BOOK TWO

MEDITATION

Oh man! Thou hast come into the world to make a profitable business of dealing with the merchandise of Naam which never fails. But alas, thou art engaged in fruitless and bewildering things of life. The night of earthly life is nearing its end. Those who do not reach the shore now, how can they cross when dead?

Hari Naam is the essence of all religions. All religions are deeply rooted in the Naam. Verily, verily, the true study of Naam, which is the Bread of Life.

He who knows how to die while living drinks Amrit, the Water of Life, which gives everlasting life. Therefore learn to die while living at the feet of a living Master. My Master, Baba Sawan Singh, instilled in me that we do really live when we are in contact with Naam, the Word, which can be given by one who is Word made flesh living on earth. Without that, there is no life. Very great and all powerful is the Naam, controlling us in the body. We cannot live without its shelter even for a moment. Time and tide wait for no man; please do hurry before it is too late.

July 17, 1970

Meditation

The Importance of Meditation

WHENEVER THE MIND has clear understanding and is inclined toward God, then quickly sit down for meditation—do not wait for tomorrow, do not wait even a few hours, or his mood will change and again he will cheat you out of the benefit. No matter what you are doing, when mind and soul are one, sit in meditation at once. Who knows what will happen in the next minute? Such an ideal mood is rare and valuable; there should be no delaying to take advantage.[1]

The Light of life is in you; indeed you live by that very Light whether you realize it or not. Each one of you has had an experience of that Holy Light. Now you must live in constant contact with the Holy Light. It is uncreated and shadowless, eternally the same and peerless. The whole creation came into being by the same Light, and that very Light is shining in every heart. All are Divine in nature, and religion is the expression of Divinity already existing in man. The Light of Life must be made manifest in existence. Be ye a witness to the Light of Life, not only within yourself but in others as well, for the same Light shineth everywhere and there is no place where it is not. Once you discover this Light and learn to live by it, your whole existence will be

changed. Love will permeate your very being and it will burst forth from the very pores of your body, transmuting all dross into sterling gold. Love, you must know, is both the means and the goal of life. Love, Light and Life are but different facets of the One Divinity.

Try to become a channel for the Divine and the Divinity will then flow through you. This is not something impossible, but it is the very acme of all human endeavors. In this world of matter one has of necessity to deal with matter. We have to make the most of the material raiment and the material world given to us. It serves a great purpose in the Divine Plan of Evolution. Matter is the ladder by which means the spirit has to rise above body-consciousness and move into the realm beyond—the realm of Spirituality—its native habitat. Learn to make the most of the means given to you and surely as day follows night, the victory shall be yours. A true Christian ought to take up his Cross daily. The Cross represents the physical body standing with outstretched arms. You have to rise above body consciousness. You have to be reborn into the Kingdom of God. The disciple must know how to die daily so as to be able to enjoy life eternal, beyond time and space.[2]

Simran and Dhyan (meditation) flood the spirit with the waters of life. Spirit comes to its own, rises in its latent Godhood and, like a tumultuous mountain stream, rushes headlong toward the ocean of life which is its perennial source, and merges therein losing its separate identity.[3]

A True Master is not a mere human being, but has

become One with God, and as such, contains in Himself the powers of all the gods and goddesses. He is veritably the Word made flesh and blood. The one lesson that such a Master teaches his disciples is to meditate always upon the Lord, the Creator of everything, and never forget Him.[4] Be the worshipper of the Living Light—become a slave to it. Do not attach yourself to anything else, for everything is changeable.[5]

The Masters say, "Stop where you are! Look at your condition!" It is all through the lack of meditation, and the only cure is to join the soul back to the Lord. Even a little intoxication derived from steady daily practice will start to erase the taste for outer pleasures. These outer attractions are making it extremely difficult for the mind to withdraw and go inward. If we start to enjoy inner sweetness . . . *When that sweetness comes, this other flavor is not to the liking.* Naturally the sweeter taste will render others insipid.[6] The cause of all our distress can be traced to the fact that we have not been drenched in the true color of Naam.[7] But if the soul does not learn to leave the body at will, and has not derived intoxication from being drenched in the color of Naam, no amount of speech or action will achieve success on the spiritual path. Remember this fact, for it is clear and simple.[8]

Listen! Open your ears and listen! He who has made his meditation has made everything. He whose meditation is not made will enjoy no meaning in his life's achievements. There is great purpose behind this emphasis on the importance of meditation. If your daily life is not under control, try to bring it in control, or give more time

to meditation and you will be able to gain control quicker. He who becomes the conscious co-worker of the Divine plan will find that his righteous life is made. Whatever he does will be performed righteously; he will not be able to act otherwise. The reason behind your failure is that you have not truly loved your Master, but have merely made a show in various ways, physically and financially, or by lip-service. There is no one who has sacrificed his mind to the Guru. Without giving up the mind, there is no success.[9]

When will you actually experience the fact that you and He are not separate and not different? When you separate yourself from matter by self-analysis. You can try by feelings, or through inferences, but both are subject to error—seeing is above all. When can one see oneself or the soul in its native clarity? Control the senses, still the mind and intellect: then the soul is seen in all its glory. He who knows himself and knows he is the mouthpiece of God—that God is working through him—he is free from illusion. Great power arises from such a condition.[10]

Do your Bhajan and Simran; release the soul from mind and senses. Bhajan and Simran are food for the soul—do not give food to the body without first giving food to the soul.[11]

Learn how to leave the body at will and transcend into the upper regions. If so, we will benefit in two ways. First, we will know how to leave the body, as we have learned to do so daily, and when death comes there will be no pain and no fear. Secondly, by traveling frequently

in the higher regions and returning to the earth at will, the fear of our unknown destination will vanish and we will develop an unwavering conviction about the true life; its mystery will be revealed. It is no use waiting for death to discover the facts of life.[12] The Masters come, lift up their hands, and shout to the world, "Oh brothers, do your meditation for without it you cannot be free."[13]

The precious moments of earth-life spent in spiritual practices count creditably toward one's eventual emancipation from the Wheel. Be regularly and lovingly devoted to your holy meditations, as that is the central pivot around which the whole sacred teaching revolves and therein an all-round development of the soul is granted.[14]

The meaning of meditation is to concentrate or meditate upon one thing, so much so that all other things are forgotten.[15]

Maulana Rumi says that compared to the vastness of the worlds within, this world is not even the extent of an atom. What a magnificent abundance of life there is within us![16]

A little knowledge is dangerous. First see what is in your own home, the physical house. Go into the folds of the holy books and see what is given there. The same knowledge that I am giving you is given therein, but for the need of a self-realized man we do not understand what is written.[17] The gem of knowledge is that Sound which reverberates, and whosoever enters inside will find it. "Everything is in this house. Nothing is outside." The untold treasure of Divinity lies hidden within, yet we search for it without and so all our efforts go in vain.

Whosoever searches outwardly will lose himself in illusion.[18]

The Change of Direction

PEOPLE shirk going within. It is difficult, no doubt, but the Path lies within. What is the use of wandering outside? A travel of one inch within is better than a trip around the globe. The mind, however, does not wish to be imprisoned, although it is to its advantage. In its outward (tendencies) it dissipates itself, and gains in power only when it goes within. On account of bad habit, it clings to the external things. The idol worship, whether the idol is of stone or paper, is the invention of mind.[19]

The world is a mere nothing—a place full of illusion and wrongdoing—valueless with no virtue, a place where the darkest deeds are carried out. What is there here that can hold any real value for either the soul or the mind? Make it understand these realities for at present it is strongly attached to all the falseness of the world and it simply has to turn and face the truth to become attached to something higher. If the soul does not leave the senses, how can it transcend the body? If it does not transcend the body, how can it realize what it is? It is a straightforward matter, requiring no special philosophy to understand. Where the world's philosophies end, there religion truly starts.[20]

So long as the heart is the focus, the mind continues generating thoughts—wool-gathering, and the individual is impressionable to circumstances. When the focus of at-

tention has been raised to the eyes, and the mind has entered within, then the mind ceases generating thoughts and is running within instead of outside. The individual then is necessarily unaffected by external circumstances or changes.[21]

The mind often exerted his strength, almost wrestler-like, and said, "I will not do this!" But again and again he was tempted and overcome by the senses. We all make strong resolutions, but when it comes to keeping them we fall down. Swami Ji is quite openly revealing our own condition—these are our very own cries of anguish, and the promises we make to change tomorrow—that tomorrow which is in the Negative Power's hands, and never comes. Everyone is in the same boat and crying out the same cry; so look within yourselves and see what you are doing with your precious lives. Why not start the good work now? The mind is very wise, it is no insignificant thing. Like a magistrate, his thoughts are wise, and he observes that with all his efforts there is still no freedom, only defeat. Some people are dragged in passion, some are roasted alive in the fire of attachment, some are caught in the nets of ego and pride, stiffly and proudly strutting their way through life. The whole world is in this terrible condition.

I want to leave all enjoyments;
Just seeing them I am helpless.

There is so much attraction in the outer enjoyments that the mind ignores its wisdom and is rendered too helpless to fight. When a cat sees a mouse, it cannot resist it. So what happens? We say, "Let us enjoy now and face

whatever the consequences when they come." We are usually aware of our follies to some extent, but too late.[22]

Mind is no small thing, and is not easy to conquer, but we should start by changing its direction. While its face remains turned toward the worldly things, the soul will be worldly, but if it turns around and faces the soul, the soul will become spiritual. We must turn round.[23]

When you are fully convinced that the fountainhead of peace and harmony is within and that you have the key and the means to tap within, you should not let the precious moments pass without deriving maximum spiritual benefit. *You are simply to decide and then act.*[24]

The Need for a Guru

ALL THE INSTANCES known to history show that no one has ever progressed to the highest conscious self-awareness without the help of a Master. It is rather a fundamental law that no one can snap or pierce through the inner veil without the active help and guidance of a Master Soul. If anybody can do it by himself or herself, let him or her try and see if he or she can do it. When one does not hesitate in learning a thing which one does not know in this world, why should one have any qualms in one's search for something that belongs entirely to spiritual worlds within. Even if as a result of some reactions of past lives, one may have some experience of his own, he will still require Someone to guide him to further progress on the Path. All those who have been put on the Way should, therefore, carry on their

meditations lovingly and devotedly so that they may progress within, from day to day, and enjoy the sweet internal bliss.[25]

Outside experiences differ in various countries, but inner experience never. He may be defined as one brimming with Spirituality and above the life of the senses. He has freed Himself from various sheaths of grosser and finer matter, and He has seen the All Truthful with His spiritual eye. He is competent to develop the spiritual possibilities lying dormant in man. He is charged by God Himself with the Magnetic Force. He is the mouthpiece of the Eternal. He has in Him the Refulgent Light of the Infinite, and He is competent to light the lamps of others.[26] So it is only by the grace of a true Master that one can be guided away from the dark edge of these powerful senses—for a while. *With indescribable strength the mighty Guru pulls the attention.* And inside is the Ever-Existent Lord, described as Naam.[27]

Shabd

THERE WAS great beauty in the Shabd. It had a music that was beyond any music created by man and which drew the soul towards Itself. It was forever calling the spirit towards its Divine Home and though it was not heard by ordinary men, yet those who had developed, through practice and the grace of Satguru, the capacity of inner hearing, could hear its melody every minute of the day, now growing stronger as the mind focused itself at one point, now dimming and fading away as one's

thoughts scattered in various directions and attention was dissipated. It was Shabd that was the true anchor of the seeker. It was the conscious power that had brought everything into creation and it was also one's real Master —the Shabd Guru—for the Satguru in His human form was Its physical manifestation.[28]

Shabd brings in untold blessings. It is the powerhouse of all energy or force in whatsoever form, from pranas down to electricity and magnetism. Every form of life is the manifestation of Shabd. All that is, is of Shabd and nothing is that is not of Shabd—life-current pulsating in and out of space. Those who commune with Shabd and live in and by Shabd are verily the children of the Supreme One, the life of life and the light of light. Shabd is the very "Bread of Life" which comes down from Heaven for all those who hunger after righteousness, and the very "Water of Life" for those who thirst after Self-knowledge and God-knowledge. True love, wisdom and power are the greatest gifts that one gets by basking in the sunshine of Heaven's Light.[29]

Surat and Shabd are naturally related to each other. Shabd is characterized by Light and Sound principles, wherewith the mind gets stilled and the spirit, freed from the clutches of the mind, is irresistibly drawn by the Shabd and is taken to her native homestead from where the Sound Current is emanating. On the other hand, those who take up practices involving pranas, cannot go beyond the frontiers of pranas which extend to the mental or astral heaven as *Chidakash* is known to be. But a Shabd yogin can go freely, openly and honorably to

wherever he likes, because Shabd pervades everywhere without ever any limitations, and reach the true home of his Father.[30]

The particular sounds that have an upward pull are five in number, as stated by the various saints, and may be apprehended through their Grace and contacted in their company. Such sounds carry with them the effect of the spiritual planes from which they proceed and in turn produce the same effect on him who comes in contact with them. They have their own heavenly melodies, the rapturous strains of which depersonalizes the soul by freeing it from the chains of mundane life.

Whoever comes near the fire, gets warmth, no matter whether he does so of his own accord or not. So the Holy Naam or the Divine Song cannot but influence you when you come in contact with it, whether you will it or not and are in time or out of time. The Power of God cannot but influence you, should you get in touch with It.

The outer music has a marvelous effect on all living beings. It shakes off the grievous burden of the oppressive sorrow and unrest under which one incessantly groans, and drives away all thoughts. It washes away the dirt of everyday life by its melodious tunes and captivates the soul. It withdraws the mind from the tumultuous hubbub of the objective worlds. It concentrates the mind, naturally, without having recourse to any fabricated methods. Music, indeed, has ever been the art of saints.[31]

These spiritual sounds are aids on the spiritual path. A competent Master, at the time of initiation, gives full

instructions on how to differentiate between them from plane to plane, as well as how to catch hold of them on the onward march to the highest spiritual realm. Herein then lies the need for a Master Soul, for He is the inspirer of Hari Naam—the Divine Word, in the depths of one's soul. Without Him, the Eternal Song ever remains a shrouded mystery with no access thereto. As Music personified, He is competent to manifest it, make it audible, and thus lead one to the seat of the Almighty.[32]

If one could discover this audible life-stream within oneself, if one could discover its lower reaches, one could use it as a pathway leading to its source. The currents might at certain points enter gorges and rapids, but nevertheless they are the surest way on the upward journey. Be a range however unscaleable, the waters will have cut a path and carved a passage, and he who will avail himself of their guidance would never fail to find a way. And since this Naam or Word current springs from the Anaam or the Wordless, he who holds firmly to It will inevitably reach the starting point, transcending plane after plane of varying relativity until he arrives at the very source of name and form, thence to merge into That which has no name or form.[33]

Ever since the child disciple is led to the Living Master and is linked with the Holy Naam within, the incessant flow of grace and protection is extended in abundance. The faithful and the loving develop receptivity and assimilate the same to enrich their lives and they become a source of inspiration to others. The celestial manifestations within are the result of the grace of the Master

and in no way may be claimed as one's personal effort or endeavor, however good they may seem to be. Yet it is of great importance to strictly abide by His commandments, thus invoking His mercy and blessing. It is not the inner experience which determines the spiritual progress, but the basic personal attitude of serene living of the child disciple, which proves his or her worth. Truth is above all, yet higher still is true living. A man is best known by the company he keeps and by his actions. The spiritual development is steady, continuous, unabated, harmonious and ceaseless from the moment one is linked with the Holy Naam. The gaps of hushing silence creating an intense longing and pangs of separation for the Master and Holy Naam within the innermost recesses of the heart are happy preludes for a big leap forward. The cumulative efforts of the sincere devotee will one day open the flood gates of celestial glory, much to his or her gratuitous joy.[34]

Without the stabilizing force of Naam, the soul remains diffused in the world, subject to the constant agitation of the mind. Passion and anger have the same results. If an obstacle comes between us and our desire, whether apparent or concealed, then anger arises, followed by envy, criticism, backbiting, enmity, petty squabbling and other things—we drift from one bad habit to another. And all this is due to lack of substantial meditation.

Even if a little was done with deep sincerity, some intoxication would be enjoyed. *When this Nectar comes, other wine seems tasteless.* Having tasted the real Nectar

of Life, one will leave a thousand tasks to sit and enjoy it. Every free minute will be put to use; one will readjust one's life to make more and more time for meditation. When people are asked why they do not meditate, their excuse is that they have no time. Forgive me, but there is never any time for this precious work, although the "true disciple" is always ready and willing to attend to the worldly pursuits. We are not faithful to our Bhajan because we have not had enough inner experience of Naam.[35]

"There is no way without the Shabd to leave this pot of clay;" and it lies within each being. When the connection to Naam is made, it then must be increased. It is the treasure of the two worlds: Physical and spiritual. *When you meet the Sant, brothers, value the True Naam; This treasure of life remains here and hereafter.* It is potent in both phases of life.[36] With repetition or Simran, you can achieve single-pointed concentration, and with concentrated attention—Dhyan—you will come to a standstill; but Shabd is the only power to take you up into the Beyond.[37] With kind thoughts I wish you to engage with all your mind and soul in the service of the holy Word and the holy Word will take care of you.[38] "Service of the holy Word" simply means that you commune with or tune yourself to the holy Sound Current which is the life of our life, the very first principle of Godhood or God-in-action, as it has to be contacted, absorbed in and comingled with. A dip into it is a dip into the Ocean of All Consciousness and purifies the soul of myriads of karmic impressions lodged in the mind

throughout the countless ages. This then is the service to the holy Word or the Holy Ghost which manifests as the Divine Light and Divine Sound.[39]

The sovereign and the most potent remedy to wash the mind clean, say all the Masters, is by communion with the holy Word—the God-in-action power creating and sustaining all that is visible and invisible. To be in tune with the music of the soul is to cut asunder and to sunder forever the knots which at present bind the material body with the conscious soul, imprisoned in the body with countless fetters.

Guru Nanak says in the *Jap Ji*: "When the hands, feet and the body are besmeared, they are washed with water; when the clothes get dirty and polluted, they are cleansed by soap; when one's mind gets defiled by sin, it can be purified only by communion with the Word."[40]

The holy Sound Current growing more powerful at times denotes His constant protection to you and an invitation for proceeding ahead within under His guidance. You should listen to it so devotedly that your entire self is merged in it, and let it transport you into the Beyond to taste the higher Bliss.[41] Bhajan is imperative to right living, for the true meaning of Bhajan is to go within and rejoin the Lord—nothing more or less.[42]

Whoever sits before a God-realized person in all sincerity, in His company will come to understand what the Shabd is, and what is the true gain from the Guru.[43]

Benefits of Communion with Naam

YOU WILL appreciate that, when attention is completely riveted within at this thinking center, and all the stray thoughts are controlled by mental repetition of the charged Names, an overwhelming inner warming comes of itself from above. This multiplies in abundance, and then inculcates a gradually accelerated devotion for the holy meditations. A well tilled and nicely ploughed field will bring forth a rich harvest when watered with the waters of loving devotion and humble supplication.[44]

Naam keeps the mind and body in a state of equipoise. Peace reigns supreme in its devotee; the ramifications of mind are done away with forever. All lusts cease to have their hold on the mind. The brain gets a soothing balm. It puts an end to wasteful hurry, and with it go all nervous tensions and mental strains and stress. Naam gives one immunity from all bodily and worldly pains and troubles. By withdrawing the attention within, the mind is stilled and the soul is freed of all mental conflicts. Even the sense of egotism itself—the most ancient malady—loses itself into airy nothing and with it, the perpetual dance of coming in and going out of the world comes to an end. The process of transmigration of the soul is but the natural concomitant of the self-assertive will or egoism.

Guru Nanak says: "Whenever one asserts the little ego, 'I,' as doing things, one assumes the unending role of an ever-active agent responsible for his actions, and is caught in the intricate net of transmigration."

The elimination of egoism is, then, the only remedy for

liberation from the unending cycle of births and deaths. It is a clear test of the spiritual current diffused in the world. All labor undergone for total self-effacement is an effort in the right direction. It is called disimprisonment of the soul from the facts of life or disenfranchisement from all that is worldly. In a word, the secret lies in depersonalizing the soul of all that is personal in it, for then one strikes at the root of all evil. The many recipes for this losing of the "I-consciousness," which flood the world today, fail to gain for us the goal of liberation. For, with such methods, the ego feeds itself and grows from strength to strength and is not effaced. Unless one becomes a conscious co-worker with the divine Plan, he cannot become selfless.[45]

The Sound Current, Soul and Master are all one. Your growing interest in its listening brings you nearer to the fountainhead of this bliss. It feeds the soul and strips the mind of its age-old dross. Past karma is wiped out by its rapturous listening with the grace of the Master. The initiates are invariably stressed the importance of listening to this Divine Sound so as to be free from the reaction of present karma, which they have to contract while meeting with their legitimate duties, in accordance with their fate-karma.[46]

The load of karmic debt gets lighter by listening to the holy Sound Current, even if it is in its lowest links, for it holds the keel of one's barque steady on the stormy sea of life, and saves it from running aground among shoals, sandbanks, and submerged rocks. But one must strive to catch higher Sounds for it is the latter that exert a power-

ful pull upon the soul by following which one is led to eventual liberation. These higher sounds can, by loving devotion and practice, be easily differentiated and communed with by the grace of the Master Power which is ever ready to extend all feasible help to the aspirants on the Path.[47]

Desire is the root cause of all disturbance and suffering. You will become desireless by regular listening to the holy Sound Current for some time. It is considered the tried panacea for that. It is the mergence of the soul in the Holy Shabd which grants such ineffable bliss and harmony, that the roots of desire are crippled for good.[48] . . . Be sweetly absorbed into the hearing of the Sound Current. It cleans the mind, purifies the heart and elevates the soul.[49] Those who meditate on Naam not only succeed spiritually but in worldly attainment also.[50]

When the soul gets a connection with the Greater Consciousness, it gains strength and refreshment. If one removes the attention from the body and goes up, the body gets perfect rest. The law is that if one gets true sleep for just a few minutes, it is enough. For those who travel on this Path, reduction in sleep is a very frequent occurrence.[51]

One never feels ill after meditation. The result of sweet and accurate meditation is the reverse: one feels peaceful and serene. The time that is at our disposal now is very precious. Lest one regrets having wasted it, it is better to use it to its fullest extent. To such people, inner help comes as oxygen comes to help fire.[52] The holy Naam is the panacea for all ills—physical, mental and

spiritual. Medicines do help for refining the physical body, but a harmonious life full of sublime piety is only possible by regular and faithful meditation.[53]

Those who have access within can read their fate easily. It is an open book to them.[54] It is during the sublime moments of meditation when the child disciple is attuned with the Infinite to benefit from the incessant flow of Divine Grace, and it is then that the rare boons of right understanding come in increasing measure.[55]

So long as we are covered by mind and matter we cannot see reality. When you have thrown off these coverings you will be able to read others correctly at a glance. Every individual is working under the influence of mind and is blind. Mind is the snake in our body which bites us always. Under its influence we do actions and our actions are the cause of our endless struggle here causing births and deaths. This snake-mind is charmed when it catches the Word. It is attracted by the sweet Sound of the Word, hearing which it is rendered motionless and the soul is released from its bondage. Nanak says that there is no other way to conquer mind except by the practice of Sound Current. And so long as mind is not conquered there is no getting in. The mind functions through ego. The soul is free when mind tastes the Word and no other taste satisfies the mind for any length of time and otherwise sooner or later the mind gets dissatisfied and begins to look for something else. Only when the Word has been tasted the mind finds complete satisfaction.[56]

There is an instance in Lord Krishna's life, when he

jumped into the River Jumna. There he saw a huge snake with a thousand heads. How did he control and overcome that snake? By playing the flute. The mind can only be controlled with the inner Sound; there is no other way. Outer things may still it for a while, but they can never control it. Many holy men in the past have lost everything through the mind. By contact with the Word and the company of the "Word made flesh" the power of the mind can gradually be overcome. If you sit at the feet of a perfect Master, you will enjoy the benefit of the radiation, for his attention is under his own control. There you will become absorbed in the stillness and forget the world for a while.[57]

True renunciation within comes through communion with the Shabd alone. Nature with all her evanescent charms ceases to have attraction for the renouncer. By renouncing everything, one penetrates into the all-pervading spirit. His attachment to matter is ended. Thus, no more births and deaths await him. Hereafter the life of the senses and the glamour of the world fascinates him not, on his way to the Lord.

Detachment in attachment is also attained only with the aid of Shabd. Whatever he does, he does with the sense of duty with no attachment to the fruit thereof. The root cause of misery lies in the fact of one's attachment. We are caught by whatever we do—in our inability to detach ourselves from everything. We must reserve the power to remain detached from all things, however precious they may be, or however much one may yearn for them.[58]

When once the life-stream becomes audible, one never feels lonely; for he hears its reverberations wherever he may be, at home or abroad. The Voice of God keeps reminding him of the true home of his Father. The practice of the Sound Principle rids one of all troubles and afflictions, the five deadly passions, the lusts of the flesh and of the mind, leaving the soul in pristine transparency, detached from all that is of the world and worldly. Shabd is the supporting staff both in the journey of this life and of the life hereafter. With the experience of transcendence beyond the confines of the body, he becomes fearless of death and when the allotted span of worldly existence comes to an end, he throws off, once and for all the mortal coils of the flesh, as easily and happily as one does his old and worn-out garments, and is freed from the cycle of births and deaths and goes openly and honorably to his home in heaven. The practice of and the communion with the Word brings in the heaven's light, and one feels divinely blessed. It gives intuitive knowledge of the self and of God, and one experiences within himself the integral realization of the soul as one common life principle, extending everywhere, in and around him, without any barriers and limitations of time and space — for all life is one, from eternity to eternity, irrespective of so many forms and patterns through which it may manifest. The moment one rises into the Timeless, he himself becomes timeless. This, in fact, is true meditation and true devotion leading to the true love of God and His creation, his own self expanding and coinciding with that of his Creator.[59]

By communion with the Word one can attain the status of a Siddha, a Pir, a Sura, or a Nath;

By communion with the Word, one can understand the mysteries of the earth, the supporting bull and the heavens;

By communion with the Word, the earthly regions, the heavenly plateaux and the nether worlds stand revealed;

By communion with the Word, we can escape unscathed through the portals of Death;

O Nanak, His devotees live in perpetual ecstacy, for the Word washes away all sin and sorrow.[60]

By communion with the Word, one can attain the powers of Shiva, Brahma and Indra;

By communion with the Word, one can win esteem from all irrespective of one's past;

By communion with the Word, one can have yogic insight with the mysteries of life and self all revealed;

By communion with the Word, one can acquire the true import of the Shastras, Smritis and Vedas;

O Nanak, His devotees live in perpetual ecsta-

Siddha: A man endowed with super-natural powers. *Pir*: A Muslim divine or a spiritual teacher. *Sura*: Gods. *Nath*: Yogin—an adept in yoga. *Supporting bull*: (dhaul), it is the fabled bull, supposed to be supporting the earths and heavens. *Shastras*: The philosophical trea-

cy, for the Word washes away all sin and sorrow.[61]

By communion with the Word, one becomes the abode of Truth, contentment and true knowledge:

By communion with the Word, one gets the fruit of ablution at sixty-eight pilgrimages;

By communion with the Word, one wins the honour of the learned;

By communion with the Word, one attains the state of Sehaj;

O Nanak, His devotees live in perpetual ecstacy, for the Word washes away all sin and sorrow.[62]

By communion with the Word, one becomes the abode of all virtues;

By communion with the Word, one becomes a Sheikh, a Pir and a true spiritual king;

By communion with the Word, the spiritually blind find their way to Realization;

By communion with the Word, one crosses beyond the Limitless Ocean of illusionary Matter;

O Nanak, His devotees live in perpetual ecstacy, for the Word washes away all sin and sorrow.[63]

tises of the Hindus. *Vedas*: The earliest books of human thought. *Sehaj*: This term refers to the state, when the turmoil of the physical, astral and causal worlds with all their enchanted panorama, are transcended and the Great Principle of Life is seen within.[64]

Helping Factors

YOU WOULD have true knowledge if you transcend the sense knowledge. Enter the inner silence, and this silence will become vocal. With longing in your eyes enter within from without. This is the central message of every True Master. In your own house you will see Him. Therefore, I would request that you gaze longingly into your heart, with silence in your heart, with silence in your soul, and with no thought of this world or the next. The grace of God will descend on you and the gaze will grow into a glimpse and He will reveal Himself to you, and you will see Him within yourself.[65]

You will please appreciate that it is the constant thought of worldly pursuits which has been the cause of present human birth, and for attaining liberation from the cycle of birth and death, the very thought pattern is to be revolutionized by replacing it with divine thoughts. Loving remembrance of the Master and repetition of names serve as very helpful factors for having the withdrawal of sensory currents from the body below, when the inner process of contemplation on the divine lights and eventually the charming Radiant Form of the Master commences.[66]

Sitting in sweet remembrance of the Master is exactly what the words imply. There is no technology involved in it. It is simple enough—a feeling of deep-seated love naturally created within or a longing. The quiet solitude of a place can be helpful to meditation. Service to the

beloved Master is one of the potential factors that help to cleanse the vessel of a person, and it is a powerful aid in getting within. To go within is the first and foremost duty of a disciple, and this can be achieved through the grace of the Master which in turn is hastened by the disciple living a life of love, service, and meditation, for they are linked and co-related to each other.[67] Wherever you are, you can at best serve the Master and the best service which earns His pleasure is sincere meditations. An example is better than precept. This is the best dedication and has its own unrivaled reward.[68]

You should try to forget all about your mind and I-ness. It is simply your harping on it and feeding its ego by constantly thinking about it, which disturbs you. You must know that regular meditations replace the vicious qualities of the mind with virtuous ones and gradually culminate in rising above vice and virtue both. Go placidly amid the noise and haste and remember what serene peace and harmony awaits you within during meditations. Such an attempt shall bless you with profound joy and bliss. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in all spheres of life. Never feel disturbed with imaginings.[69]

You must know it for certain that the life of an initiate is fully controlled by the gracious Master Power for his spiritual progress. Those who relish to meditate regularly and inculcate a keen sense of self-abnegation by surrendering their will to that of the Divine Will of the Master enjoy perpetual bliss and harmony. Whatsoever comes to your count is a blessing in disguise and should be ac-

cepted cheerfully. AVOID HURRY AND WORRY. Instead just learn to do one thing at a time and that too with single-minded attention and devotion. All bliss and joy lies in the concentrated attention at the eye focus and if you will develop this technique, your entire life will be changed and dyed in the color of divinity, with the grace of the Master.[70]

You need not dwell much on your personal character or impurities of mind. It amounts to self-pity. You will please appreciate that by watering the seedling at the roots, the plant thrives most and blooms in abundance. The holy Naam is the tried panacea for ills of mind. Although it is a very happy augury to be conscious of one's shortcomings, undue apprehension sometimes breeds morbidity which hampers progress. The conscious contacts with divinity within revolutionizes the thought pattern of the child disciple and he sees everything in much clearer perception. Slow and steady wins the race. Your job is to be implicitly obedient and humbly dedicated. It is for Him to reward you for your efforts. Patience is the noblest virtue but is the fruit of very long cultivation. Just learn to live in the living present and with undivided attention and devotion. You should train your mind in such a manner that when you do anything required of you, there is no hurry, compulsion or resentment from your side. You will find that it will be helpful to you in all your spheres of life including meditations.[71]

Depression and despair breed in egoistic hearts. If you will inculcate a keen sense of humility by self-abnegation and effacement, you will enjoy more ineffable bliss and

harmony. Humility is the sheet anchor with the dear ones. It is an adoration of the Saints who work in this physical plane by keeping their divinity hidden from the public gaze. How safe and sublime it is to work humbly on behalf of the Master, by rolling on all credit to Him. You are a personal testimony of the sacred truth that when you work for the Master for channelizing the divine grace, how graciously you are compensated. The golden principle of attributing all success to the Master Power and failure towards your own personal weaknesses to be overcome gradually, should be followed lovingly. Ego is a human element. It is annihilated very slowly by meditating on Sound Current and Light Principles. Gradually it will dawn upon you that you are a doll in the hands of divine powers dancing to His bid.[72] Complete surrender to His Will and Pleasure is the surest and safest way for inner inversion and the journey on to the realms of pure bliss and unalloyed harmony.[73]

It is quite natural and logical, just as one goes up in an electric elevator unaided and without effort, similarly the soul currents are withdrawn to the eye-center.[74] With a calm mind sit in exercises. Trikuti is in the mind range. When the attention catches and follows the Sound Current the mind is dormant and out of action; at all other times when the attention is off the current the mind gets the upper hand.[75] You need not struggle for staying at the eye focus when you withdraw quickly. You have simply to relax fully, repose joyously and resign to the divine will and pleasure of the Master and go into the Beyond. The innermost deep silence of the heart coupled

with a burning anguish of the soul will invoke more divine grace.[76] You must silence your thoughts during meditation. The silencing of the intellect is the last nail in the coffin. You should not wish to have one thing or another. Simply sit at the door and wait. The sublime silence is best and easily achieved by lovingly and humbly reposing in the gracious Master Power to grant and bless whatever is deemed fit. That benign power is incessantly with you and is quite aware of your earnest efforts. But so long as you are conscious of your actions, you stand in your own way and when you lovingly eliminate yourself, He will manifest to you in the form of celestial manifestations of Divine Light and holy Sound Current. It is something like inviting someone to enter the room while you are blocking the way by standing in the doorway.[77]

He or she is not to presuppose things or visualize results, for those will follow of their own accord. We have but to sit in loving remembrance, with steady gaze fixed in between and behind the two eyebrows, and do mental repetition of the Five Holy Words, without any exertion or strain on the eyes, or on the forehead. Ours is to be an attitude of passivity, for the Doer is one and only One: the Master, who is the best judge for the time and measure and manner of each step on the path.[78]

The meditation practices should be an easy, natural and enjoyable process, wherein you could sit for extended hours. So please try to avoid such faith-shakes as will distract your thoughts from the Path until you have progressed sufficiently and grown strong within so as to be-

come immune to receiving unhelpful impulses and be able to radiate your own loving thoughts and impulses. This is a period where one has to be very vigilant. So please carry on in faith and regularity. The Master Power is over your head extending all feasible help.[79]

So when you sit in meditation, forget the world, and let the Guru alone be before you and you before him—there should be nothing else. When our Muslim brothers sit for prayer, they spread a prayer-mat in front of them to remind them that there is nothing between God and the devotee. Sit for practice in this way and you will not even be aware that you are withdrawing. This is the true way to realize God—to travel across the ocean of life.[80]

Some succeed in performing their spiritual disciplines in the prescribed manner in a short period, others do not for want of the conscious control of the mind and the outgoing faculties. This is why it has always been stressed to weed out all undesirable traits and habits, and to replace them by the opposite ennobling virtues; and for this, the maintenance of the monthly self-introspection diary is mandatory. The more you progress in man-making, the more your mind and senses will come under your conscious control.[81] The more you will try to eradicate the weaknesses in you and lovingly attend to Simran, Dhyan and Bhajan, the richer will be the extent of your experiences within.[82] Purity of life is essential for fruitful meditations.[83]

When the mind needs no other thing except the Master, He Who is always within draws the veil aside and appears. So it is a question of developing an intense de-

sire for Him. This desire is aroused by meditation and by sweetly remembering Him in one's heart to the exclusion of all other things.[84]

Regularity

TO BE AN INITIATE is not enough. One has to be devoted regularly to meditation and develop from day to day. Lack of spiritual progress and remaining away from contacts where such inner progress is likely to be nourished, is apt to bring about a negative attitude under uncongenial influence.[85]

Hazur Baba Sawan Singh Ji said: ". . . no matter in what circumstances one finds himself and what new problems one is facing, a devotee should not miss his Bhajan. He may give only fifteen minutes or even five minutes to it daily, but he should be on it without a break.[86] Spiritual meditations are the food for the soul and should not be missed. A day put off backs your progress considerably. These practices should please therefore be performed faithfully, regularly and sweetly. They are designed as a first step to take your soul up above your body inwardly to the Radiant Form of the Master, who will then guide you and take you further up, step by step, till your goal is reached. Thus you will see the difference between the rituals performed within the domain of the body and senses and those that take you above the body consciousness.[87]

Spiritual inheritance counts greatly for everybody's inner progress, yet earnest and persistent efforts put in

under the protective guidance of the Living Master never go in vain and in due course of time bring in much fruit and that too in abundance. You should know it for certain that everything is being recorded behind the veil, and the gracious Master Power is fully aware of your innermost aspirations.[88] Each bit laid up for spiritual discipline counts creditably toward your inner progress. The cumulative result of your devotion will bring forth very good results in due course and at the proper time, with the grace of the Master.[89]

You should always hie on your Holy Path irrespective of worldly gains or losses. You will appreciate that after all everything is to be left behind at the final hour of death, and only the Holy Naam will accompany us into the Beyond. You know very well the supreme importance of regular meditations. The more you are developed while living here, the more of the inner journey is covered in the Beyond. Know it for certain that you are here in this mortal world only for enjoying the rare bliss of Holy Naam. God and Master (God in man) first, all else secondary.[90]

Try to do one thing at a time. If you exercise discipline in all of your affairs, your progress will not be retarded by any amount of extra responsibilities you may have. Try to put in regular hours undisturbed by any thoughts of the material things about you.[91] Proficiency demands persistent and earnest efforts.[92]

When He gives you something, increase it through daily meditations. We do not like to do it and say we

haven't got the time, but remember you have to die for yourself; no one else will do it for you.[93]

It is said that those who do not do Bhajan will never be free from misery: lethargy will constantly torment them. They are always lazy. When does this procrastination come and when does it go? For the negative work he is all attentiveness; while waiting on the Naam, he slumbers. To gratify the senses, he is wide awake and ready—even at midnight. But for Bhajan . . . "not now, we will see tomorrow." This is mainly due to his regular association with outer enjoyments; he has inclination toward them. He has done little or no Bhajan to speak of, has not drunk deep enough to enjoy its sweet nectar, and therefore feels disinclined. With lethargy, procrastination becomes the thief of time . . . "Not just now, wait awhile . . . we will do it tonight, no, tomorrow morning . . . let us just finish this work, and then . . ." The tragic result? If you put off the moment, the other moment which one imagines will be more opportune, will never come. If one becomes lazy, then laziness will induce sleep. If your meditation is not fruitful, how will you know what is inside? Even when at initiation through the mercy of the Master something is seen within, yet a man will start thinking it is all imagination. This is how the mind hoodwinks us, with the result that the soul recedes into the enjoyments and scatters its attention.[94]

Whatever the matter, however preoccupied with outer duties, the disciple must find some time every day—be it ever so little, for Bhajan. Only through maintaining the link with Shabd can anything be gained and once

a disciple has strengthened the link through constant practice the inner music flows in incessantly at all hours of the day becoming a clarion-call forever inviting within and deftly lifting him like a silken robe from off the thorns of earthly desires.[95]

Get the full benefit of meditation, and increase it day by day. The more you increase it, the nearer will you advance toward your goal. If you refuse, the day will come when you will be filled with regret for the lost opportunity. It is all a very simple matter of fact, and outer show of respect will achieve nothing. Learn to obey implicitly —this is the secret in a nutshell.[96]

Create New Habits

MIND, like fire, is a very good servant but a bad master. It has got one of the best attributes which can be harnessed for spiritual benefit. It relishes to run into its grooves of habit, and if you will do some acts regularly at the fixed hour every day for some days continuously, you will find that a habit is formed, and it finds pleasure in doing the same thing automatically. So when the mind is diverted towards spiritual practices, by undertaking meditations at the appointed hours for some time regularly, you will find that the same mind which resents inversion will relish it, with the grace of the Master. The divine manifestations granted by the Master are superbly charming to entrap it, when it will leave aside its vicious attributes.[97]

Grow the nails of regularity. An army without a com-

mander will end up in chaos, so we must command our lives with regularity. If you are employed somewhere, you go there daily at the proper time without any trouble, and for meditation we should adopt the same attitude and sit daily at the regular time. Sadly, we are adrift; sometimes we sit, sometimes we don't. If we were truly regular, we would find that if we should happen to have a day without meditation, we would feel ill at ease, as though we had missed something. If possible, there should be a room in the home set aside for God's remembrance alone—you would find that the very atmosphere of that room would remind you of Him.[98]

The very early morning hours are best suited for meditation, as all thoughts subside during the night's rest and the food has been digested.[99] Rise early every day, and do your meditation.

Rise before sunrise, and repeat the Naam;
All negative effects will be mitigated, O Nanak.

Early morning is the most beneficial time for meditation.

Supreme oneness of thought upon the True
Naam is had at the ambrosial small hours
before dawn.

So rise early and shake off all feeling of sloth. Go into the remembrance of Him even if you are lying down—even at night, or when resting. Go to sleep with the same thought, so that the very remembrance of Him will be the very beat of your pulse. When you arise in the morning, be awakened—have a bath or wake yourself by any means, but be really awake when you sit down for medi-

tation. With these habits, even in sleep your meditation will continue, and when awake, even then you will have that meditative attitude all day.[100]

The quiet solitude of a place can be helpful to meditations. Service to and for the beloved Master is one of the potential factors that helps to cleanse the vessel of a disciple and aids in going within. To go within is the most important part of the sacred teachings, and this can be achieved only through the grace of the Master, which in turn is hastened by one's living a life of love, service and meditation. Thus they are linked and co-related to each other.[101]

No one is nearer to you than your Master. There is no need to run to mountains, though quiet surroundings do help in peaceful meditation.[102] If you have noise in your own place, you may find some monastery or church nearby where you can have more peace and quiet to carry on your meditations.[103]

In the future we should learn a lesson and not destroy the purity of our surroundings by our sinful actions—especially those places meant for meditation. Swami Vivekananda said that if we repent the sins we commit in the worldly places, God will forgive us, but He will never forgive the sins which are committed in holy places. So when you go to a sacred place, keep your thoughts pure and turned toward God alone.[104]

The Light and Sound are so efficacious that if absorbingly attended to, the mind will be stilled. You may say some prayer before your meditation creating an aura which would serve as hemming all around you and you

will feel the presence of the Master to your great joy. Please remember that mind itself is inert and takes life from spirit, which, when attuned to the inner manifestations, becomes calm.[105]

Spiritual Background Plays a Part

SPIRITUAL evolution is something personal and each one brings with him or her past background to progress, all under the protective guidance of the Living Master.[106] All is dependent upon the background, the earnestness, the love and devotion that a person will put into the spiritual practices. The divine treasures are for all, whether rich or poor. Master's loving help accelerates progress.[107]

Is the nature and extent of our spiritual growth or advancement beyond the tenth door determined by our past lives? Yes—in a way it is determined. A man is in the making. One who passed primary class will get admission to the next grade. One who has just been put on the way will take his or her own time. However, there is no hard and fast rule about it. The one who has been put on the way progresses more by regular devotion of time to meditations with full faith than one with a different background who is not regular in his meditations.[108]

It is incorrect to think that spiritual progress cannot be had for at least five years. Those who are not ready, are neither led to the gracious Living Master nor are they initiated into the Mysteries of the Beyond. Those who are initiated get some experience of Light and Sound

to start with. However, progress does vary according to the past background and because of this some may progress rapidly and others lag behind. But there is sure hope for everybody. It is a simple, yet arduous schedule which is made much easier by the grace of the Master.[109] Even if He gives a little at the beginning, then there is hope for much more; and whatever He gives, protect it with your life.[110]

Time Element for Development

"ONCE ONE meets a competent Satguru, one learns the complete inner way and launches on the spiritual journey," Baba Ji would say. "There is then only the liquidation of give and take that limits the soul's flight. The soul is not then pure enough to catch the Divine Shabd and must be first freed of all karmic reactions. The Satguru must free it from the chain of karmas in this life itself so as to safeguard against the necessity of taking further births for their repayment."[111]

You need not feel sceptical over your restricted inner progress but try to be more accurate and earnest. It is inner longing of the soul and intense loving devotion which blesses the child disciple with fruitful meditations. You will grow gradually in due course.[112]

There should be no clutching on your part to have one thing or the other. Simply sit in an attitude of humble supplication, having full confidence in the competency of the Master to grant you that which is in your best interests at the time. It is up to Him to give and not for us to demand.[113]

Matter and mind are subject to change, but there is no change in spirit. Mind is not such a thing that can be switched off and on at will. It cannot be taken away from its routine course, in spite of one's best efforts, in a day, or a month, or a year. It is a life's struggle. Those who have conducted this struggle or are engaged in struggle understand what it is to struggle with the mind. Look at the coarseness of the mind. It is son, daughter, wife, husband, parent, wealth and property, attachment, greed, lust, anger, pride, and what not. It is attached to the outside world with ropes, double ropes, triple ropes, and many-fold ropes. It has been held by these chains so long that it does not feel the irksomeness of these chains. To the caged bird the captivity is the normal run of life.[114]

You should not be skeptical about your inner progress, as such an attitude impedes progress. Please rest assured that everything is being recorded carefully behind the veil, and all your earnest efforts stand to your credit spiritually. Thought is the keynote to success. It is the thought pattern of the initiate which is changed gradually when he or she feels overall protection and guidance from the Master Power in all spheres of life.[115] Everything that comes to you in the divine dispensation is invariably right for your spiritual progress.[116]

Patience and Perseverance

THE SECRET to success on the Path is practice, more practice and still more practice.[117]

Your complaint that the mind wanders during exercises is the complaint made by almost every practitioner in the early stages. The mind feels pleasure in roaming at large and does not like to give up its liberty until it has attained to higher pleasure in exchange for its present enjoyments. But constant practice will force it to give up its former habits.[118]

Just see how simple and easy it looks, but it requires much perseverance and steadfastness for attaining proficiency on the Path. You are simply to maintain a reverential silence within for enjoying the full fruits of the Divine Grace, which will manifest itself in great abunddance. Please note that if you call at the door of some rich man and await regularly for some days continuously, he will one day surely ask you the purpose of your daily calls on him. It is but a worldly example, and if you mentally wait at the celestial door of the Divinity, accurately and with firm patience and all humility, don't you think that He will respond to your supplications? Most surely He will. You just wait patiently and see within.[119]

So I wish for you to tread the Path having full faith and confidence in the Master, and above all, be grateful that you have been accepted for Initiation in this difficult age we are living in. Persevere, persevere, and persevere again. Perseverance combined with full faith in the

gracious Master Power working overhead will one day remove all obstacles, and your cherished goal will be achieved.[120] But the time factor is a necessity, patience is a necessity, perseverance is a necessity. It will not happen in one day.[121]

Simran

SIMRAN of the basic names of God has an inevitable influence on the mind. It leads to Dhyan, making the spirit forgetful of the world and worldly objects. In meditation nothing but concentrated Simran remains and from the great and deep silence of the heart (Hriday Kamal of the Saints; i.e., the Divine Ground behind the eyebrows) there issues forth a ceaseless Sound Current, which helps in pulling the spirit up, leading to the withdrawal from the body (without of course breaking the silver cord) and guides the spirit in its journey into various spirit realms. The luminous form of the Master always remains with the spirit helping and guiding it at every step. This Sound Principle is the link between God and Man and in this way an indissoluble bond and relationship is established between the Creator and His creation.[122]

The repetition of names at intervals has a significance as stated above. It is a safeguard against the untoward and impeding factors which beset the Path, and helps the sensory currents from the body below to withdraw to the eye center without any strain on the part of the child disciple. The attention should be riveted penetratingly

into the middle of what you see before you. If the repetition of the names mentally is done constantly, the attention will be divided. The gaze should be fixed constantly, and repetition done at intervals, simply to guard against any negative effect and help the process of withdrawal from the body.[123]

The basic names of God have the power to dispel the forces of darkness that may meet and assail a spirit on its onward journey. Simran of these names helps the soul both in the physical plane and supra-physical plane, one after the other. Hence it is imperative that Simran be done of such names as the Master Soul enjoins, for they are charged with a tremendous spiritual power which negative powers can hardly put up with, and from which they flee as from an enchanter driven. Immortal and everlasting as these words of the Master are, they bestow life everlasting to the soul in which they sink and take root.[124]

The sacred charged words carry the life impulse of the Master and their repetition with deep faith and single-minded devotion, feed the soul with gradual consciousness, and leave behind indelible impressions over it. Even if you fail to see anything within during your meditations, you should resort to faithful Simran, which will be like tilling the soil, to be prepared for the bumper crop of Spirituality, which will be watered well with the gracious mercy of the Master, and the Holy Seed of Initiation will fructify in due course.[125] As soon as mind begins to roam away, stop it by Simran (repetition).[126] Be strong in your Simran; it will remove all difficulties. You will

become bold and fearless. You will see within so many rivers, mountains—you will cross them by flying over them. Simran will enable you to fly over them.[127]

Withdrawal: Rising Above Body Consciousness

THE ABC STARTS where all philosophies end. It is a matter of seeing, of rising above body consciousness, of experiencing for one's self.[128] The highest aim is to rise into God consciousness. That will come only when you know yourself, who you are. You are not the man-body, you are dwelling in the man-body, the highest rung in all creation. We have to make the best use of it and that is: how we can be out of it. For this purpose, Masters always advise us to rise above body consciousness. "Learn to die so that you may begin to live." You will have the right spectacles to see through if you do this. Everything will appear in its right perspective. This is why all Masters have said: "Know thy Self!"

The withdrawal of sensory currents from the body below with the aid of repetition of the charged names or listening to the holy Sound Current as coming from the right side is the normal feature of meditations. You may understand it more clearly: suppose there is a roof with a hundred stairs and unless you cross all the hundred steps, you cannot reach the top, even if you reach the ninety-ninth. You are under the roof and not on its top. As you approach nearer to the roof, you have more and more light. Similarly, the withdrawal of the sensory currents up to the eye-focus demands complete cessation

of outgoing faculties and focusing the inner attention at the center between and behind the two eyebrows.

The sacred process is to be undertaken in a state of effortless effort. If you are completely riveted within at the eye-center and are not watching the process of withdrawal, you will find that you will be completely withdrawn with little or no effort on your part, without any feeling, just as a hair is taken out of butter. When you are withdrawn completely or even partially, you may see into the middle of what you see in front of you, and the intellect should be stilled for the time being when the inner vision will open.[129]

If you do your practices accurately, you will rise above body consciousness. The body is not you. You will begin to have experience of the Beyond. You have to leave the body. This fate awaits everybody and there is no exception to the rule. But with all that, we are afraid of death. Death is only a change, just as the sun sets on one side of the world and rises on the other. Similarly, we leave this physical world and rise into the Beyond. This is a practical question, and if somebody gives you a demonstration of rising above body consciousness, you should develop it from day to day.[130] If you just have that angle of vision by rising above body consciousness, you will always be conscious in knowing that this is not your home. The Home of the soul is the Home of our Father. We are fortunate in having the man-body, in which we can go back to the Home of our True Father. This cannot be done in the lower orders of creation. The man who learns to die, to leave the body at will, gets everlasting

life, never to return. All glory and beauty lie within you. The astral planes are more beautiful than the physical one. The causal plane is still more beautiful, and the spiritual planes beyond are the most beautiful of all. Those who have experience of the Beyond would naturally like to go there, but they are bound. Even the Masters are playing their role. They want to go back, but they are bound by order. They have to carry on.

In meditation, when you rise above body consciousness, the body gets complete rest, and your consciousness increases. When you resume the body, it is recharged and gets a fresh lease on life.[131]

You are fortunate to have been taught how to take up your cross daily so as to rise above body-consciousness and be reborn into the Kingdom of God which is within you. Learn to stay longer in the Beyond and enjoy the bliss of the Kingdom of God within you.[132]

Guru Dev: Radiant Form of the Master

ONCE THE MIND has been brought under control and it no longer doubts and wavers, "Then the Radiant Form of the Master appears within. There is no difference between it and the physical form. It is like a reflection in a clear mirror. But so long as the glass is not clear, nothing can be seen reflected."

The mind was indeed a glass, which when sullied by the muck-flow of worldly attachments blurred and hid everything, but the moment this film was cleansed, it imaged the Universal in itself.[133]

The term Guru Dev, therefore, signifies the self-luminous form of the Master, which is free from and far above his physical body, and which the spirit actually perceives with its inner subtle Light. When the spirit comes face to face with the astral Master, all doubts vanish and its labors get the crowning regard—the *summum bonum* of life.

This subtle form disengaged from the bodily form of the Guru is termed Guru Dev. It is self-luminous and lustrous with Light extending over miles and miles. Satguru or the Master of Truth is the Power of Truth or God that works through both Guru and Guru Dev. With roots firmly embedded in Sat, or Truth, he directly derives his inspiration from the eternal and unchangeable permanence, Sat, hence is known as Satguru.

Guru Dev meets and greets the spirit as it crosses the border lying between the physical and subtle regions by passing through the stars, the sun and the moon, spoken of in the Vedas as Devian and Pitrian Margs (Paths). This astral form is exactly like the physical form of the Master, but much more beautiful, luminous, and magnetic. Guru Nanak refers to this illuminated path, thus:

The Luminous Form of the Master is wondrously enrapturing and enchanting. Only a perfect Master can manifest this to a spirit.

This lustrous form of the Master always accompanies a spirit in the various planes, ending with Sach Khand or the Home of Truth. When His luminous form descends to the focus of the eyes, a devotee has nothing more to strive for. Herein lies the devotion of the devotee.

Half his success has been achieved, and hereafter the Master's astral form takes over the charge of the spirit with full responsibility for leading it to the final goal. Even the Saints also adore this form and derive ecstatic delight from it.

The manifestation of Guru Dev depends purely on the grace of God and one's special merits in one's progress on the spiritual path.[134]

There is hardly any need to imagine or visualize the Master's Form while engaged in *Simran*. Any such attempt is likely to scatter the attention. Then there is another danger in doing so. What form you conjure up, will be a make-believe, a projection of your mind and not reality. When one is initiated the Master resides in the initiate for all time. What is already inside will automatically come into view when you get in there fully and completely, though it may take quite some time to adjust yourself to the new surroundings, unknown before. God manifests of Himself more fully in some human form in which He is working without any visualization.[135] It is really a happy day for an initiate to meet his or her Radiant Master within. The enjoining by the Master of regular meditations and stressing the need for living a life of love and purity are intended to make the way clear for the initiates. It is not their efforts alone that will bring them success in their uphill task, but the loving and willing surrender and faithful repose with which they sit and obey the commands.[136]

Once the soul had won access to the Master in his Radiant Form within, its major task was over. The rest

was a matter of time. It could of course be taken directly to higher planes by the Satguru, but he worked out the progress gradually otherwise, as was the case with an insistent Pundit, the shock and strain of it would be too great.[137] When you join the Master inside, you will be able to perceive all things, from the beginning to eternity.[138] The Master talks with His disciple face to face in all the planes and gives him wise counsel in times of need.[139]

A disciple should never be content until he or she contacts the Master within, face to face, in His Luminous Form and talks to Him as one ordinarily does without. You should gather up all your thoughts to gain this end as early as possible, for then alone all your worries will come to an end.[140]

Difficulties in Meditation

Why is it so difficult to hear Shabd?

SHABD IS reverberating in all Universes seen or unseen. The human soul and Holy Shabd are of the same Divine Essence. Those who develop their Inner Consciousness by regular, faithful and accurate meditations can listen to this Heavenly Melody any time they choose to do so. The novices do feel some trouble in focusing their attention at the eye center and controlling their vibrations and thoughts carefully. Besides, those who speak much and waste their precious energy in idle and loose talk cannot listen to this Heavenly Melody. It is the inner single-minded devotion and attention which grants this rapturous listening. Practice undertaken with

perseverance and steadfastness invokes Divine Grace and the initiate can listen to the holy *Shabd Dhun*.[141] It is the scattered attention of the initiate which does not allow him to hear the holy Sound Current. Besides, the overwhelming attachment to worldly pleasures and sense gratification stand in the way. The Living Master is Love Personified, and as such, loving devotion to Him is the factor which makes for better inner contact of the Audible Life Stream. It is rather the tendency of human mind which does not relish being chained and as such it requires some discipline to be observed for having an inner conscious contact of the celestial melody. At the outset it is indeed difficult but by regular practice the soul feels an innate affinity with the Sound Current, when inner bliss is experienced with the grace of the Master.[142]

Q. Why does one put off practicing Shabd when it is so very essential for spiritual progress?

A. Human mind is fashioned as such by Providence that it resents silence and stillness at its center—back between the two eyes. It is an agent of the Negative Power attached to each human soul and relishes externality. It does not relish introversion. Besides, it is fond of sensuous pleasures, which cannot be eschewed easily. It is the gracious protection of the Living Master that He grants the conscious contact of this Heavenly Melody, yet the Satsangis do not pay proper heed to this most important aspect of spiritual discipline. It may be added that the dear ones who are engrossed in the pursuit of gross pleasures of flesh and matter seldom take to the Holy Path, and if perchance some of them may happen to be led

to the Master and be granted Initiation, due to some past karmic evolution, they do not relish this spiritual discipline.

Human body is just like a radio set wherein these Divine Melodies are being received by all living. The Living Master is the One who can repair our damaged sets and grant us the knob and wave-length at which this Heavenly Song can be heard. Regularity and steadfastness coupled with untiring selfless service in a spirit of dedication are the chief helping factors for practicing this spiritual discipline.

Mind has a varying set of tricks to unloose on the initiate for evading this listening. Sometimes it poses as a friend to coax the disciple by putting forth family obligations, etc., and the dear one is caught in the noose of attachment. At other times it stands up in tough fight like a formidable foe. Besides, the temptations of worldly pleasures keep the mind constantly swinging and wavering. The only point where it can find rest is at the eye-center, the seat of the soul. The putting off of practicing Shabd is an age-old malady of the human mind for which divine grace of the Master is most essential.[143]

You are advised to hold fast to your meditations with religious regularity even if you feel confused on mundane affairs or overtaken by your mind. Please note that these are the tricks of the negative power which keep the dear ones snared in outer confusion and results in the wastage of precious time at your disposal. Catch time by the forelock and never relax your mind to be indulgent in gloom or sadness. It is during these moments of sheer

bliss and harmony when your soul is charged with divine impulses and new vistas of right understanding open for your gratuitous joy.[144]

At present every soul has, on account of constant association with mind, acquired a tendency to flow downward and outward through the outgoing faculties. It is because of this, that she cannot catch the Sound Current (the Elixir of Life) within. A cup turned upside down may for ages remain in the rain but not a drop will fall into it. But if it is turned aright, it will get filled up in one or two showers. Exactly is it the case with the soul. As soon as the Master Soul gives her a contact with the life-giving Sound Current by turning it aright through the withdrawal of the sensory current, the lotus-like cup of the spirit gets more and more water of Immortality until she gets drenched through and through and is saved forever.

Mind, you know, is ever after pleasures of one kind or another. But the pleasures of this world are all transitory and have always some sting at the bottom. "Our sincerest laughter with some pain is fraught," says an English poet.

This renegade of the mind can only be subdued if some internal pleasure of rapturous strains of the Divine Music—the Word—is given to it in lieu of the external ones. When mind tastes the sweet Elixir, it is diverted from the worldly enjoyments and is subdued. The soul becomes free.[145]

You have mentioned regarding your introspection diaries—that when others are progressing on the Way, why should it not be so in your case. Meditation is a matter

of love and devotion; it is meant to cleanse the vessel of all inner dirt and filth. Unkind thoughts, temptations for revenge, a pride of learning and knowledge, lurking doubts and skepticism, distrust of God and lack of faith in Him are some of the formidable barriers that stand in the way and prevent His grace and blessing from flowing in. Meditation done in an accurate way and with regularity, giving proper time with love and devotion, does bring good results and in abundance.[146]

What are the waves which oscillate in the ocean of the mind? This happens because the senses are boiling over. From the eyes alone, 83 per cent of all impressions enter our being, and 14 per cent through the ears. The remaining three per cent enters through other sense organs. These impressions through the senses are so severe that they are perpetually at boiling rate; so our first lesson is to learn how to control the senses. When the senses are in control, only then will the mind be tranquil. When the mind is stilled, the intellect also becomes still, and the soul can have connection with the Oversoul. If you make three holes in a container, fill the container with muddy water, and then force air through these three holes, you will see that the water will churn and bubble. But if you put a little alum in that water, it will become crystal clear and still. So the alum of Naam will cut through the dirt of birth upon birth.[147]

Under the influence of the senses it is very hard to reach the gaggan (the seat of the soul in the body) or rise above body consciousness. If a man has even one strong desire, say that of lust, outwardly people may con-

sider him to be a great soul, yet inwardly, he is dancing to the tune of that desire. Outwardly he may be impressing people in many ways, but inwardly, he is digging deeper that very pit into which he has fallen. Directly or indirectly he is drifting away from the Truth, and whatever he has learned has become null and void. So I humbly repeat that to become a human being is very difficult, whereas it is not difficult to realize the Lord. But the attention must persuade the mind to leave the senses and become proficient in the science of rising above into the Beyond. When the senses are won the five enemies will not attack. The five enemies are lust, anger, greed, attachment and ego. Furthermore, if the ten senses are controlled, the Light is manifest in that soul. God's Light will fully manifest itself in that body wherein the five gross and five subtle senses are fully under control.[148]

Two very powerful forces are anger and lust. They rule over everything. If the attention dwells on lust, the soul falls very low; in anger the ego expands. The soul cannot be linked with Naam until it withdraws inwardly and rises above the senses. Our attention has instead become like an image of the mind. We want to enjoy all the low, worldly things, yet we say we want the highest thing of all, the Nectar of Life! It is all wrong—how far do we think we can go? Do one thing at a time; but do not remain under this false impression. One Saint says, "Where there is Naam, there is no kam (lust)—where there is kam there is no Naam. Two cannot remain at once—light and darkness.

Most of our precious time is wasted in indulgence of

jealousies, ego, scandal, criticizing, backbiting, possessiveness, etc. There are other degrading pitfalls, but remember that lust and anger are the most powerful, and a soul under their influence can never go very far within, for there is no tranquility, serenity or oneness. He who has no lust and anger is the image of God. Just think, the merest glance from such a person can still the mind and the undesirable things leave their hold for a while. The words that come forth from this rare personality are charged with his inner tranquility, so much so that men who hear them will also enjoy a serene stillness. It follows that air which passes close to ice will bring a refreshing coolness and the air which passes near the fire will give warmth. So whatever the inner condition of a person, so his words will be charged with that atmosphere—be it anger, lust, or a sweet tranquility. Out of the abundance of his heart, a man speaks.

Everyone, literate and illiterate alike, is trapped in the powerful grip of these two most damaging traits. You have been asked to fully understand this, perhaps a thousand times, and you still do not understand the danger. Still, when the mind suggests something, you say: "Yes Sir, whatever you say." Guru and God are very easily and quickly pushed aside. Very few people want to admit their mistakes, and with such conditions, salvation is very far away. To become a human being is most difficult; to realize God is not at all difficult. If only the soul would leave the senses and the mind, and come up above the body consciousness, it would achieve something great.[149]

The obstruction caused by petty things during meditation might be attributed to your sensitive nature. The reservoir of the subconscious mind is filled with worldly thoughts, impulses and instincts inherited from past lives. This must be drained out completely before it can be filled with love and devotion to the Lord-Master. Reverential humility and self-abnegation are ennobling virtues. The spiritual aspirants grow in Divine wisdom giving no credit to themselves as they revel in the superb bliss of Divine intoxication.[150]

Oftentimes ill health will not permit proper meditations. Such periods intervene in the liquidation of past karma, yet their severity and duration is toned down considerably with the grace of the Master.

You need not be skeptical about your progress, and instead be cheerful. You are doing your job and giving regular time to meditation. Each bit laid for the spiritual edifice counts creditably and will stand to your side in the long run.

Karmic liquidation is indeed a chief factor, for which the loving initiates are stressed the importance of disciplined life full of loving humility and piety. You will be blessed with increasing grace from the Master-Power working overhead.[151]

It is a natural desire of an initiate to rise high in the inner planes and meet within the Radiant and charming Master and enjoy His grace and blessings as well as the perfect peace and bliss of those regions.

Difficulties often block the Way. They must be over-

come. You have a Strong One over your head. Take refuge in Him!

Why should a child ever feel shy in writing to his Father? Everyone who has learned to ride has experienced many a fall. To fall in sin is manly, but to remain there is devilish.

Please do not be disheartened. Do avoid uncongenial society and be regular and earnest in your meditation. Do your best and leave the rest to the Power overhead and do not worry. No amount of worry will help you. Let Him worry for you. You do your small part in humility.[152]

In regard to your difficulty in concentration which you say has increased since your initiation, you will be able to understand this from a parable narrated for your calm consideration. Mind is just like a horse tied with the fetters of matter and normally it dominates the spirit. Mind being the agent of the Negative Power, is quite satisfied so long as one continues all efforts in its domain, and does not resent stillness and concentration. When the mind is attuned within with the holy Initiation from a Competent Master, the rope is cut asunder, and the soul is set free to travel back into the realms of peace and harmony, which are beyond the scope of the Negative Power. So the impeding forces make a futile attempt to harbor the efforts of the spiritual aspirant, lest the soul is completely dis-encloaked from the bondage of mind and matter. The factors with which you are confronted are the normal features of a spiritual aspirant. They work as a blessing in disguise when one's sincerity and

integrity are tested at every step, and one becomes more firm and resolute with the grace of the Master.[153]

You complain that during meditation thoughts of business keep creeping into your mind. This is because you seem not to have developed a proper habit of doing meditation correctly. I find that you have certain debts to clear, and that you must discharge your duties as a husband and as a father, and this requires that you work hard in your business. You should do this earnestly. Work is worship. But after a day's hard work it is time to draw a curtain. At that hour, maybe 8, 9, 10 or 11 at night, you should forget your business entirely considering that you have handed it over to the charge of Someone else more competent and powerful. Then relax, and relax completely. And whatever time you have, devote it without a break to the spiritual practices with full faith and love and with as much earnestness as you put into your business in an accurate way. Do not have any clutchings. Let the Master Power that is constantly with you, working over your head, bless and grant what It considers best. You should have pleasure on your part and leave the results to the Master overhead.[154]

So what is meant by "not doing the practices properly" is simply another way of saying that the one-pointed concentration preluding complete withdrawal to the eye focus has not yet been achieved by the dear ones.

You are the indweller of your own body, but are not yet its Master. Your servants, the mind and five senses, have usurped the throne on which your soul should sit. Until they are dis-possessed and placed in their rightful

place as servants, they will not allow you to withdraw and go in. The Master within, like any loving father, is eagerly awaiting the day when you shall have set your house in order. He only requires one opportunity to snatch you from the prisonhouse of the body, and like an expert angler, once He has successfully hooked His fish, He will not allow it to escape until He has it safely in His basket.[155]

How to Overcome Inaccuracies in Meditation

I FIND THAT despite your best efforts, you are unable to have any perceptible inner experience. For locating the discrepancy and its cause, you should please find out the following:

1. Do you repeat the sacred charged Names orally? If so, it is to be replaced, though gradually and slowly, to the mental repetition. It may further be explained thus—suppose you met somebody some days earlier, and had a talk with him and you want to recollect it now. You will neither use the tongue nor speak again, but mentally you will have all the conversation repeated. This is the true form of repetition or Simran. The five holy Words are to be repeated mentally during meditation.

2. Do you remain conscious of the breathing process going on in your body? If so, it is to be eliminated as the breathing process starts from the navel center and ends in the nasal center, and as such you remain in the body during your meditations. This can be done by looking sweetly and intently within, back and behind the two

eyebrows, altogether oblivious of the body below or of the breathing going on in the body. You will agree that normally while doing work all day, reading or writing, coming or going, sitting or walking, eating or drinking, or even while talking, we are never conscious of the breathing going on. Similarly, during meditations, you are not to be conscious of it.

3. Do you feel any numbness or stiffness in your body during Simran practice? If so, it is equally important to be eliminated as discussed above. The sensory currents from the body below are graciously withdrawn to the eye-focus, not by the single-handed efforts of the disciple only, but by the loving grace of the Master Power working overhead for proceeding within. You should not watch the withdrawal process in the body but keep your inner gaze constantly fixed into the middle of what you see within. The practice of Simran is indeed a slow process, but when established with the grace of the Master, one reaches the eye-focus without any special effort. You will agree that it is the loving devotion and the anguished cry of the soul which invokes mercy and one gets attuned.

4. Do you silence your thoughts during meditation? Naturally, you will say "no." The silencing of the intellect is the last nail in the coffin. How it may best be eliminated is explained below:

You should not have any clutching tendency to have one thing or the other. Simply sit at the door and wait. This sublime silence is best and easily achieved by lovingly and humbly reposing in the gracious Master Power, to grant and bless you with whatever It deems fit. That

benign Power is incessantly with you and is quite aware of your earnest efforts. But so long as you are conscious of your actions, you stand in your own way, and when you lovingly eliminate yourself, He will manifest Himself to you in the celestial manifestation of Divine Light and holy Sound Current. It is something like inviting somebody to enter the room while blocking the doorway by standing in it.

From the above I hope you will be able to locate the fault and will be able to remove it, with the grace of the Master. I quite appreciate your yearnings, but the fact remains that He, the Great within, will surely bless you at the opportune moment when He considers it fit.[156]

What the Master tells you to do is not really difficult if you could but comprehend the simplicity of it. He tells you to sit in a position most comfortable to you, one in which you can sit the longest without moving; that while sitting in this position you are to remain wide awake with your attention directed at the seat of the soul behind and between the two eyebrows; that you are to look sweetly and serenely into the middle of the darkness in front of you, repeating the Simran of five charged names slowly and at intervals.[157]

If the dear ones were to do their spiritual practices correctly, with due regard to self-introspection, they would, as sure as two and two make four, rise above body consciousness and transcend into the Beyond, where the Inner Master is patiently waiting to greet His children at the threshold of the astral plane. But because they are unable to do this, even for a short while, they erroneously

believe their meditations to be barren of all concrete results.[158]

Dangers and Pitfalls on the Way

WHILE SITTING during meditation, one may forget the repetition of the five holy Names. In such a case mind and Kal (the Negative Power) can deceive us. So, to be on guard, do not leave off repetition when withdrawn or in a sitting. If the Form of the Master remains while doing Simran, the disciple should listen to and accept the words of the Master as true. Often if we fail to repeat the five charged Words, the mind comes up before us in the form of the Master to deceive or to mislead us. When the real Master appears to the disciple, He will answer all questions asked of Him. No deceptive form will remain while the disciple is doing Simran. If any reply is given by the Master in dreams, that cannot all be true. The Master's Radiant Form appears to the disciple while he is in a conscious state, and He stands during Simran. The Negative Power at times may tell us things, but does not stand before the Five Names. He may pretend to be our Master. Such words must not be relied upon.[159]

When the soul withdraws, it traverses with the astral body into higher regions and sees figures. At that time you should repeat the Five Names. The figures will disappear. Only such persons will stand before you as Those from the Fifth Plane, and from These you will derive some benefit. Soul traverses here and there and sees many

events which are transpiring elsewhere. But we should not waste our time in engaging ourselves in such things, as that will retard our spiritual progress. If you are regular in putting time into the spiritual practices, you will go ahead and surely meet the Master within, face to face.[160]

As regards vision, when you rise above body-consciousness, you may see visions in the astral planes. Do not engage in looking at them, but repeat the Five Names. Sometimes you may see lions and snakes appear. These are not forms of the Master of Love. A snake at times represents the mind. So do not pay any heed to it; it will not harm you. Sometimes the five passions—lust, anger, greed, attachment and ego, leave us in the form of a lion or little children. These things cannot retard the progress of a soul who is doing Simran of the five holy Names.[161]

As regards voices coming to you, you should pay no heed to them. Please ask the one concerned to appear to you and talk. If he turns up, repeat the Five Names. If he stands before repetition, only then listen to his voice. Generally, these voices come from the negative and should not be given any attention.[162]

To cross the mental world is not so easy as it may seem to the untrained in the mysteries of the Beyond. It is the most delusive world where even the Mahatmas and the Rishis with all their learning and tapas, fail to hold on to their own ground. What is there in that vast universe (of the three worlds) which Brahman would not like to offer to these earnest souls who try to escape through his domains and reach the True Home of their

Father! At every step, be it in the physical world, the astral or the mental, he tries to block the way of the aspiring souls. The great Prophets and Messiahs and all others have given their experiences of the fierce encounters that they had with Satan, Mara, Ahriman, the evil spirits—Asuras, Demons and their agents in countless ways, fair or foul, whereby they try to obstruct the way, to win over the seekers after Truth by assurances of worldly kingdoms and principalities; and if they do not succumb to these temptations, then by threats of violence by fire, thunder, earthquakes, heaven splittings, cloud-bursts, lightnings and what have you. It is in predicaments like these that one can only stand these trials when one has by his side his Guru or Murshid, for the Guru Power then draws and absorbs the disciple's soul into Himself and takes him along the path of "Ringing Radiance." For each soul the Brahman stakes his all, and does not yield, unless he is convinced that the seeker clings to the protection of the Master Power (Akal or Timeless).[163]

Please do not bother about the negative powers and instead dwell more on the divine protection of the Master Power by keeping yourself immersed in the loving remembrance of the Master. Love coupled with inner humility and self-effacement surmounts all such impediments whatsoever.[164]

Dry Spells

I AM GLAD to find that you are devoting some time for your holy meditations with the grace of the Master. The casual spells of dryness or vague feelings do intervene as a result of reaction of past Karma, when the child disciple should muster more of courage and determination in sticking to the sacred schedule or regularity. It may be pointed out for your information that during such periods the loving protection of the Master becomes more strong as you have felt with His grace. The holy meditations when undertaken in a spirit of dedication to the Master become more fruitful with His grace. Your earnest prayer for having regularity is appreciated. You should stick to your resolution carefully irrespective of mind's protests. You will succeed with His grace. Please note that the mind relishes the grooves of habit having formed out of its indulgence in acts of repetitive nature through the senses. You are to change its attitude from downward to upward, and all else will come of itself. You are to lay the line track carefully and the powerful engine will run on it with the same speed and velocity. Let your mind be attuned to the holy Feet of the Master —the Supreme Guide, and try your level best to abide by His Holy Commandments.[165]

The intervening dry spells in meditation which the spiritual aspirant finds sometimes are a blessing in disguise when the inner devotion is fostered for a higher step. You need not worry about it, but instead be earnestly devoted to your holy meditations with renewed zeal

and vigor. The gracious Master Power will be extending all feasible help, grace and protection.[166] Man is so constituted that he cannot for long remain at one level. He either progresses or slips back. You may judge for yourselves which way you are going by seeing how far your minds and senses are coming under your conscious control.

This is achieved not only by ethical living, but also by the inner help and strength you get every time you sit for your meditations. So, if no apparent inner headway is achieved, know it for sure that the ground is being watered. Every time you sit, you are creating a habit which one day the mind will accept as in its best interest, as opposed to its present habit of seeking enjoyment in outside things. Habit strengthens into nature, and this is the reason for the present difficulties experienced by the dear ones in their routine meditations. The habit of the mind in running after outside enjoyments has become natural to it. Therefore, it resents sitting in the quiet. By creating a new habit, you will, in time, change the nature of the mind from one seeking pleasure in things external to one thirsting for the bliss and sweetness to be had from things internal.[167]

Retarding Factors

THE DIVULGING of inner experiences to others except the Master or more advanced disciples affects one adversely and retards the inner progress. It has a significance. A rich man would like to control his hard earned riches lest it be noticed by others, who would become jealous of him. Similarly, the spiritual treasures achieved by the devotee need extra care and vigilance to be hidden from others so that the same may remain safe and well-guarded—just as a sapling is eaten away by a passing goat, but when it has grown into a stalwart tree, an elephant cannot uproot it. Again, the adverse thoughts of others do affect the disciple. Moreover, others growing jealous will not be able to give him or her proper guidance. The laws of the physical plane demand that each must behave soberly and must not exhibit his or her extraordinary qualities which relate to higher planes, and as such the disciplined devotee is required to cultivate tolerance and humility. You can see that one narrating his or her personal experiences many a time becomes elated, thus invites the ego to take the upper hand, and pride has its fall as a result. On these basic grounds, the Saints made a Law to be strictly observed by one and all that the inner experiences must not be divulged, except to the Master who is competent to give proper guidance on the Way.[168]

Moreover, one should be very cautious to avoid falling into carnal enjoyments as that darkens the inner vision.[169]

At the time of initiation, you would have been warned and clearly told about the things that tend to help the progress in meditation and the things that stand in the way and retard spiritual progress. They are recapitulated below for your guidance:

> "Disclosing inner experiences to anyone other than the Master, neglect from abstaining from prohibited diet (i.e. all meat, fish, fowl, eggs or intoxicants), gaps and defaults in any part of meditation, retard the progress."

You could not keep within yourself the new joy and beauty that the Master had given you and erred gravely in speaking about the same to ——. The reaction of ——'s mind caused doubts to creep into your mind. Be rest assured. The Master is always with you from the time of initiation, seeing and reacting to everything that an initiate does. St. Luke said, *Take heed that the Light which is within you is not darkened.* So now again with love and devotion, pray to the Master Power within to open your way. He will listen. He is not away from you. Your meditations will again become sweet. Great opportunities will open up.[170]

Mind: Definition

MIND-STUFF is made of a highly rarefied matter of *Satva* substance in the elements. Gossamer-like it spreads in the body with its tentacles deeply rooted in the senses, working through sense organs. Its base also goes far above, rooted as it is in the universal or cosmic mind *chid-akash*. It serves as a link between the material body and the conscious spirit or soul in the body which is enlivening both the mind and the body. Like fire, it is a good servant but a bad master.[171]

So long as the soul is in the mind zone it is a prisoner. It is engulfed by the mind and is subject to it and has to obey the dictates of the mind. The mind and the soul combined in their turn are locked up in forms—causal, astral, and physical successively. The mind feels shy of going in and coming in touch with the Sound Current, for there it loses its identity and freedom. Instead, it is prepared to go to the extent of sitting in trenches in the face of bullets to win a bottom victory, or will gladly face the risks of crossing the Atlantic to gain a name or establish a record.[172]

What constitutes desire? All conceptions in the mind are desires.[173] At present the mind desires those things it cannot get. When it realizes the Truth, the whole of Nature will be at its beck and call.[174]

Mind is nothing but a storehouse of *karmic* impressions coming down from the beginning of time in an endless series of incarnations. The body cannot but perform karmas, and karmas fashion the body and all that is of

the body and bodily relations. The entire world is a play of karmic impressions stored in the mind by the people of the world. This is why the world is termed as *mano mai shrishti* or creation of the mind.[175] The mind by itself is not conscious. It is the consciousness of the soul that the mind reflects.[176] Anyone whose soul is under the mind's influence and control becomes an image of the mind, for he forgets his true self. We call this ego or I-hood for one thinks "I am everything."[177] God plus mind is man and man minus mind is God.[178]

Intellect

What are the attributes of mind?

MIND HAS four facets or attributes: to wit, (1) *Chit*: It may be likened to a lake in which countless streams of impressions are imperceptibly pouring in all the time. (2) *Manas*: It is the thinking faculty of the mind which cogitates over such impressions as rise on to the surface of the lake in the form of ripples and waves just as the breeze of consciousness blows over the waters of the *chit-lake* and sets in motion an endless chain of thoughts one after the other. (3) *Budhi* or intellect: It is the faculty of reason, ratiocination, discrimination and finally decision, after considering the pros and cons as presented by the *manas*. It is the grand arbiter that tries to solve the problems of life which come before it. (4) *Ahankar* or ego: It is the self-assertive faculty of the mind for it likes to assume credit for all the acts done, and thus prepares a rich harvest of karmas that keep

one moving up and down in the giant Wheel of Life.[179]

All actions leave an impression behind which dull minds fail to decipher. Only when the mind develops, and this it does when we travel within and upwards, the memory revives and the record becomes intelligible.[180]

Q. We have been taught in our Satsang that all thoughts that enter the mind during meditation register on the astral and take the form of karma for us. Would you please comment on this?

A. The thoughts continue feeding the mind and register impressions in the Chita—the subconscious reservoir of the mind, and serve as seed karma to fructify at a later stage. However, the thoughts entering the mind during meditations become more potent to bear fruit at the earliest opportunity, and as such are considered more violently harmful than those entering the mind in the normal waking hours. It should be attributed to the inner concentration during meditations when the mind becomes comparatively more sharp and one-pointed. The listening to the holy Sound Current as coming from the right side with rapturous attention and absorption therein burns away these seeds of karmas and renders them infructious to bear fruit.[181]

Attributes of Mind

What part does intellect play on the path?

VERY LITTLE, where the practical side is concerned. But this does not mean that intellect is harmful to Spirituality. If an intellectual man comes on this Path and really gives himself up to the Master's Will, and does what he is told, then there is no better disciple for this Path than he, for there he has an advantage over an ordinary practical man. And that advantage is he will be able to give out the Truth to others in many ways in a language made with well thought-out words that will convince the intellectualists more easily than simple words uttered by a mere practical man.[182]

Q. Does intellect play any part in Self and God realization?

A. Yes, intellect plays an important part in understanding the theory of the problem of Self-realization. Once the theory is grasped, there is not much left for the intellect to do. Thereafter remains the practice, with heart and soul, to achieve the Goal by a process of Self-analysis, for the Science of the Self is essentially practical.[183]

Q. Can we penetrate into the Beyond by intellect?

A. No, intellect is just one of the faculties of mind, to wit, reasoning. The intellect is earth-bound and so is reasoning based on intellect. "How can the less the greater comprehend or finite reason reach infinity."[184]

Q. Can we be ever sure of God-realization intellectually?

A. No. God-realization is not a subject of intellect. It is a question of actual experience, beyond the pole of knowledge. All our talk of God is but inferential and at the most a matter of feelings and emotions all of which are subject to error. But seeing the inscape (with the inner eye opened) is believing, and admits of no uncertainty and skepticism.[185]

I would advise you not to dwell too much on ratiocination, for it tends to scatter the mind. This thinking-self continues to be with us for quite a long time, its range extending from the physical to causal states and until all these states which constitute the mind zone are successfully crossed, it does not drop off.[186]

For spiritual progress, stillness of mind and intellect is most essential. Any unnecessary wrestling with the intellect or free play of the mind retards spiritual progress. Concentration means the control of mental vibrations, and may be obtained by attuning within to the Sound Current which is the astral manifestation of the Master Power always present with you.[187]

Verbiage is simply a vehicle of expression when you try to put forth your inner-most feelings seeking solution for the confusion created by your mind. Each question carries a rational answer in its bosom. The human intelligence baffles at times at surface but if you endeavor to delve deep into the innermost recesses of silence of the heart, you will find ineffable divine bliss gushes forth from the fount of Godhead. Divinity dawns in deep silence—the seer becomes dumb and mute with overwhelming divine intoxication and relishes to absorb his

little self in Him—the Light and Sound Principles.[188]

Philosophy deals with theory, but mysticism deals with contact with Reality, because philosophy works on the intellectual level whereas mysticism works on the level of the soul.[189] At the level of the intellect you may remember so many things about what the Master has said and given out. That has no life; you are talking only at the level of the intellect. So Life or Consciousness is something else than intellectual wrangling or wrestling.[190] You may, however, know that thought is an expression of soul being an abstract attribute granted to the humans for smooth working in this world. But you have to transcend this realm of intellect by stilling it, when the divine revelations of Light and Sound Current will recharge your soul with divinity and result in eventual mergence with the Absolute.[191]

It is beyond the ken of human comprehension to gauge the grandeur and limitlessness of divinity. Your questioning is within the domain of intellect, whereas spirituality dawns when the intellect is silenced by loving devotion and reverential humility. It is during the silent and sublime moments of holy meditation when the child disciple is nearer to the fountainhead of bliss and harmony, and the rare boon of right understanding is granted with the grace of the Master. Regular feeds of Holy Naam will manifest to you divine glory in its pristine beauty. The initiates are invariably advised to practice the divine virtues which are helpful for regular progress on the Holy Path. It is a slow but sure process.[192]

Obstacles of the Mind

BETWEEN GOD and spirit, there is no other obstacle but that of a veil of the mind. If this veil were to stop fluttering in the breeze of desires, as it does at present, the spirit can take in directly the Cosmic Energy from its very source.[193] The mind may stand in between, but the soul knows what Guru is and what God is.[194]

"In the temple of God, the mind drags us downward, away from the Truth." It is because of the mind that we cannot partake of that which is inside us. It drags us down like a weight of iron. In turn the senses are dragging the mind, and the pleasures of the world are dragging the senses. If the attention withdraws from outer environments, leaves the senses and calms the mind, then only does it realize that it is soul. Have you understood this? Our mind is the barrier between soul and God.[195]

Q. Why does the mind forget the Bliss?

A. Forgetfulness is the chief attribute of human mind. It is due to the gross *Maya,* or materialism, that we forget the inner Bliss and are overtaken by sensuous urges. When inner consciousness grows gradually, mind forgets its lower pulls and relishes inner Bliss perpetually with the grace of the Master.[196]

Those who are led by their mind impulses are known as *manmukhs.* Such persons cannot rise above the body consciousness. They do try from time to time but always keep their minds above the Master, with the result that time and again they fall helplessly. If they could pin their deep faith in the competence of the Master and rely

less on their own intellectual reasoning, they could be blessed with this rare privilege of inner inversion to enjoy the supreme bliss.

Such dear ones cannot achieve inner stillness and silence. The Master tries to make them understand in one way or the other, but they are so much filled and intoxicated with their mental merchandise that they fail to comprehend the greatness and sublimity of the Holy Path. You will please understand that mind has its various grooves wherein it clings fast. Basically, when we try to sit silent, only then will we come to know where the shoe pinches. The alphabet of spirituality commences with inner silence, which necessarily requires solitude and seclusion. It is only during these sacred moments of silence that we can understand the basic principles of spirituality and imbibe their right import.[197]

The wiles of the mind are both very subtle and risky. It often lies in ambush and makes its inroads when least expected. The ingrained evil propensities though invisible are very strong, and time and again they come to the surface to deliver blows which often prove fatal. The coil strikes out like lightning, with such sharp and sudden twists and turns that man by himself is helpless in its clutches. Here comes the need for the long and strong arm of the Master, which stretches forth with equal agility to his rescue.[198]

Herein the Master once again reminds us that mind is very wicked and tricky, for it will not readily accept the gospel of the Guru, however reasonable it may be. Knowing full well that we cannot avoid the decrees of

Heaven by any amount of wishful thinking, the mind continues planning and maneuvering otherwise. Our intellect, finite and limited as it is, cannot possibly comprehend the subtle activities of the mind, which goes on thinking endlessly. The only remedy for taming the hydra-headed mind is that of the Holy Naam. By contacting the all-audible Sound Current within and the heaven's holy light, it becomes docile and forgets all else around it. This is the sovereign remedy for all the ills of the world, a panacea that cures all diseases of the body and mind. By administering to it regular doses of the celestial music emanating from the Throne of God, the mind gets rid of the lower propensities and begins to enjoy and take delight in the higher ravishing bliss of divine intoxication, which is the greatest gift of the Master. Never agree to the dictates of the mind as it has a hundred and one ways to keep you stuck fast in the physical body and the terrestrial plane.[199]

The hand of the Negative Power on your head will not allow the mind to obey you. He will go on increasing the duality to make it more and more difficult and confusing. The Negative will not help you to overcome this duality—only the Positive can do that. It is a marked difference between the Powers.[200]

The Negative Power puts two strong impediments which are encountered by the Initiates of the Master. Firstly, the mind will always be doubtful about the efficacy of Holy Meditations and one will start missing the meditations, and get devoted to alternative pursuits, substituting them with mere routine readings of the scrip-

tures and other sacred texts. Secondly, it will bring forth an argument that there is no more need for him or her to call on the Master, as Initiation per se is sufficient for proceding on the Way back to the Home of the Father. Complacency retards inner progress. We are living on a plane which is governed by the Negative Power and where the inexorable "Law of Karma" works supreme. The mind is the agent of this Negative Power, and in one way or the other, it will entangle you to be kept tied to the many limitations of the body and worldly possessions. Such a skeptical mind will, instead of doing anything useful, find fault with the Master and His Path.[201]

Negative Power has a vast dominion engulfing the first three planes and those who happen to fall prey to the allurements of their mind—subtle and causal—are caught in finer fetters or bondages. The Masters of the Highest Order, who came in the past, have left behind some useful treasures in the form of their precious experiences for our guidance so that we may safely tread in their footsteps.[202]

"Through the illusion of the body you also become attached to material objects, and the result is that wherever your attention is, so you become that. You are under the influence of the mind and senses, which are feeding the senses through the outgoing faculties, and the more you feed them the harder the mind will work and the more strength it will get."[203]

Herein the Master conveys to us another sublime truth by telling us that we have been caught in the spider's web, having prepared a vast net of attachments

for binding ourselves down in the mire of delusion and deception. You will appreciate that a spider weaves fine threads of its own secretions and gets entangled therein. Similarly, it is our own mind which has developed an unnecessary attachment with the physical body and its allied relations. Do you know what is the underlying basis of Maya or delusion? Its roots lie in the physical body from where it springs and spreads around like a gigantic Upas tree. We readily forget that we are ensouled bodies and not merely physical bodies. It is the soul currents which permeate through and through the physical plane whereby it is enlivened, and they in turn, get their sustenance from a higher life principle known as the Holy Naam or the Word. So long as that divine power is working in us, we are alive and as soon as that power is withdrawn, the whole structure collapses like a pack of cards, and it is then said: *Dust thou art and unto dust returneth.*[204]

It is better to guard the tendency of each other because the objective mind is very powerful in the physical plane and it is mutual Satsang only which checks out evil tendencies. Society of the people tends to scatter the mind. Mind is the most powerful, clever, and cunning enemy, and to release the spirit from its bondage it is necessary to break attachments from the alluring material objects, which are not ours and have been evolved by matter and Maya.

Human nature is the same everywhere. The Pindi Mind does not like to be subdued because it has been free for so long and has become so much absorbed in

this outer world that it has not only forgotten the worlds within but has forgotten its own source—the Brahmandi Mind. Instead of controlling the senses it is now subject to them and thus constantly wanders from one subject to another without anything to rest upon. If by good luck it is comparatively free from the anxieties of life and hears of the worlds within and occasionally has a point glimpse of the mere outskirts of these worlds, then instead of going in and bearing mastery over them, it is—alas!—held out by "fame, the last infirmity of noble minds," as Milton calls it. The fame and honor given by people keep it out just as much as ears are held by sweet music, and the eye is held by attractive objects. In the guise of doing good to others it deceives itself and in ignorance knows not that the valuable time is being lost. First know thyself and then preach. It is not proper to teach of a thing when one has not the first-hand knowledge of it.[205]

Step by step the Master is opening up new vistas of right understanding by telling us what the root cause of this misconception is. He says that it is foolish for the human mind to be attached to outer fancies, infatuated by the colorful shell, and caring little for the sweet kernel within. The mind may be likened to a parasitical plant which has no roots of its own, but draws its sustenance from the host tree to which it tenaciously holds. In exactly the same way, the mind in itself has no separate existence per se, but is a sheer projection of one's mental make-up and is inextricably mixed up with the sense objects, through the senses. It, at its lowest level, is

bound to the body, while at its other end—the highest level—it is subtle enough to draw its sustenance from the soul.[206]

You must not feel disheartened and try to regain your inner happiness by doing your very best and leaving the rest to the gracious Master Power working overhead. Even the darkest cloud has a silver lining somewhere. He is fully aware of your distress and awaiting most eagerly to receive you within in faithful meditations. You are to be on the guard lest your subconscious mind is fed with thoughts of gloom and morbidity. It makes no distinction between constructive and destructive thought impulses. It works with the material you feed it through your thought impulses. The sub-conscious mind will translate into reality a thought driven by fear just as readily as a thought driven by courage or faith. Just as electricity will turn the wheels of industry and render useful service if used constructively or snuff out life if wrongly used. You are free to a great extent in this respect to be receptive to the thought impulses of faith, loving devotion, humility and self surrender, which will in turn bless you with peace and harmony. You must not dwell much on your confusion but meet every situation with courage. My love and blessings are with you.[207]

Befriend the Mind

IS THERE any good or helpful characteristic of mind? Yes, mind, like Janus, has another face as well. If it is trained properly by gentle persuasion and kindly words of advice, with a little patting now and then, it can be converted from a formidable foe into a valuable friend and a helping hand to the soul in its search to bring about this conversion, and when it is done, one can have no better help-mate than the mind. It has the capacity, chameleon-like, to take on the color of the ground where it squats and that indeed is a redeeming feature. When living on the circumference of life, it expands outwards, downward; but rooted as it is in the *Gaggan*, it is not impervious to the higher and holier influences of a Master-Soul to whom it responds and He channelizes it the other way about.[208]

The mind is undoubtedly our enemy and is too superior in strength to be annihilated. It is an innovation introduced by Swami Ji who tells us to make friends with the mind, which is an agent of the Negative Power and, in its present state, an enemy of the soul. Instead of fighting with it right and left and to no purpose, we may make the best use of the mind in a friendly way. You know that mind has a tendency to tread on much beaten tracks, that is, it creates grooves of habit and mechanically acts in a repetitive manner. Just see for yourself if you do something at a fixed time and continue doing so for a number of days at the same time, a habit is formed,

and after some time it will become part and parcel of your daily routine.

So this is the easiest way of overpowering this powerful idiot, instead of fighting with it outright in an unequal struggle. We can turn to our advantage this weakness by devoting regular time to the holy meditations, at the fixed time with religious zeal and punctuality. It will be seen that after some time, the inner revelations will arm you with something far superior, and the mind itself, which used to resent inversion, will also start relishing the same and gradually give up its past pleasures. The Master gives us a positive approach for the solution of this riddle, which is so easy and interesting to solve by making a friendly alliance with the mind instead of making it an inveterate foe.[209] Nothing can be gained by cursing the mind, for the mind is no small thing; so the Master's advice is to befriend it.[210]

The mind's habit is to drag everything downward, yet as your friend, even if it wants to hurt you, it will not do so. Under such an arrangement he might even cooperate with you. If he desires food, then agree—"Yes, I will give you food, but first let us do a little meditation, then we will have food." If you immediately refuse the food, he will be tormented with the desire for it. He is like a stubborn donkey; the more you restrict him, the more stubborn he becomes. It is a very accurate definition of the mind. If you make a note in a book, "do not read page so-and-so," it will be the first page people will read; they won't be able to resist the temptation! So make your mind a companion; don't fight with him.[211]

The Satguru advises the soul to take the mind along if it wants to return home. He never says to ignore the mind, or leave it behind, but that the soul should understand and make it agreeable. As long as man does not kill the physical mind and withdraw from the sense level, he cannot proceed. One must leave all sense attractions and rise above body consciousness, otherwise it remains impossible to go higher and taste the Nectar of the Lord. Excessive eating and drinking, and frittering away the attention on worldly sights, sounds and sensations—all these are outer enjoyments which deny one the bliss of the inner enjoyments. Lord Buddha said we should be desireless, for desire is but sense enjoyment. Only by stepping aside from all this can one truly take a step ahead. If you can take the mind with you, it will be easier, but if you forget yourself and your aim in the mind's enjoyments you will lose all desire to progress. Make it your companion, and make it understand the situation, for the mind is unhappy—so much so that at times it cries out in torment.[212]

Make a friend of the mind. It is our cruel enemy which will go on tormenting our life, but by making friends with it we take the first step toward gaining the desired control. If one makes friends with an enemy, he may not immediately cease his enmity, but it will lessen the lengths of his cruelty. In this way there are chances of his becoming stilled, during which time you will be more awakened.[213]

So it is possible to gain control over the mind only in the company of a Satguru. He will help you to befriend

it, and so make the path easier. Then it may start to listen to you, whereas it usually does not. Many find this difficulty in meditation, and say that their mind does not allow them to meditate. With love, make it your companion. Love is such a magnificent thing, that it can control even the worst charactered person. No matter how much you may hate your pitiful situation, yet hate will only serve to increase the problem. You may throw all the filth out of a dirty house, yet the smell of that will spread and permeate not only the interior of the house but the surroundings too. The true solution is to start washing with the water of Love and gradually the badness will be washed away forever. If you are good to your enemy, his enmity will be softened somewhat.[214]

Because of its vast area of rule, everyone is under the mind's control, so among those who practice meditation, very few rise above even the first region. Even fewer rise above the second, and to rise above the third is really something rare.[215]

Stilling the Mind

MIND IS ACCUSTOMED from ages to hop about and live on things of the outer world. The more it goes out the more it is scattered and the less peaceful it is. Peace comes from within and not from without. One must invert within to get it. You have been given the way for inversion and staying on within to enjoy peace and bliss in the Higher Planes. Outer life and inner progress go hand in hand. No spiritual progress can be made

without ethical living—great stress is, therefore, laid on the latter. You need not be frustrated. Everything will come in due time by the Grace of the Master. Time factor is necessary. Please do not be impatient, but carry on your job steadfastly and lovingly with faith in the Master Power. The inner experiences will increase from day to day. Work is worship. During the day when you are busy in your worldly vocation, please be fully devoted to it with diligence so that your mind is fully absorbed in the work you do. Should, however, there be any moments when your mind is free, those moments should be utilized in repeating the five Holy Names or sweetly thinking of the Master or listening to the Sound Current, if that has developed. All this may seem difficult in the beginning, but slowly and slowly the mind gets into the habit and soon it begins to like and enjoy the meditations and this sort of truthful and straight life. The outer failings are to be viewed with a keen eye and the failures are to be removed from day to day.[216]

There is a sound of Truth vibrating within—a song which is sung in every being. There is a great attraction in hearing this Sound, through which all other attractions will fade away, and the stage of senses will be left behind: one becomes free of them. This mouse-mind has become heavy by drinking the weight of God's Name. The mind can be weighted down by the mercury-like quality of the Naam, rendering it impossible to run around loose or engage in its ever constant oscillation. There is no other means of controlling the mind. The accounts of Lord Krishna's life state that he jumped into

the River Jumna and controlled the hydra-headed serpent there with the sound of his flute. This many-headed serpent is the mind, which has a thousand ways of inflicting its poison, and without that Sound from the Beyond, it cannot be controlled or overcome. Outer intellect and knowledge have no power over it, for though it may remain quiet for a short time, it will then run away again. If you cover a fire with ashes, it would seem there is no fire at all, yet a strong breeze will revive it and reveal the heat lying beneath. However, if you throw water upon it, even a thousand tornadoes would fail to revive it.[217]

Brave is he who has control over his mind and senses, for the inward progress is in proportion to this control. It is the repetition that brings the mind in and the Sound Current that pulls it up.[218] Please try to still the vibration of the mind, and when it stands collected in the eyes you will pass on to the regions of light.[219]

But they could benefit still further from mastery of the mind if they could but learn the sacred technique of self-analysis and withdrawal of the sensory currents from the body. Herein you will certainly agree with Swami Ji, who says that the human mind is gravely foolish in having fallen prey to the outer sense enjoyments and is endlessly entangled in worry and misery. You know that the mind, at present, resents inner silence and stillness, as it has a tendency to roam without for aeons and aeons without end. You can keep it engaged in outer pursuits for hours at a time, but if you were to attempt inner silence and stillness, it would cry out and run riot,

for then it behaves like a small babe who, when locked in a dark cell, shrieks, cries, and knocks to get out.

Now, if the baby were provided with some sweets to eat and toys to play with, it would stop crying. Exactly similar is the case with the human mind.

The Living Master holds the key into the Beyond; and when he provides the child disciple with inner links of divinity which carry him into higher regions, the latter gets a feeling of satisfaction. You know that the inner bliss is supreme and unrivaled. There is nothing similar to it on earth, but alas! the mind is so much intoxicated with the lust for woman, wine, and wealth that it fails to see and comprehend the greatness of the spiritual beatitude within. But patient and persistent efforts to keep the mind still will gradually unlock the treasures of divinity within you with the Grace of the Master. Always be buoyant and fresh when you sit for meditation and wait patiently, like a loving baby looking up into the eyes of the nursing mother.[220]

Mind is enamoured of pleasures and runs after them whenever and wherever they can be found. It is stilled in the physical presence of the Master. It is by His Divine Radiation that the souls are attracted towards Him, and the mind which gets consciousness from the soul is stilled for the time being. Tulsi Sahib says:

The attention or the outer expression of soul
is controlled in the company of a Sadh.
It is only then that the mind attains some stillness.

But pleasures of the flesh are quite different from true

happiness born of inner peace in the soul. If the mind is provided with the appetency to relish something sublime, and gets an opportunity of doing so, it knows the value of real happiness, with the result that the sense pleasures lose all their charm, and thereafter seem insipid and valueless.[221]

All dedicated work is worship. Great is man and Providence has blessed everyone with untold energy and strength which if properly harnessed can bring in desired results. Just learn to do one thing at a time and that too with single-minded attention and devotion. Ordinarily the suns rays do not burn, but when the same are passed through a convex lens, these become so powerful that they burn anything placed in their range. Similar is the case with concentrated attention which will enable you to progress in every sphere of your life including meditation. Please be rest assured my love and blessings are always with you in all noble undertakings and enterprises.

In proportion to the loosening of the union of mind with matter, the union of mind with soul strengthens. Carefully, therefore, examine the tendencies of the mind and study its weaknesses, and try to overcome them. So long as there is dirt in the mind it cannot stay within. Its attachments draw it out. Whichever pan of the balance is loaded, that pan goes downwards. Mind is our enemy and like an enemy its movements should be watched. The whole world—man, animal, bird, or insect—dances to the tune of the mind. Every creature is being tossed up and down by it. The only place when mind dances

is when it is brought before the Current. Only then it becomes helpless. It cannot be controlled by the study of scriptures nor by the performance of austerities; neither the soldier nor the warrior nor the conqueror nor the moralist have succeeded against it. He who ever succeeded against it did so by catching the Sound Current.[223]

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