THE TEACHINGS OF KIRPAL SINGH
Volume II

SELF-INTROSPECTION & MEDITATION

Compiled and selected from the writings of Kirpal Singh
by Ruth Seader

RUHANI SATSANG
DIVINE SCIENCE OF THE SOUL

Preface

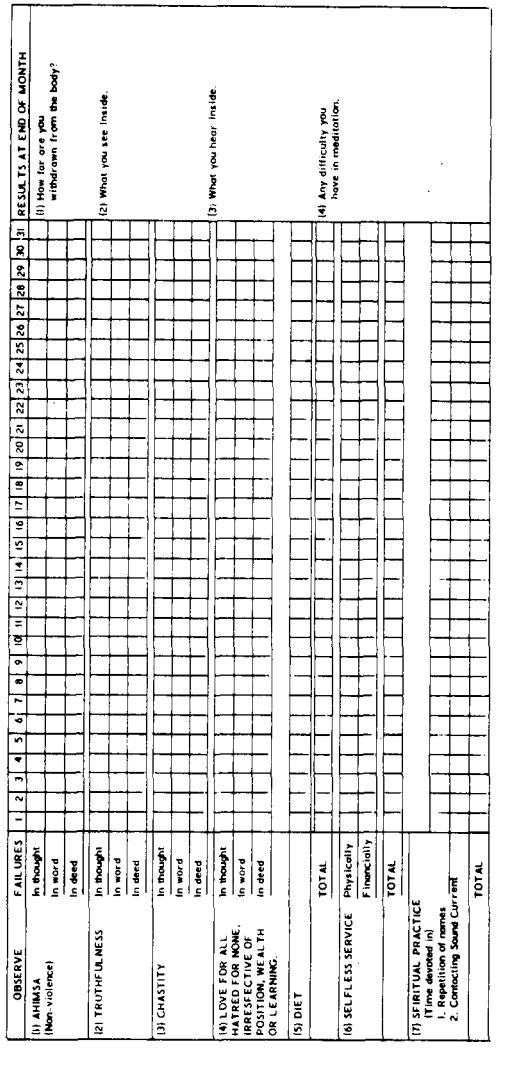
from *Seven Paths to Perfection*

A TINY SEED contains a mighty oak in its heart which can blossom forth into fullness by proper nourishment and protection. All young and tender saplings do need hand-watering, periodical weeding, fertilizing and protective hedging against the stray wayside cattle so that the saplings are not harmed. In due course of time the tree grows into full maturity, providing shade and shelter to the wayside travelers and becoming a source of help and inspiration to others. Exactly in the same manner, the Holy Seed of initiation thrives best in a rich and fertile soil formed of high ethical values and loving compassion. A divine stir by the Living Master of the soul in man is a happy start for the long spiritual journey ahead. Seekers have been therefore advised to do self-introspection which helps in developing fertility and in germinating the divinity to full bloom. The seven basic requisites enumerated in the prescribed self-introspective diary* aid immeasurably in covering the entire field of ethics, and help to invoke the Divine Mercy.

KIRPAL SINGH

* see following page

At the end of the day each initiate is requested to recall the number of failures in thought, word and deed, in the various columns of the self-introspection diary which is shown below.



DIARY TO BE MAINTAINED FOR SELF-INTROSPECTION FOR THE MONTH OF _____ INITIATED _____

for disciples of His Holiness Sant Kirpal Singh Ji Maharaj

OBSERVE	FAILURES	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	RESULTS AT END OF MONTH
(1) AHIMSA (Non-violence)	In thought																																(1) How far are you withdrawn from the body?
	In word																																
	In deed																																
(2) TRUTHFULNESS	In thought																																(2) What you see inside.
	In word																																
	In deed																																
(3) CHASTITY	In thought																																(3) What you hear inside.
	In word																																
	In deed																																
(4) LOVE FOR ALL, HATRED FOR NONE, IRRESPECTIVE OF POSITION, WEALTH OR LEARNING.	In thought																																
	In word																																
	In deed																																
(5) DIET																																	(4) Any difficulty you have in meditation.
	TOTAL																																
(6) SELFLESS SERVICE	Physically																																
	Financially																																
	TOTAL																																
(7) SPIRITUAL PRACTICE (Time devoted in) 1. Repetition of names 2. Contacting Sound Current																																	
	TOTAL																																

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____

HELPFUL FACTORS: 'Service before self' - Attend Satsangs - Love for the Master - Implicit obedience to His commandments - Self-control & Discipline - Humility - Sincerity & Longing.

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BOOK ONE

SELF-INTROSPECTION

Self-Introspection

Importance of Keeping the Diary

IF WE COULD learn to obey and keep the diary, we would become gods and goddesses.[1]

It may be that he knows his condition; he reads, he thinks, he attends Satsang, he makes resolutions, but always falls back into the old habits again and again. This is why I have advised keeping a daily spiritual diary. It is a method of self-introspection which I have introduced after much deep thought on the subject. If you would only keep it . . . even send it to me blank! How many months would you go on sending it blank? The benefit of this is a moral upliftment—this is a very sweet way of explaining it.

With time, methods change. In olden days, clothes were washed by thrashing them against rocks, and nowadays we have got to the stage of dry cleaning, without the use of water. Masters have used many ways through the ages, trying to induce an awareness in men of their way of life. Those who are not following this Science correctly never keep diaries.[2]

Spiritual diaries have been prescribed after careful thought, and with deep purpose. Daily self-introspection must be kept up, and through this you will be able to see for yourself how far you are coming out of the senses'

influence. With the Satguru's mercy one gets a little connection with the Light and Sound Principle, but if the life is not kept pure and chaste, the curtain of darkness will obscure the Light again. You must be regular in your meditation to maintain the Light; there are important reasons behind the keeping of diaries.[3]

The diary is meant for one's personal use and helps to bring out many of the hidden underlying weaknesses to the surface so that one may begin to see them and try to remove them one by one, and with their removal life becomes pleasant and spiritual progress is accelerated.[4]

The diary is planned to be a personal thing for the information of the Master and a helpful and sweet reminder for the initiate not to deflect from the right Path, and also to help him to progress from day to day by improving, and if there is no improvement, to ponder and reflect why this is so. It is a very useful thing.[5]

Initiates have been given self-introspection diaries, which they should maintain regularly and scrupulously. By this means they will be, at least, remembering the Master's enjoinders during the day. If they don't keep the diaries they will simply forget to act up to what they have been told . . . so this is one good of keeping a diary.[6]

The diaries show how much time you put in and how many places your heart is attached to outer things in one form or the other. Devotion requires purity of heart. Purity of heart requires that no other thought should strike in your heart other than of the One whom you love. If there is no other thought in your heart for anybody else and it is vacant from outward attachments,

then God is there. Devotion starts when you detach your heart from the outward things and attach it to God or to the God-in-man. This is developed by coming into constant contact with Him. The ABC starts by regularity of devotion to your spiritual practices.[7]

So those who are not keeping diaries must maintain them. I always again and again press this point. Those who are not maintaining diaries will fail constantly. In due course of time, their whole heart will be attached to the world. Outwardly they might appear to be very devoted, but they are really devoted to the world.[8]

Those who do not maintain the diary will lose valuable ground in making steady spiritual progress. In time, they will cease to apply themselves to their spiritual practices and in consequence the virtues stressed on the diary form will be observed less and less.[9]

If some of the dear ones desire to maintain diary for self-introspection (before initiation) such like dear ones will eventually benefit from the Holy Path.[10]

Self-Introspection and Man-Making

THERE ARE basically two stages to be gone through before the struggling disciple rises above body consciousness and begins to enjoy the spiritual disciplines and to firmly tread the Path of Spirituality. The first stage is where the disciple has little or no knowledge of self-introspection and is in a state of abysmal ignorance. The second stage is when the disciple begins to realize that he has innumerable faults and failings which must

be corrected before he can hope to rise above body consciousness, at which state this Path really begins.

This second stage, which is for most a long drawn-out struggle with lower tendencies of the mind, is known as "man making." Spirituality, or rising from the lower realms of existence to higher realms of untold bliss and harmony, is not difficult. It is the "man making" which is difficult. There is no specific time limit for this second stage. It all depends upon the disciple's aptitude for self-discipline, obedience to the commandments of the Master, and developing a love for Him. It is the self-assertive ego which is the last obstacle to be conquered, and this cannot be done until the soul begins to come into its own, has some glimmerings of its true nature, which has the result of developing in the disciple a natural humility. This is not to be confused with an attitude of servility, mind you. True humility has strength, but is nevertheless not self-assertive. Although the gracious Master Power is ever at hand to help the disciple in this struggle, it is something which the disciple must go through himself. Nobody else can do this for him. You have been put on the way and have been given some capital to start with, which still exists with you. A seed has been planted in you which one day must surely fructify and you have as your constant companion the Master in His subtle form of Light and Sound. He is also quite capable of manifesting to you in His charming radiant form when you have learnt to rise above body consciousness.

It is not reasonable to expect to attain to the higher planes without first perfecting yourself to a great degree.

As in worldly studies, in which it is not unusual to spend twenty years or more to obtain the necessary qualifications to fit yourself for a career, so even greater is the time and effort that must be put in by the disciple before he can be made a fit vessel to receive the truths of his own soul and of God. It is a very odd outlook that some have: to expect self and God-realization in a short time and with little labor, while the same people are willing to toil for years to obtain the pot of porridge that is all this world has to offer.[11]

In no other expression but the human form can a soul realize God.[12] The gods and goddesses are anxious to get the human form, and it means only that the human form is the highest in all creation due to its great spiritual possibilities.[13]

I would stress the importance of self-introspection, for which the maintenance of the diary has been prescribed. A keen vigil and careful living is an essential helping factor for inner progress. A disciplined life by having complete control over the senses, which feed the mind, which in turn overpowers the soul, should be cherished. The inner divine links of Light and Sound are most helpful for controlling the senses. If you will follow these divine principles, the inner change of life will follow automatically. Truth is above all, but higher still is true living.[14]

Adopt a righteous way of life and be content. You may have certain desires, but stop there; don't increase them. Then reconsider the desires and where they will take you. What lies ahead, and what will you take with

you? We are hurrying, scurrying through life; we are not even conscious of what we are doing most of the time. So the Guru advises us to handle all our affairs with tranquil serenity.[15]

When one undertakes to reach a certain goal in any field of human activity, it is necessary to take stock of one's progress from time to time. It is only through such stock-taking that one can become conscious of one's shortcomings and errors, eradicate and uproot them and plan out future progress. Having put our shoulders to the wheel of the Great Master's Cause, it is necessary that we should, in like manner, review our activity and achievement, from time to time. Without such self-analysis and self-criticism, no real advancement is possible and it was to encourage this practice and make it a daily habit that, in the case of individual initiates, I insisted (and continue to insist) that they maintain a daily record of their thoughts, words and deeds and of the period of meditation. What is necessary for us as individual initiates is even more necessary for us as members of a large movement.[16]

One must first think of the result before doing or even contemplating any deed.[17]

Fear of God is the beginning of wisdom and a danger foreseen is half-avoided. One who is forewarned, is forearmed.[18]

Everything will be given to you in due course of time if you follow His behests and live up to what He says. Every day you are given tasks which are intended to help your spiritual growth. Unfortunately, most people look

for a very special assignment to be given to them by the Master personally before they accept it as a task from the Master. They do not see that their day-to-day dealings and behavior with other people in their work, the responsibilities they have to assume in their other mundane duties and how well they fulfill them, are all tasks given by the Master. If you watch closely your reaction to situations that confront you in life you cannot but be aware of how much you have grown spiritually. This is the most important part of spirituality as far as the disciple is concerned. He must first complete his course in "MAN-MAKING" with full honors before he can be given higher tasks to carry out.[19]

Every thought, every word and every deed, good or bad, leaves an indelible imprint on the mind and has to be accounted for. Hence the necessity for right thoughts, right aspirations and right conduct, all of which constitute the hedge around the tender sapling of spirituality.[20]

What constitutes desire? All conceptions in the mind are desires. So, be desireless. You will have noticed that when an obstacle blocks the achievement of one's desire, anger arises. Then there is pride—"I must have this (or do this), otherwise I will be belittled in the eyes of others." One can accept pride as being the basis of all sins, for it turns into I-hood. He recommends us to leave off perversity, or stop being obstinate. Always be sure to listen to the other person's point of view—you may find that what he is saying is correct. Perversity just binds a person more; there is no room for expansion. Dogmatic knowledge of books, for instance, which might be right

or wrong, should be discarded. It goes without saying that all attachments should be broken away—you must finish up the give and take—you must leave the body and all its environments. If an obstacle comes between you and your desire, it grows even stronger. Just put a large rock in the middle of a fast flowing stream and you will create two things: froth and noise. When a man is angry he cannot speak softly, and finally he froths at the mouth. If you do get the thing you desire, it turns into attachment. There is only one cure for all this: Only after seeing your true self can you realize the Lord.[21]

Millionaires will leave their millions behind, those who have mud huts will leave them, this body did not come with you and will not accompany you when you return. Yes, you will take your actions with you.[22]

Is any thing else required to become reunited with the Lord? *Sadachar* (righteous living) is most essential. The mind that is running amuck in bad outer influences must be brought to heel; only then can any real progress be achieved. Our greatest obstacle is that the soul is under the mind's control, and mind in turn is under the senses' control. So release from this bondage is hastened by living righteously.[23]

We receive impressions from outside through the eyes, ears, the tongue, by smelling and by touch. So we must have self restraint. Such a man only can progress from day to day, by regularity and also by self introspection.

This is most important. Your very soul, the outer expression of which is called attention or *surat,* if engaged outside, makes it impossible for you to see within.[24]

With all this right understanding, what develops? Right thought, and furthermore right speech, and out of that right actions will follow.[25] If you can do this; if you can conquer the self and surrender it at the Feet of the Master; if you can learn to see Him working through all things; if you can accept the fact of your own limited vision; if you can undertake a ceaseless and zealous watch over your thoughts and deeds, weeding out all evils and imperfections—then you shall not only win salvation yourselves but enable others to do likewise. Your example shall shine like a torch in the darkness, and men, even those who may first oppose you, will turn to you for guidance and help. You will find a new sense of peace surging through you, a peace that does not depend on the absence of outer disturbances, but is an inner state of mind that stands unshaken even in the most tempestuous situations. And this same quality shall enter not only your individual lives, but the larger life of the great spiritual movement of which you are a part.[26]

Attachment

THE HUMAN BODY is the temple of God. In order to attain super-consciousness, one has to withdraw from all the physical attachments. So long as we remain identified with external objects, we cannot assume a subtle form.[27] All Masters say that when you have got a man-body, the highest thing is to attach yourself to God. Wherever you will be attached, there you will go. You have been coming to the world again and again. The reason is because you are not attached to God, otherwise

you would have gone to God. So keep your diaries and eliminate all foreign thoughts from your heart. Our heart is at present divided. It should have no other thought except of Him to Whom you want to be devoted.[28]

So generally, what do we do? We get something to start with and fritter it away by being attached to outside. The father will be pleased with the child who has made the best use of what has been given to him. If he becomes an honest man to be relied on, he will be given more and more. We find people who say, "We were very well off before, but not now." But why not now? We have made beggars out of our own selves. So we have to be careful. Self introspection is most necessary. Those who do not keep it, their capital will be dwindled away.[29]

Now you see how important it is to maintain self restraint. Make use of something when you want it. Now you are dragged irresistably to outside things. You have to live in the world quite detached. When you want to use one faculty, use it. When you want to leave it, leave it. It is not so with you now. For that purpose, you are given a contact with the Light and Sound Principle within you. When you get more bliss there, your outward attachments will be cut off.[30]

A man who is really detached from the world is not affected by it. Renunciation truly lies in the fact that we are not tied to the world, to anything outside. A man who has got love within him, love of God, is attached to God so much that all other things leave his mind, he is not attracted by anything else.[31] A heart that is not attached to the world never thinks of worldly things. One

who does not show failures under the different headings and who has a pure heart, then God must sit in it. He is already there, but He will become manifest.[32]

Self-Control and the Importance of Being Self-Centered

SO THE IMPORTANT THING is to first learn to handle your outer environment, consisting of your domestic and/or working life. We are to be judged by our actions and not by our words. It is from the abundance of our heart that all actions result, whether physical, emotional or intellectual. The mind is an index and reflecting mirror and it truly depicts one's inner state. A measure of success of how well you are succeeding in handling your outer environment will be a gradual awareness that you are becoming the master of your own thoughts. It is to achieve this success that I introduced the self-introspective diaries. How many really keep their diaries properly? Very few, if any, I am sorry to say. If the diaries were to be taken advantage of, you would see a change in your behavior, your mode of thinking, and, consequently, you would progress spiritually by leaps and bounds. The purpose of the diary is to reflect your own inner state, so that you know where you stand. It is a tool, which if used properly, will chisel you into a receptacle fit for the manifestation of the Master within you. You should put just as much devotion and attention into keeping your diary as you put into your meditations.[33]

Unfortunately, few, if any, have any idea of what

keeping the diary really means. As time passes, their entries become a mere matter of form, and the whole purpose behind keeping the diary is lost. We are asked to maintain the diary in thought, word and deed. How many of us really do so? The majority just react in thought, word, and deed to the stimulus of the moment, in other words, instinctively. The truth of the matter is that we must become consciously aware of every thought that passes through the mind; we must weigh our words before we speak and not speak idle words as a mere reaction to the situation that confronts us. If we are able to make some progress in this regard, then we will be far on the way to controlling our self. This in essence, is the practice of Raja Yoga. Only when we have advanced far in the practice of living the life demanded of us (as implied in the keeping of the diary), will we become fit enough to reap the fruits of the practices of the Surat Shabd Yoga.[34]

One can gauge his or her spiritual progress by the measure of *conscious control* that he or she has over his or her thought patterns. One who has in some measure achieved this control will not be swayed or upset by outer conditions, stresses and strains that his environment may place on him. *If one cannot rise above, be in full control of, and handle with ease the circumstances of his outer environment, he will never be able to succeed in the way of Spirituality.*[35]

To gain control of one's being, to bring one's whole life under that perfect control, to help oneself to cut away from outer attractions, requires self-introspection. Start

by consciously controlling a small fraction of your life. You will be able to succeed if you are also enjoying a little inner intoxication of Naam. All Masters say there is no success without meditation.[36]

It is we who give power to the mind. It is we who give power to the outgoing faculties. It is we who see good or bad outside. If we become self-centered, we may make the best use of our outgoing faculties however we like.[37] Unless you become self-centered, you cannot avoid the influence of others.[38] We derive effects from outside and wherever our attention goes, we are affected by the radiation of those with whom we come in contact. If they are pure, that's all right. If not, you get their radiation.[39]

Victory over the mind is victory over the world. You have been granted the yardstick for measuring your spiritual attainments in the form of an introspective diary, and you can surely judge things for yourself and see how far you have advanced on the Path.[40] Man-making precedes spirituality. Unless and until you become the master of all the five senses, appreciable inner progress cannot be made.[41] *Control all Kama (desire), anger, greed, attachment; This play is loved by the Lord.* Kam attacks through the eyes, anger through the ears. Attachments come through embracing. Rise above all these, and you will gain connection with the Truth.[42]

The recurring failures in various columns of the diary shows that you remain too much engrossed in worldly affairs, which should be reduced by keeping yourself immersed in the divine grace. Silence, solitude and serenity should be cultivated by living a life full of spiritual disci-

pline as enjoined by the Master. You can cut short unnecessary engagements and wild pursuits by keeping your spiritual goal in the forefront. A well regulated life earns rich dividends.[43]

Every action has a reaction. Every act of omission or commission has an appropriate penalty. We cannot escape from sin as long as we consider ourselves as born of the flesh, for flesh is the root cause of all evils in the world. Until a spirit learns to leave the sensual plane at will, enjoyments and distractions do thrive like a bay tree.[44]

Every day brings in a new life full of vast opportunities. You must not apprehend any fears whatsoever and instead try to harness your faculties for attaining the goal of spiritual perfection. Take and accept life with all its vissicitudes in easy terms of joy and bouyancy. Just face the situation bravely with mental equipoise and stability. The tree of life reared in storms yields more of cool shade and rich fruit. Failures should serve as stepping-stones to success. It is persistent effort which overcomes all difficulties.[45]

Change Your Ways

O MAN, it is the time now to discard your old, disreputable habits and adopt new ones. Habits are formed by repeatedly doing the same things, so we should first unravel all the bad actions: lies, hypocrisy, cheating, criticism of others, enmity, avarice, malice, backbiting, and various others. If you do not intend to change these

ways, what is the use of attending Satsang? *Your steps are forward, but your mind is retrogressing.* Satsang is the means of making us into something beautiful, but not by merely repeating God's name. Change your habits now into good ones, for habit turns into nature with time. Cast away all negative thoughts, and instill positive ones in their place. If a person does wrong, forgive him, and he in turn should forgive your misdeeds.

In the Koran, it is written, *Even God has no thought for him who has no inclination to change.* How can we expect other people to show excellent examples? If we ourselves would change, the whole world would change with us. It is a message for all. One of the worst habits is that of criticizing others. All virtues exercised in righteous living are good, but that of *ahimsa-parmo-dharam* (non-violence of thought) is the highest. It can become a daily habit, for it lies inherent within us all, and although other thoughts are there, yet consciously or unconsciously it is working and will rise to the surface one day. That is why you are told frequently in Satsang that the past is past, forgive and forget, and do not make a foundation of bad thoughts or there will undoubtedly be reactions. You will be the loser, for again you will revolve on the cycle of births and deaths. So with love the Masters encourage their children to change their habits while there is still time.[46]

Man is a conscious being and has been given the faculty of discriminating right from wrong. Where man falls short in this discriminatory ability, he has the golden opportunity of approaching some Master who can give

guidance and right understanding on the subtle points of his behavior and actions. The sacred books that have been written by the Master cover every facet of Spirituality and should be studied with a view to clarify how one should act in daily life. Other literature has also been issued on the same subject and the booklet entitled *Seven Paths to Perfection* should be carefully read by you for the purpose of knowing the ennobling virtues to be developed as opposed to the failures to be avoided, which are given on the diary form. You may take the virtues given in this booklet and the failures to be avoided as given on the diary forms, to be your blueprint for living; the rest is up to you. This blueprint can be successfully applied to any situation that may arise in life and as such, there is no need to write to the Master on every situation when a little self-honesty and application of common sense will show you the right course of action.[47]

You should know it for certain that you are divine in all respects and are the master of your destiny which is full of higher potentialities. You are simply to make exertion to change for the better, and firmly stick to your resolutions. All else is to follow of itself, as the Gracious Master Power is at your side to extend all feasible help, grace and protection.[48] The more one aspires to weed out the imperfections by daily introspection, the more serene bliss and grace come from above. Patience and selflessness are ennobling virtues. Right understanding is the basis of all happiness.[49] You should not worry about past or new Karmas. If at every moment you are consciously watching your behavior, a calm consideration will replace a

blind instinctive reaction to certain situations in life where the choice lies between committing a lapse in behavior or avoiding it.[50]

You should guard against the five deadly sins of desire, anger, greed, infatuation and vanity, and develop instead the virtues of truth, chastity, non-injury, universal love, and selfless service.[51] The paths leading to worldly enrichment and to God lie far apart. One can take either of the two, as one may like. The mind is a single entity linking the body with the soul at one end and the body with the world and worldly riches at the other. Thus one has of necessity to choose between the two alternatives. Once the die is cast, one has perforce to apply oneself steadily to reach the goal whatever it be.[52]

In short, the sincere and conscientious aspirant will reorient his entire mode of life, in eating and drinking, thinking, acting, feeling, etc. He will gradually weed out of his mind all irrelevant and unhealthy desires, until he gradually attains the state of purity and simplicity that marks the child.[53]

Make a wave of receptivity from heart to heart—this is the way to realize the Lord. Become even a little receptive and the Master in you will restrain you when you are in danger of going wrong.[54]

The dear ones should have their lives well disciplined and carefully regulated in the larger interests of their spiritual progress. One thing at a time and that too with single-minded attention and devotion. That is keeping the house in order. A kind thought will attract all

the kindness of the universe and contrarily a vicious idea will create a vicious circle by accepting all vice in the universe. A mango sapling will attract all the sweetness of the soil whereas if a pepper seed is sown a little apart it will attract all its bitterness; both the plants will flourish with the varying elements of Mother Nature, yet on the same soil. One is full of all sweetness and the other of all bitterness. That is the Eternal Law. Human heart is the soil in which good and bad thoughts are the seeds, which when sown carefully are sure to be grown gradually by honest and correct cultivation. You are to choose the best virtues for acceptance and inculcating in your life, when you can expect a bumper crop in due course. You are free to some extent and can benefit from this limited liberty by hard work, right living and regulated discipline. Just learn to implant lofty ideas in your subconscious mind and feed them with the waters of self-confidence, determination, diligence and adaptability. Stick to your guns. Never stoop low, never and still never. Stand aloof with your sublime principles of life which will stand by you in the hour of need.[55]

Hence it is, that mystics of all traditions have been untiring in their stress of the need for absolute self-surrender. It was this cross of sacrifice of the self, the ego, of which Jesus spoke when he exhorted his disciples to bear their cross daily. For in every little act, word, or thought, the ego is seeking to dominate us and if the seeker is to triumph over it, he must be prepared to crucify it every moment.[56]

To fall in sin is manly, but to remain there is devilish.

One falls often, no doubt, but one becomes a good rider only after many a fall. But don't lie down and remain wherever you fall; that is bad. In the Koran it is written that God will not change any people who have no thought to change themselves. Where there is a will, there is a way. Keep your aim before you always, and work for it; then you will be sure of success.[57]

Success in spirituality is not the difficult task which most of us take it to be or make it to be; but it does require patient self-purification, a watchful introspection, a careful weeding out of all undesirable elements present and a pruning of outspreading ramifications; and above all, timely tending and nurturing of the tender spiritual sapling as it sprouts from the soil of the human mind. This work hangs on the shoulders of every one of you and I am sure that you are fully alive to your responsibilities and obligations in this behalf.[58]

Until one can love, *obey* and transform one's life, the gift of the Master remains as a seed locked away in a steel vault that cannot sprout and grow to fruition.[59]

Time Factor

MIND IS A SLAVE to habit, and is forcibly led astray by it. Find for yourself what habits are obstacles in the way of truth. Get rid of them by and by and fill their place by good ones. For instance, anger should give way to calmness and avarice to contentment, and so on. By continued application, mind will give up bad habits. But note that mere theory of a thing does not help, unless

a thing is actually done. Mind is very powerful. At the time of deliberation, it makes promises but does not care to fulfill them when the occasion arises. To control it is not the work of haste; it requires years of patient perseverance. So long as it does not take pleasure in the internal music, it must fly out to worldly pleasure. Apply your mind with love and keen interest to the spiritual exercises, without any false apprehensions. One day you will get complete control over your mind and senses and find it is a great blessing.[60] But the time factor is a necessity, patience is a necessity, perseverance is a necessity. It will not happen in one day.[61]

The Need for Prayer and Effort

PRAYER AND EFFORT go cheek by jowl. We pray to God for what? For the success of our endeavors. Should we wish for a thing, we must try for it, and alongside our efforts to achieve it pray that God may grant it. Prayer is just the last weapon and a sure one that comes to our aid. *Where all human efforts fail, prayer succeeds.* As a bird cannot fly on one wing only nor a chariot move on one wheel, so effort and prayer must go together if we want success in all our ventures. One of them by itself can achieve nothing. As long as a person is not fully Divinized, or in other words does not become a conscious co-worker with the Supreme Power by understanding His Will, he cannot do without endeavor, for God helps those who help themselves. A mere prayer without endeavor seldom bears fruit. Just take the instance of a boy

who is late for school. If he were to sit down on the roadside to pray, he would be running against time. If he wants to gain time, he must run and it is possible that even if he be late his teacher may forgive him because of the effort he has made to reach there in time. To have a ruling passion for an objective and to work hard for achieving the same is the right type of prayer in the truest sense of the word. Effort should be combined with prayer, for mere lip service to reach the goal will not help much. In all sincerity one should pray and indeed the very striving for a thing with heart and soul is the greatest prayer and is bound to fructify. In all trials and tribulations, one must try to rid himself of his weariness and pray to God that He may help him in his endeavors. This is the only right attitude. If, in spite of this, you fail in your endeavors, then take that failure as coming from God for your good.[62]

The Master-Power overhead is always aware of His children's needs and yearnings and He acts in their best interests. All errors must be weeded out one by one, and when the child-disciple is doing his or her best to eradicate these errors, all necessary help comes from within. This effort may take a long time, but it must and will come about, and much earlier for those who are lovingly and faithfully devoted to the Master.[63]

A mere confession of sins and shortcomings in prayer does not avail anything. If we think that by mere confession our sins can be washed off and we can once again indulge in them freely, we are wrong. Such an attitude, far from being a saving force, keeps us perpetually down

in sins. Redemption is the gift that comes either from God or the Godman who specifically comes for the benefit of sinners. Our job is just to understand his commandments and to keep them scrupulously, leaving the rest to him.[64] Apart from the work of returning the lost souls to their Source through joining them back to God, the Masters have no other purpose in the world.[65]

A keen desire to improve spiritually coupled with earnest efforts brings in radical change in the thought pattern of the initiate and the entire life undergoes change for the better. You should be more steady, humble, and polite in your dealings.[66]

The loving disciple is always prayerful and repentant for his or her trespasses and lapses committed consciously or unconsciously during the day.[67]

Beg from the Lord and the Guru their Divine Vision, complete self-surrender and the gift of Naam. Pray also to be saved from the evil tendencies of the mind and the senses. Being Omnipotent, He is capable of granting us all these boons. Besides this, the seekers may pray for the gift of happily resigning to His sweet Will. We have no good qualities in us. Being ignorant and of low mental caliber, we are not well versed in religious ceremonies, etc. Therefore, oh Beloved! have mercy on us. Bestow on us the capacity to sing Thy praises and to remain happy in whatever be Thy Will.[68]

Purification: Repentance, Forgiveness, and Abstention

PURIFICATION: Purity of body, mind and soul is the most important factor in winning the love of the Lord. It may be considered in three different stages—Repentance, Forgiveness and Abstention.

REPENTANCE: Nothing under heaven is perfect and each one of us has his own weaknesses. Sin has come to man as a heritage from Adam. Mind in man is the agent of the Negative Power, and it misses no opportunity to tempt man against God. In daily life we slip at every step. Our best resolves turn into airy nothings when temptations assail us. Unaided, we cannot possibly escape from the cunning wiles, subtle snares and wild clutches of Kal or the Lord of Time, i.e., the mind. It is only the saving arm of the Master that can protect us and rid us of its terrible onslaughts. But every time that we fall a prey to temptations, we must realize our weakness and sincerely repent for what we have done.

FORGIVENESS: Repentance, though good in itself, cannot alter the past. Each act of omission or commission leaves its indelible impressions upon the mind and singles us out for its reaction or fruit. In this way countless Karmic impressions go on accumulating day in and day out, making additions to our *Sanchit Karmas* (a vast storehouse of unfructified actions). Nobody can escape from this tremendous load which has a far-reaching effect, extending sometimes to hundreds of lives and over.

Is there no remedy, then, to burn away the powder magazine before it blows us up? The Saints tell us that there is a way and a sure one indeed. Prayer for forgiveness is a positive weapon in the hands of a sinner. There is hope for everybody including the sinners. Saints come into the world to save the sinners and the lost. An association with a Master-soul goes a long way in liquidating the Karmic account. While He forgives in His Saving Grace our daily lapses, He at the same time enjoins abstention from repetition of the same. "So far and no further," is their admonition. "Go and sin no more," was the usual advice with Christ and Master Sawan Singh too, who used to advise his disciples to make a halt wherever they were and to sin no more. The past actions can be washed off, provided we refrain from sowing any more of the dragon's teeth.

ABSTENTION: While repentance and forgiveness help us in escaping the effect of Kriyaman or day-to-day acts, we have yet to guard against future repetitions. No purificatory process can help us through unless we put a stop to the incessant round of the Karmic wheel, which gains momentum from our every act.

At times a magistrate may award a lesser penalty for a crime but that may not ennoble the criminal. In the dispensation of the Master, there is always the stern admonition which is so necessary an element in keeping a person on his guard. Like a Master-sculptor, he has to chisel hard to bring shape and form out of a formless piece of stone.

In brief, it is necessary that we must first of all mold

our life according to the instructions of the Master, and feel a genuine delight in thinking of Him. Secondly, we must understand His Will and pray for those things that are to His liking; and thirdly, we must learn to accept smilingly His decrees whatever they be.

Last, but not least, love is the soil on which life thrives the most. Lover gives and never takes favors. If one tries to live a Godly life, all God's favors automatically flow down to him. One who loves God need not ask for any favor. It is enough for us to dedicate our very life to Him and become His bound slaves. It is up to Him to treat us as He wishes. To live in His Holy Presence is its own reward and there can be no reward greater and richer than this.[69]

How to Do Your Diary

WHEN AT THE END of the day, you recall your failures in thought, word and deed, in which direction will your mind be turned? Naturally, it will go to the One who has asked you to keep it. So keeping the diary is also remembrance of the Master; you are saying something to Him. If you remember Him, then, He remembers you, and, in time, you will develop receptivity to Him wherever you may be. There can be no true spiritual progress without receptivity, and the daily maintenance of the diary with full attention and a true yearning to be freed from the lapses which are recorded therein goes a long way to developing this receptivity.

In the Christian religion, I understand that those who

wish may make a confession of their lapses before a priest. They may go once a month or weekly, but generally not more often than once a week. But by keeping the diaries, you are making a confession every day. Let your confessions be honestly and openly recorded in the various columns, so that you know where you stand and can take rectifying action. The best and easiest way to cure your ills is to yearn to be free of them and, as mentioned above, to have sweet remembrance of the Master at the time you are filling in your diary.

Last and just as important as the foregoing, keeping the diary should not be allowed to stagnate into a mere recording of failures, which tends to become mechanical if done with little or no attention. The true purpose of putting these failures down in front of you is to make yourself aware of them so that they may be weeded out. To weed them out, it is not sufficient to cut off one or two branches; you must uproot the cause. Once you become aware of a failure, you should be able to trace it to a certain situation, and this situation will help you to identify the cause of the weakness in you which has to be eliminated. By and by, the very cause of the failure will drop off by itself.[70]

Now as to the lapses or departures from the right way, as you call them: the mind, as you know, works in subtle ways—too subtle for an ordinary man to detect and then to detect rightly and in time before the mischief is done. It is from the abundance of heart that all actions, oral as well as physical, proceed. We have, therefore, to be mentally alert about our thought-waves, so as to be able

in time to mark their ebb and flow and then by-pass them by the process of concentration, forgetting all about the mind and the mental states, including even the pure mind essence which gossamer-like envelops the soul. . . . It is the memory of our experiences in the distant past and in the living present that constantly and irresistibly follows us to our heels, and since we have not yet learned to keep aloof and above them, the lapses occur in spite of us. The enumeration process is just the first step to be cognizant of our doings, which we are likely to overlook in our self-righteous assertiveness. . . . Thoughts are to be watched which precede actions. It is a slow yet steady process of gradual improvement for which an all-out effort is necessary. A well disciplined and spiritually regulated life is very much essential.[71]

The Lord is not an innocent child, to believe anything you wish; He sees the true condition of your life, inwardly and outwardly.[72]

Personal awareness of the transgressions of the holy commandments, and immediate confession by way of inner repentance, are all helpful measures for inner growth and receptivity. However, recalling and counting such lapses at the close of the day, and jotting them down on the diary forms, has its own benefit when you regret such deeds and feel inspired to work for improvement.[73]

Pride and ego do not let us progress—when we make mistakes we will not admit them.[74]

The diary forms are divided into seven categories. The first six categories deal with the failures to observe the

virtues indicated by the heading of these categories, while category number seven is a record of the time spent in spiritual practices. In the first six categories, you are to enter the number of times that you fail to observe the virtues indicated, in thought, word and deed. For example, if you fail in "Non-violence" in thought, word and deed, four times in one day, you are to enter this figure in the column provided under the day on which the failures occurred.[75]

It is not necessary to write a confession to the Master every time you commit a misdemeanor. The Master Power is quite aware of the lapses of His disciples and wishes only that they become aware of these lapses and not repeat them. Let your confessions be honestly and openly recorded in the various columns on the self-introspection diary. This is the sublime principle behind the correct use of the diary form.[76]

If all initiates give a proper study to the books and Circular Letters and also attend the Satsang, there should be no need for them to write to the Master with any question or problem, the solution of which already lies at hand. All initiates should understand that to write to me on any problem or question but delays the answer, which could otherwise be known within a short time by following the advice given above. In my Circular of June 13, [1969] I advised the initiate who had some problem or question to which he required an answer, to sit quietly in a receptive mood, thereby attuning himself to the gracious Master Power within him. Then he would surely receive his answer and have full confidence

as to what course of action he should take.

If any initiate feels that he must have some outer guidance on the Teachings, he should discuss his questions and/or problems with the Group Leader or Representative of his area.

However, there is one very important point that must be born in mind by all, whether initiates, Group Leaders, or Representatives. This is, that Group Leaders and Representatives are there purely for the purpose of giving out the theoretical side of the Teachings and arranging facilities whereby the initiates of their group or area can meet together for Satsang. Group Leaders and Representatives are not to be used as crutches for the initiates to lean upon. Nor should the initiates look to them for any purpose but to help them in understanding the Teachings. In other words, initiates should not look to them for spiritual guidance in any shape or form, as this is the function of the Master. If an initiate looks to a Group Leader or Representative for spiritual guidance, he automatically places a blockage in between himself and the Master, and his spiritual progress will suffer in consequence.[77]

The diary forms should be a true reflection of your own inner state. The failures made should be as an open self-confession of the shortcomings which stand between you and the Master. Similarly, devoting regular time to the Spiritual Practices is an indication of the positive growth. If you live up to the sublime purpose behind the keeping of the diary, you will progress from day to day, and achieve your goal in this lifetime.[78]

Ahimsa

AHIMSA OR NON-INJURY to all living creatures, and more so to fellow beings, by thoughts, words and deeds—the injunction in this behalf being: "Injure not a human heart for it is the seat of God."[79] It is an ennobling virtue that brings each one to par with his or her fellow beings and ultimately leads to the principle of the brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of God. The cultivation of this virtue demands a broad development of toleration towards all, irrespective of their shortcomings and failures. To radiate the grand principle of the Family of Man on the divine ground of loving and compassionate desire for the well-being of all, costs very little but counts very much. A heart full of divine compassion is the abode of all virtues.[80]

I would like to impress upon you particularly to give up thinking ill of others. Until you make the enemy your friend, you will have no peace within yourself. Your sleep state will be full of restless dreams. If anyone thinks or speaks of you in an aggressive way, do not follow his example, otherwise his thoughts will react upon you. If a wave of water hits a hard surface, it will bounce back, but if it strikes something resilient, it will be absorbed, like the action of a sponge, and there will be no violent reaction. One curse is given, but on its return becomes many. If it is not returned, then? It was one, and remained one. Again, we remember Farid Sahib saying, *The whole world is sounding, and you are also dancing*

with it. It is better, with a cool head, to try and read between the lines to discover why the person is acting so antagonistically, and then take action accordingly. You will save yourself from degradation this way. To think or speak of a person badly, to tell lies or cheat, to be hypocritical, indulging in backbiting and other ill-becoming traits—these are all degrading to the soul. Keep your hearts pure, and as God is in everyone, try to see only the best in all. Whatever duties have been given to you by God, perform them with love, and if others are shirking their duties, appeal to them with love, and pray for their better understanding. Then, leave them to the Lord. If we always remember that the God we worship is in all men, we would not even allow a single brother to go hungry.[81]

Jesus always preached the two cardinal virtues: (1) "Love Thy Neighbor as Thyself" and (2) "Love Thine Enemies." Does that mean that it is out of timidity or weakness that one should love and forbear one's enemies? No, there is something moral and divine that lies at the root of such an attitude.[82]

So, love the sinner but hate the sin.[83] Purity mainly lies in not thinking evil of others, in thought, word and deed.[84] If you think good of others, you will radiate good. If you purify your mind you will purify the minds of others.[85]

Never hurt anybody. We hurt others by thinking ill of them. We think ill of others, we scheme. This is wrong, as thoughts are very potent. When you think ill of others that reacts to them like a telegraphic wire. You may not

be telling anybody anything but if you think of them, radiation is there.[86]

When one thinks evil thoughts or commits an evil deed, it strengthens the forces of evil. Those who desire to belong to God should feed the sacred fire with the fuel of pure thoughts, good words and noble deeds. This will burn away all else except God and Master.[87]

If you have any bad thoughts for anyone, stop them, and if anyone has wittingly or unwittingly harmed you, forgive and forget. There is no other cure. If you cannot forgive the misdemeanors of others, your progress will stop, for forgiveness and justice are different. Forget justice, and develop the virtue of forgiveness. Keep your heart clear; do not think badly of anyone, even if they have deliberately harmed you.[88]

Any time you feel overtaken with unloving thoughts towards anybody, you should resort to the Simran of names and think of the Master. You should develop the Christ-like attitude.[89] So the foremost thing is, not to think evil, speak evil or hear evil of others.[90] If you will cast out evil thoughts about others, all are friendly.[91]

There is no evil in the world. If it appears to be evil, it is due to the smoky or colored glasses that you are wearing on your heart or mind. You will find that if you think in the way that I have just told you, then naturally you will have respect and love for all, even for your enemies. They might think otherwise of you, but if you have thrashed out every evil thought within you for everybody, you will see with that angle of vision, which the Master gives you, that it is all the manifestation of

God; then naturally, everybody will be beautiful. You will see this beauty even in your enemy: A perverted view is only on account of smoky glasses.[92]

Become the seer and see the Lord at work in everything.[93]

We should learn to forgive and forget which is a golden principle of life for attaining peace and harmony so very much helpful for having a calm and contemplative mood, which, in turn, will bless us with successful meditations. He who forgives is twice blessed. Taking revenge is cowardice, but forgiving the lapses of others is an act of virtuous nobility. The initiates are advised to take the stock of their *karma* every day before retiring to see whether during the course of their working day, they have incurred anybody's displeasure or have wronged anybody. If so, they should repent and pray for Divine Grace. Similarly, if others have in one way or the other done any harm to them, that should be forgiven in the name of the Master. There is a very good example in the Bible, where it is said that before one stands for prayer, he should forgive the lapses or shortcomings of his brother who has wronged him, so that the Father in Heaven may condone his shortcomings. Evidently, we must inculcate such a sense of forgiveness by daily practice. We must forgive all who have wronged us before we depart from this earth-plane, which will be helpful for our soul's progress on the inner planes.[94]

If someone makes a mistake, forgive him. But people prefer justice to forgiveness. Remember this, that with justice, the heart is never cleansed. Outwardly a person

may be emphatic that he forgives; but in his heart he wants to strike out at the offender and cut the very roots of him. If you have no compassion in the mind, how can you honestly say you forgive?[95] To *forgive and forget* is what one must practice in thoughts, in words and in deeds so that they may become a part and parcel of daily living from day to day. Love knows no criticism, no imposition, no boasting, no reflection on others' shortcomings, but works in a constructive way to cement all in one loving fold of the Master. Love beautifies everything.[96]

We must all learn to look within and not without. It is far easier to see a mote in another's eye than to see a beam in one's own.[97] We must reform ourselves before we can reform others, but unfortunately we are always anxious to reform others. We should weed out all imperfections one by one by self-introspection and this will bring peace all around. Love beautifies everything and if we learn to love everyone, all our imperfections can be washed away, especially by loving kind words.[98] Kind words imbued with humility don't cost anything. If you have that attitude in life, I think ninety percent of your troubles will be avoided.[99]

The place where fire burns becomes heated first and then transmits its heat to the atmosphere around. So is the case with fire or anger. An imagined or supposed wrong keeps rankling in the mind like a thorn. When one cannot bear its intensity, one bursts forth into flames of hatred and contempt (begins abusing right and left), loses his balance of mind, and like a canker keeps emit-

ting a malign odor that virtually goes on polluting the atmosphere around. Most of the injuries and wrongs are the outcome of our own process of thinking, and such thoughts breed countless others, multiplying in geometrical proportion. We can get out of this vicious circle only by changing our attitude towards life. Why sacrifice our natural equanimity for mere trifles, for passing bubbles and vapory nothings that are things of no consequence? Instead of brooding over these supposed and imagined wrongs it would be better by far to contemplate on the higher aspects of life, the divinity within and the divinity without, for this world is verily of the divine and divinity resides therein.[100]

You will gradually have greater control over your feelings and emotions, such as vanity, greed and lust, and develop instead virtues of humility, contentment, chastity and love. You will give up your habit of judging others and start adjusting yourself to their weaknesses and shortcomings, either by overlooking or affording constructive help to them. By this adjustment, you will bring much sunshine and happiness for yourself as well as for all those around you. If you think with a calm and cool mind, you will realize that most of us have not become perfect as yet.[101]

In this vast creation, everyone is gifted with an individual perception. The heredity, the environment and the teachings inculcated, all combine to make one what he is. We cannot blame anyone for thinking differently in his own way. Everyone has his own temperament and his own way of thinking. They must differ and they do

differ vehemently. There is no help for it. It is, on the other hand, the sign of sentient life. We must not therefore on that account cross swords with them. Even if in their ignorance they, at times, may talk ill of the spiritual teachings and use harsh words, they cannot help it. But that should not disturb the true seekers after Truth. We must be polite and gentle and even humble in our conduct. Bandying of words does not help. We may try to remove misunderstandings, if any, sweetly and gently, but not in an antagonistic spirit. It is advised that individual persons (including representatives, group leaders and other old and new initiates) should not enter into any sort of discussions or disputes with any religious bodies, circles, faiths or sects, etc. If any such bodies do enter into such things, they may be directed to refer to the Master for an appropriate reply.[102]

A close view of the problem would show that ordinarily we are neither worried nor irritated when everything goes in accordance with our wishes. No sooner do we fancy that our interests are thwarted or feelings are injured, than a chain of reactions starts, resulting in violence in thought, word or deed, according to one's physical, mental or moral make-up.[103]

We aim to realize God, that God which is in all beings, whom all worship as One, though He may be given many different names. He is the great Controlling Power which keeps all souls in the body; when He withdraws, we also must leave. When a person truly understands these facts, how can the question of hatred for others arise? Whom will one hate? Out of right understanding,

true thoughts and actions develop and follow naturally. God is in everyone—if you know that someone is unhappy or in need, go and help them. If they are hungry or thirsty, share whatever you have. Because of God, do service to His children. This does not mean bondage, but rather it is a helping factor. Bondage lies in forgetting Him and tying oneself to the world and its environments.[104]

"Where there is compassion, there is religion. Where there is greed, there is sin. Where there is anger, there is negation. Where there is forgiveness, there is the Lord Himself."[105]

Truthfulness

To crown all these virtues, come truth and good living. One should in the first instance be true to one's self. The trouble with most of us is that our mind, tongue, and actions do not move in unison. We have one thing in the mind, another on our tongue and still another on our hands. "To thine own self be true, and it must follow as night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man" (Shakespeare). You are in the body; God, the controlling-power, is also in the body. If you are true to your own self, you have to fear none.[106] One who does not deceive the God in himself will surely not deceive others either. Before we can deceive others, we first deceive ourselves, and it means that we do not believe in His Omnipresence, otherwise we would not do these things.[107]

Truth is the greatest of all virtues; true living is greater still. We must try to lead a neat and clean life in the temple of the Holy Ghost and not defile it by falsehood and lusts of the flesh thus turning it into a money changer's den of the devil. [108]

So one should imbibe first the virtues of Truth. Lies, cheating, deceit, hypocrisy, showing something different on the face from whatever is in the heart—these things increase the corruption inside. Keep these facts in mind, for he who has no ill will against anyone will say what is true. His tongue will be sweet because he has no intention to hurt anyone's feelings, but rather speaks frankly for the sake of right understanding. Who speaks the truth without fear? Either an established enemy or a true friend, although the enemy may make a mountain out of a molehill because his intentions are dishonorable and he exaggerates. A true friend will never broadcast one's shortcomings, but with love will try to explain where you are going wrong, with your interests at heart. Imbibe the virtues of truth, and with love encourage better understanding in others. And what is more important, do not fail in your own good intentions and principles because of hearsay or rumors. Some tongues are led by selfish motives with little respect for truth. There is a purpose behind everything, which may be obvious or hidden. Do not therefore be a puppet to the tunes played by others; you will do harm to yourself.[109]

When a person tells one lie, then one hundred more lies must be told subsequently, to cover up that one.[110]

Truth does not mean simply speaking truth but it is a

righteous mode of life. Truth is above all, but higher still is true living. Our actions should be exemplary so that they show and denote that we belong to a noble school of thought, based on Truth, Piety and Love.[11] As God is Truth, we must practice Truth in all our dealings. If Truth resides in every heart, it must manifest itself in life and action.[112] Remember that actions speak louder than words. If you cultivate the habit of speaking truth, people around you will act likewise. Thoughts are more potent than words and even stronger than action.[113]

The Truth of Truths resides in the innermost recesses of the human soul and needs to be dug out, unearthed and freely practiced in all our dealings. The True Sound-Principle is the source of all life and it is only by contacting It on the Divine Ground that we become truly truthful and our life can be molded on the pattern of Truth. By practicing Truth and living in Truth, one gets clothed in the love of the Lord and freely extends love to all and sundry.[114]

Chastity: Brahmcharya

BRAHMGHARYA or life of Chastity: It includes continence in thoughts, words, and deeds. We must not cast covetous eyes on others nor entertain impure thoughts within, for "Chastity is life and sexuality is death." If we want to tread the Path of Life Eternal, we must be chaste and clean both within and without.[115]

You should please note that mind is the inert force yet driven and channelized by intellect when the sense organs

are made to function for gratification. It is the inner urge of the mind lying latent which arouses the intellect to seek enjoyment in sense objects, and unless the reservoir of this sub-conscious mind is depleted of carnal desires and passions, by prolonged discipline and meditations, it is difficult to overcome the lower pulls. Desire is the root cause of all suffering. Listening to the Holy Sound Current with rapt attention and practicing prolonged meditations on divine light shall bless you by ridding you of these desires. Self control leads to true happiness. Like a bird, desire finds a place while perching in the senses, seizing the thoughts, polluting the intelligence, finally bringing ruin to the spiritual aspirant in the mire of degradation. A pleasure which is bitter at the beginning but sweet at the end is worth our cherishing. You should try to imbibe these truths in all earnestness to arrive at definite conclusions for adaptability.[116]

The fake allurements of sensual gratification usually end in frustration. Carnal desires are seldom satiated by indulgence. Spiritual discipline and renunciation of stumbling impediments by careful consideration preceded by repentance, is helpful for spiritual progress. Infatuation breeds indulgence, whereas abstinence and renunciation bring in serenity and sobriety. You should know it for certain that mind is a very useful servant but a very bad master. It is the good grace of the Master that the child disciple is reminded by the gracious Master Power working overhead to follow the right course and those who abide by His instructions are blessed with success in evading the temptation and this monkey mind cooperates

with them for their spiritual progress. Contrarily, those who fall a prey to the allurements and do not heed the divine counsel are hurled down into the abyss of degradation, and the same mind runs wild in that direction. So you understand the basic necessity of following the sacred impulse from the gracious Master Power in entertaining sublime thoughts.[117]

Through passion, the soul can fall very low. The seat of the soul is high, between the eyebrows. And the seat of passion? Well, everyone knows where that is.[118]

Lust attacks us eighty percent through the eyes, fourteen percent through the ears and the remaining six percent mainly through touch. So how to maintain chastity? That's the point. You have just to control your attention. The mind and outgoing faculties derive their power from the soul, and the outward expression of the soul is the attention. So if our attention is riveted at the center of the soul in the body and we make the best use of the outgoing faculties, we will not be affected by what we see or hear. You might be looking at somebody but you need not be doing so with your full consciousness, even with your open eyes. Somebody might be relating long stories of vicious things to you. If you control your attention, even with your open ears you won't hear.[119]

When you look into the eyes of somebody who drags you up and helps you to forget your body, that is a criterion of what love is. That is why I always advise, "Don't look into the eyes of others except the Master's." This is the way in which lust attacks us. We are attacked by lust through the eyes. If you look into the eyes of oth-

ers who are imbued with lust or other lower things, you will have the same effect by radiation. Look only into the eyes of a God-manifested man and you will be benefitted.[120]

An impersonal deviated approach or slight relaxation in the observance of ethical code of morality in accordance with the sacred tenets of the Holy Path is likely to cause harm. Normal association and company breeds attachment. But when this is flavored with divine fragrance and relished in the Name of the Master, this is bound to have much deeper impact. Opposite sex has much stronghold amongst one another when the charm and attraction involved is too much to be resisted. This results in gradual infatuation and bondage. A slight slip can cause much havoc when the dear ones are hurled down in the abyss of sensual gratification. Divine love and sex are quite opposing poles. Sex is not only sinful, but a serious impediment on the Holy Path. It is by long cultivation that one can expect some degree of success in living a clean, chaste life. This aspect of life should please be kept in view by the senior members of Satsang when they can guide the 'young buds' in their larger interests of spiritual progress.[121]

By the observance of Brahmcharya (celibacy), we not only preserve the vital fluid of life (which is an invaluable asset in the physical body and can in no way be underrated) but it positively helps one in attuning to the Divinity, already woven into the very pattern of our life but lost in the mighty swirl of the world. The lost strands of the life-giving threads—the Holy Light and Audible

Life Stream—as manifested by the Master, cannot be held for any length of time, unless we are firmly embedded in the life of chastity. A vacant mind is the devil's workshop, and hence constant repetition of the Charged Words and remembrance of the Master are counseled. These act as powerful aids and help in anchoring the mind and keeping it steadfast in the otherwise tumultuous sea of life. It should be clearly understood that no amount of intellectual attainments or sophisticated reasoning can stand by you in an hour of tortuous agony, except the gracious protection of the Master.

Again, ripe fruits retain their freshness so long as they remain on the branches, but when once plucked can only be preserved either in honey or in some high-grade refrigerators. The personal aura of the Gracious Master is the embalming honey, and His loving protection, the invaluable cold storage, where one may find hope for liberation from this ancient malady. The lives dedicated to the holy cause of God have left behind records of their precious experiences which show in abundance that there is hope for everybody provided one is earnest in his or her endeavors, and provided above all, there is proper guidance and help from a truly competent Master-soul. As every Saint has a past so has every sinner a future, but nothing can be accomplished without the Grace of the Master-power overhead. The child disciple has, of course, to keep himself busy and occupied in something useful or at least in repeating the sacred Charged Names mentally, shunning bad company and uncongenial environment—like study of obscene literature and art—

and by avoiding looking into the eyes of others, particularly of the opposite sex, and in strictly taking vegetarian diet, conservatively cooked and in strict moderation. These are some of the helping factors which, if pursued steadfastly, can bring in sure results in due course of time with the grace of the Master-power overhead.[122] One will not suppress all sexual desires, for repression can only breed neurosis and prepare the way for downfall, but he will be ever seeking to sublimate it. He will understand that nature's purpose in this instinct is to preserve the race and will channel it so as to fulfill that purpose, never making it an end in itself, a source of physical pleasure, for when it becomes that, it turns into a drug that anesthetizes the spirit and begins to defeat nature's purpose of procreation by encouraging the invention and use of contraceptives.[123]

Besides, is it psychologically possible for the human mind to detach itself completely from its normal field of experience without first anchoring itself in another and higher one? It is a universal characteristic of man that he seeks kinship with something other than himself. This is the law of his life and source of all his great achievements. The child is bound to his toys, and the adult to family and society. As in the case of a child, you may not without harm deprive him of his playthings until he has outgrown them psychologically, likewise to expect the sadhak to give up his social and family attachments without first outgrowing them by discovering something greater and larger, is to cut at the root of life. It will not bring progress but regression for the man who

undertakes it as an enforced discipline only succeeds in repressing his natural desires. The result is not the enhancement of consciousness but its numbing and atrophy, not detachment but indifference.[124]

Continence is a virtue to be observed for success in all the spheres of life, be they mundane or spiritual. A clean and chaste life is a fertile soil wherein the Holy Seed of Spirituality thrives the best. It consists of restraint in thought, word and deed, as in each case the poison is injected into the depths of the mind and multiplies with the accumulated impurities of countless ages. To cultivate chastity is an uphill task that requires a long-drawn struggle through life—something very strenuous indeed. Fortunate are those who practice celibacy because they are in a far better position to follow the Path Godwards than those who are wallowing in the miserable mire of self-indulgence. A normal temperate married life as enjoined by scriptures is, however, no bar to spirituality.[125]

The Masters do lead an ideal married life and when they take up such a role, they stop such a course. So, married life is no bar to spirituality if led in accordance with the scriptures. The partners in life are advised in their best spiritual interests to observe chastity by leading a moderate life by mutual cooperation. The check marks on the diary forms are essential for the people seeking improvement gradually. One learns by self-introspection and careful living. The dear ones are not forbidden to marry or have homes. But, they should have ideal family life flavored with the divine grace of the Master Power. The young before marriage, should be asked to

lead chaste lives, as chastity is life and sexuality is death. A lamp burns splendidly when it has oil within, but if all the oil is leaked away, how can there be light?[126]

It would not be advisable to live together as husband and wife by the initiates unless they are legally married. It amounts to adultery.[127] You will appreciate that in close association it is not possible to curb sensual desires and observe a life of continence and self-restraint, which in turn will affect your spiritual progress. If a man comes out of a tavern while reading the Bible, what do you think the people at large will think of that?[128]

Procreation is only one insignificant aspect of married life. From the time of conception until a child is fed on mother's milk there should be absolutely no self-indulgence. Thus, once conception takes place, there would be a break of two or more years in sexual relations. This is what the scriptures prescribe. If one has just two or three children on this pattern, he is regarded as a chaste person.[129]

Married life is no bar to spirituality, if lived according to the ethical code laid down in the scriptures. Just in a sweet loving way induce your wife to prolong the periods of abstinence to achieve the higher purpose of life and ultimately come up to the standard as prescribed by the scriptures. I hope she will be helping you in the matter. A chaste life in husband and wife is a source of health, vigor and energy to them.[130]

You should continue to meet with your obligations towards your husband in as detached a manner as is possible. The relationship between husband and wife is

sacred and nothing should be allowed to come in between. Your loving patience and cooperation will help him to awaken to the higher expression of life in due course. My best wishes are with him.[131]

Chastity is life and sexuality is death. While I sympathize with you in your present situation with your husband, you should continue to meet with your obligations in as detached a manner as is possible. You should inform him on your own behalf in a loving manner that the vital fluid which he loses each time is extremely harmful not only for his spiritual and mental health, but also to his physical health. If, however, he cannot stop all at once, he should in his own interests try to practice more self restraint. With your loving help and cooperation he will be successful in this and to some extent, safeguard his physical health. Your advice to make use of the soul was appropriate. The body is the temple of God and should be made a fitting instrument to manifest the God in man and not be degraded to the practice of sensual pleasure.[132]

Unfortunately, very few people have the right understanding as to the importance of maintaining the chastity of life. It is because man is not chaste that he is under the domination of other vices such as anger, greed and attachment. If he were to control his sensual appetite, the other vices would gradually drop away. So chastity is the key not only to the spiritual life but also to success in every other field of endeavor. The pity of it is that the very people who could help their fellow man, such as doctors and the clergy, are themselves in the grip of sex-

uality and are hardly likely to recommend the practice of that which they themselves are a prey to.[133]

If you always think of the body, naturally you will think of the opposite sex. Christ said that husbands should love their wives as Christ loved the Church. Even husbands and wives should not think of one another as a man and a woman. They may have one duty of begetting children but that is not everything. It is mainly to have a companion in life for the purpose that both of them should reach God.[134]

Semen is the essence of our body. It is the driving force, a vital fluid. The more of it we have in our body, the more healthy we will be. One who practices celibacy is great and courageous enough to face hundreds of people single-handed. If such a man has spiritual understanding, he is a great soul indeed. Those who are deficient in this essential virtue, are incapable of any worthwhile progress. In the *Shastras* (Hindu scriptures) it is stated that to waste even a drop of semen is equal to death and to conserve it is life. Guru Nanak has also said: "Whosoever loses semen, loses everything."[135]

Q. Does loss of life fluid in sleep retard progress?

A. It does affect spiritual progress. You should avoid looking into the eyes of the other sex and resort to the *Simran* of charged names all along your vacant moments or loving remembrance of the Master, or listening to the holy Sound Current if it has become audible. Such a schedule will be helpful for the eradication of carnal desires. Besides, you should take your food much earlier before retiring for sleep, so that it is well digested. And to,

the hands, feet, and face, and also lower portion of the rectum, should be washed with cold water before going to sleep.[136] Also, you should say some prayer before retiring and sweetly keep repeating the sacred charged names and remembering the Master. If you sleep in this relaxed mood, no further disturbances will overcome you in this way, with His grace and protection. Thoughts create impressions in the mind, which seek release in sleep when the attention slips down into the body. These should be recorded on the diary forms.[137]

After all, we have to commune with the Truth which is already within us. For becoming a Satsangi (one who is linked with the Truth) you have to cease to be a *mansangi* (one who is linked with the senses). So we have to do away with our association with sensual pleasures to obtain the ultimate Truth.[138]

Who can rise above body consciousness? One who is unatttached and is not engrossed in sensual pleasures can do it. Only such a person can easily tap inside. Ethical and chaste life is, therefore, very essential. Even if the Master by his own grace lifts someone, whose life is not pure, above body consciousness, the latter will not be able to withstand it. It is crystal clear that there are two main obstacles in the way: passionate desires and anger. To lead a chaste life is not enough. We have to overcome all desires. In anger the soul flows out. Self-indulgence and anger lead to various other vices. Unless these two enemies are disciplined first, others—greed, attachment and egotism—cannot be controlled. One who succeeds in conquering all these five enemies is free from

suffering. The senses derive their power from the mind and the mind from the soul. If our attention is concentrated at the seat of the soul, the senses become powerless.[139]

It is only an alert and conscious person who can cultivate chastity and can attain higher consciousness. By practicing chastity one gradually rises into cosmic consciousness. When consciousness dawns within, one is not troubled by the sensual thieves—we are being robbed by the five deadly passions. In the absence of chastity and forgiveness, a thick wall of darkness comes over the soul and we are not our own. Christ has described this state as "death of the soul." What is death of the soul? It is the bedimming of the Light-consciousness in us. Attachment to material comforts lowers our consciousness. Consciousness increases with increasing awareness. Where does this awareness come from? It comes by cultivating compassion and chastity. See how important these virtues are, but we do not pay attention to them. We have already been blessed with his grace and also with the capital of holy Naam. Is it not our duty then to safeguard our capital? We should keep his commandments instead of doing mere lip-service to him.[140]

One who has found a Master, but has not become his mouthpiece (Gurumukh), has not yet freed himself from lusts of the flesh. After having found a Master, one must develop receptivity towards him. Who is a Gurumukh? One who has no wish of his own and lives in the will of the Master. Such a person is automatically relieved of all sorts of passions. As the Master is an embodiment of

chastity, chastity radiates from Him and penetrates into the disciple the moment he thinks of Him. He is full of compassion and forgives all. Only a Gurumukh can escape from all kinds of indulgences since he abides in the Word of the Master.[141]

Be true to Him Who is dwelling within you. If you practice the two virtues—chastity and forgiveness—you will find that, without much effort, you will attain higher consciousness, complete awakening and a perfect peace of mind. Thus, you will begin to radiate peace, harmony and tranquility to those around you.[142] Who are we? We have the God in us. We are all micro-gods. It is only because of our (soul's) outflow at the plane of the mind and senses that we have become degenerated. If we withdraw from sensual pleasures and divert our attention towards our controlling power, we would surely become its mouthpiece.[143]

You may go on meditating all through your life, but unless you practice chastity and forgiveness, it will not bear any fruit.[144] Chastity and forgiveness are the two basic and noble virtues of all. If we acquire these virtues, we will be successful in our meditation.[145] Now let us listen to what Sant Kabir has to say about purity of life: "When chastity and forgiveness sprout in one's heart, the invisible Lord becomes visible. Without chastity one cannot reach Him. Empty words are of no avail."[146]

From this day forth, we should resolve to lead a pious and disciplined life. We should have regular self-introspection by keeping a diary. You have just to become

chaste and you will find that you have developed supernatural powers of perception and foreknowledge of world events. And if such a chaste life is dyed in the color of spirituality, then the great capabilities of a person can well be imagined. As such, purity of heart and chaste life are the main prerequisites of spiritual progress.[147] Even if the person is able to find a perfect Saint who can give the disciple a first-hand spiritual experience, progress on the spiritual way is impossible unless we practice chastity and forgiveness. We should, therefore, forget the past and start leading a clean life from now on.[148] A celibate can reach his real Goal without making much effort. One who practices both forgiveness and chastity has nothing to worry about and will realize God.[149]

Chastity is the main source of all virtues. It is rare to come across a really chaste person. Nearness to such a pure soul produces a soothing effect and even his reflection causes an awakening. It is not an exaggeration. By virtue of ethical life, the body of a celibate is charged with the divine grace, tranquility and fragrance. Chastity is thus a great blessing. "Chastity brings all the treasures of the three worlds (physical, astral and causal)."[150] As you think, so you become. If your mind constantly dwells on a chaste person, you will unconsciously attract and imbibe chastity.[151]

Desire is the root cause of all our disturbances and suffering. You will become desireless by regularly 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.[152]

Love for All

LOVE BEGETS LOVE

LOVE IS THE panacea for most of the ills of the world. It is the core of all other virtues. Where there is love, there is peace. Love, and all the blessings shall be added unto thee, is the central idea of the teachings of Christ. The entire edifice of Christianity is founded on the twin principles of "Love thy God with all thy soul, with all thy mind and with all thy might," and "Love thy neighbor as thyself." God is love and so is the human soul, being a spark from the same essence. St. John says: "He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love," and, "He who loveth God loveth his brothers also." Guru Gobind Singh likewise laid emphasis on the prime need of love: "Verily I say unto thee that God reveals Himself only to those who love."[154]

Loving and selfless service to humanity is the cornerstone of all religious philosophies and no man can make any progress on the spiritual path without cultivating love within him. The seed of spirituality that the Master so lovingly sows in the arid soil of our hearts, has to be nurtured with the waters of love, if quick results are desired. We must transform the desert of our heart into a veritable garden of love full of lovely blossoms and luscious fruits. From our heart should spring an eternal fountain of love, so that whosoever comes in contact with

it is drenched with love to the very core of his heart.[155]

How can love be created? First, a desire is created within by hearing about it—and then by seeing a perfect Master. Masters are overflowing cups of the intoxicated love of God, so by just seeing them the love starts awakening in us too. However, if they also give the connection with the Lord within, then one can be assured that he is on the True Path back to God.[156]

One can accept pride as being the basis of all sins, for it turns into I-hood.[157] False pride of worldly possession or pelf, assumed superiority because of spiritual knowledge or intellectual attainments, vanity of earthly things and status may turn astray the mind of the spiritual aspirant, yet in course of time all these vanish into thin air. On the other hand, a heart full of reverential humility is a fit receptacle for His Grace, a receptacle which when filled to overflowing runneth over on its own to others. For a humble person no sacrifice is too great in the larger interests of spiritual development, whereas a proud person would endlessly await and even miss the chance when offered. Time and tide wait for no man. Human birth is a priceless asset granted by Providence in the ascending scale of evolution, and its highest object is spiritual perfection, for which all of us are here. Fortunate are those who are spotted, singled out and initiated into the Mysteries of the Beyond, and are linked with the Divine attributes of Holy Light and Celestial Sound. It is now up to us to "make hay while the sun shines."[158]

Love is innate in our soul. It radiates and should come in contact with the Overself, called God or Paramatma.

Instead of contacting our soul with God, we have contacted it with ensouled bodies, and this is called attachment. Love is that which overflows within and you forget yourself. This is a criterion to differentiate love from attachment.[159] If love keeps you in the body, attached to the body, that is not love, but is called attachment. This is the very fine difference between the two.[160]

Love one another for the sake of the Master. If you love for the sake of the man concerned, this will stand in the way of your love for the Master.[161] So love God and as God resides in every heart, love all for the sake of the soul and the Controlling Power that keeps the soul in the body, not the body itself. Then you are saved. If you serve others from the same level, then that is the service of God.[162]

One lesson that we can derive from this is that if we are devoted to God or to the God-in-man, then we must love each other. This is but natural. But any love which is colored with your personal interest or selfish motives makes you narrow minded. You would like that the person whom you love should be loved by you and nobody else. But if you have true love for God, then naturally all who love God will be loved by you. This is the vast difference between true love and attachment or lust.

So the difference between true love and lust is that true love cannot be broken even after leaving the body. This love is developed in the body but absorbed in the soul, not in the body and its environments. So this is called true love or charity. The other is called lust or attachment and there is a vast difference between the

two. Love of God makes us free, makes us all joy, all happiness, all bliss. Lust or attachment enslaves us, it makes us very narrow-minded. In the worldly way, if you love somebody, you will be envious if another person shares that love, but those who love God will also be loved by you, because they love God. So the love of God gives you love for all the world over. Love of the outside things will only make you narrow-minded, close-fisted, and the result is, one lives for God, the other lives for the world.[164]

To meet with your own wishes is not love, in the true sense of the word. That love gives you bondage and slavery.[165] Love is a negation of selfishness and will only pick up good in another, rejecting other things. Humility would mean service to be done in a humble way for the sake of service regardless of the position or even recognition.[166] Trustworthiness and tolerance bring loving cooperation, and selfless efforts bless the child disciple with reverent humility which is the most helpful factor on the Holy Path.[167]

There is only one remedy for all discord and inharmony and that is Love. He who has not mastered its secret, can never hope to be received in the court of the Lord. It is the beginning and the end of Spirituality. He who understands Love and its true nature and who lives and moves by its light, shall, as two added to two make four, attain the Lord.[168]

While we are walking on the path of righteousness, we discover that we are far from being perfect. Perfection comes slowly and requires the hand of time. It does not

matter to what faith one belongs, so long as we love God and our fellow-men, for our passport to the Kingdom of God is the love we have in our hearts. If we are students of psychology or metaphysics and are well versed in the laws of mind, and lack love and compassion for our fellow men, we are outside the Kingdom of God. It is what we are that opens the door of our soul to God and makes us His channel of blessing to help others.

Some people hope for a heaven in far distant skies, but heaven is a state of consciousness in this life. If we aspire to live and love divinely, we are already citizens of the heaven to come in the hereafter. For the Kingdom of God is a state of consciousness wherein we worship God with all our heart, and with all our mind and with all our strength and love our neighbor as ourselves. Religion is, therefore, a matter between soul and God, and all other forms of worship and religious observations are in vain unless we enthrone Divine love in our hearts. It is the temple of the heart in which we always keep the Light of Truth and Love burning.[169]

We have been put on the way to God because of our love for God.[170] Learn ye, therefore, to love all creatures as yourself. Live in and for the love of all and the Lord of Love shall reward you manifold in return for the sake of His own Divine Love. That is His Law, eternal and immutable. Try to cultivate a loving and a living faith in His Goodness and nothing shall stand in your way on the Path.[171]

Diet

WHAT WE EAT goes to constitute the body and the mind. "Sound mind in a sound body" is a well known aphorism. We can have neither one nor the other with unwholesome diet. A strictly vegetarian diet consisting of vegetables and fruits, both fresh and dried, cereals, dairy products like milk, cream, butter, cheese, yogurt, etc., is essential for all aspirants for Truth. We must therefore avoid meat, meat juices, fish, fowl, eggs both fertile and unfertile, or anything containing any of these ingredients in any form or in any degree. Every action has a reaction and flesh-eating involves contracting fresh Karmas and thus helps to keep the inexorable Karmic wheel in motion for we have to reap what we sow. We cannot have roses if we sow thistles.

The above prohibitions apply equally to all kinds of alcoholic drinks, intoxicants, opiates and narcotic drugs, as they tend to dull our consciousness and make us morbid.

"The body is the temple of the living God" and it must therefore be kept scrupulously clean.

Any prospective candidate for Initiation should therefore try the vegetarian diet for at least three to six months, to ensure that he or she can adhere to it when put on the Path.[172]

The observance of strict dietary regulations is very essential for steady progress on the holy Path and any transgression is liable to affect your progress. These rules

should never be violated even for the consideration of guests.

These are very small things but they have much effect. So a simple diet, a strict vegetarian diet with no spices, should be adhered to. Eat only as much as you need and leave the table still a little hungry. These are the things to be followed which will make you active in all your affairs, whether in meditation, physical work or anything else.[174]

The soul, as I have said before, is eternal, all wisdom and bliss. If it is all wisdom and full of bliss, then how is it possible for it to have any unhappiness in this world? For how long will it enjoy the outer tastes? We think that we are enjoying the enjoyments, but in fact the enjoyments are enjoying us. The god of food once went to Lord Vishnu [part of the triune Lord of Creation: Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva: the Creator, Sustainer and Destroyer, respectively] and complained. "The people are eating me up brutally, without any sympathy for me!" Lord Vishnu said, "All right, if anyone eats you beyond his needs, then you eat him up." Just think; what is the cause of all disease? Indigestion. We enjoy, and enjoy, and enjoy until we are no longer capable of enjoying anything. Then the enjoyments start enjoying us.[175]

Let half of the stomach be full with food, one fourth with water and let one fourth remain vacant, so that digestion will not be difficult.

The more your stomach is clear, the more concentration you will have. If your stomach is upset, then natu-

rally you cannot sit, you cannot concentrate. So to help you in your meditations, the stomach should be set. No overfeeding should be indulged in. Eat when you really feel hungry, not everytime putting in something. Two meals a day are enough, though you may have a little breakfast in the morning. Sometimes the Masters say that those who would like to progress more should have only one meal a day.[176] If your food is regularized you will rise up punctually in the morning.[177] Let the stomach remain partly empty. If you put more food in it than can be digested, naturally the things which are not digested will create disease. Eat as much as you can digest. Give some rest to your poor stomach. It takes at least four to five hours to digest anything. If you eat too much too often your stomach will revolt.[178] Eating habits can be corrected by careful living. You can improve by gradual adaptation and moderation.[179]

It is very necessary to distinguish clearly the ends from the means. To lay too much stress on the means is likely to make us gradually forget our objective and to become fossilized. Once we know, for example, that abstinence from all kinds of meat diet and spiritous liquors helps us on the spiritual Path, it is enough that we avoid them. But to take it as an end in itself is to miss the goal.[180]

You should be careful for your health as it is equally important to be fit and healthy for meeting with your mundane and spiritual obligations. Physical body must not be denied adequate nourishment.[181]

Your dog should not be fed on meat as it will contract Karmic debt for you. It can live on vegetarian diet all

right, just as you have switched over.[182]

The initiates should, as a matter of principle, be very cautious in their food articles especially when they have to dine at friends'. It is so simple to inquire humbly and discreetly beforehand and tell your friends that the prohibited food articles are not allowed by your Spiritual Doctor.[183]

All prohibited foods and drinks should be scrupulously eschewed even in the face of medical advice, as none of these can lengthen the scheduled life-span nor are, in fact, conducive to nourishment. It is certainly a wrong notion that flesh or eggs give extra vigour or strength; on the contrary, these things flare up the carnal appetites which in the long run result in gross dissipation of energy.[184]

If one adheres to a strict vegetarian diet, that will help a good deal in having normal life, but does not necessarily result in better tempers, controlled sex life or detachment from gross thoughts, desires and actions, worldly ambitions, possessiveness, lust or greed. Kabir says, "If you leave hearth and home and retire to a secluded place and live on pure vegetarian diet, even then the mind does not leave off its base habits." Alongside such essential and positive aids, we must religiously devote regular time to the spiritual practices of contacting the Light and Sound so as to cut down the ramifications of mind, which is so very necessary for self-realization and God realization.[185]

Drugs

IT IS AMUSING to note about the Utopiates (LSD, Marijuana, etc.) for producing hallucinations. You may please note that spirituality is the science of the soul, and the soul is a conscious entity in the body. The Way back to God as offered by the Masters is one of developing inner consciousness with the aid of Holy Naam (the Word). All suchlike outer aids resulting in temporary hallucinations, as stated by you, are certainly a mockery for the divine grace. You can well understand the vast difference between having a conscious and wide-awake approach for proceeding within and that which makes recourse to these outer aids which are no less than opiates creating sensational vibrations. You will recall that the observance of a strict diet by avoiding all flesh food, intoxicants and opiates, is a basic essential for inner spiritual progress, for attaining a refined state of mind. We have to develop consciousness, the divine attribute of soul, and for the achievement of (inner) consciousness, inner and outer piety and chastity are very much needed. The drugs are equally harmful, and should be avoided, which dull the brain and cloud the mind with vague feelings of distrust and confusion. You are advised to convey this piece of right understanding to all the dear ones who are on the Holy Path and to others who seek your counsel in this behalf.[186]

Do those who take drugs such as LSD and have certain experiences—are they valid experiences?

No, no, they are hallucinations. That's the death of the soul, you follow me? The consciousness is lessened, naturally they will have to go to the lower planes. That is all this intoxication starts, it is still more death to the soul. It is deterioration. Definitely going down to beastlihood. Even a snake is conscious but there are different degrees. Man's consciousness is more. If you use suchlike things your consciousness is affected. You will have to go to the lower planes.[187]

I appreciate your kind sentiments for your friends when you wish them to progress spiritually. The so-called spiritual experiences, had under the spell of drugs, are misleading and are rather likely to affect your inner progress. Spirituality is a research into the realms of reality—the consciousness.[188] Drugs, opiates and intoxicants should not be partaken as these will not only affect your health adversely but shall be detrimental for your spiritual progress. You should please leave off all such drugs and learn to live without their use.[189] It is the result of drugging which has resulted in this setback when you are to suffer from serious pains.[190]

Selfless Service: Physical

NISHKAM SEVA or Selfless Service to all living creatures in sorrow and distress: If one limb of the body is in torture, the other limbs can have no rest. "Service before self" should therefore be our motto in life.[191] Service is considered an ornament to a beautiful person that adorns and elevates his or her soul to be-

come a clean vessel for His grace. Service of any type granted at the Holy Feet of the Master is beneficial and should be cherished as whatever one does must bring its fruit in accordance with the Law of Karma. The secret of selfless service is to deny a reward or recognition of any type and on the contrary consider one's self as a humble instrument in the Divine hands which are the sustainers and protectors of all. All credit goes to the Master, yet the media of love are blessed with the superb Divine intoxication which is of supreme magnitude.[192] Selfless Service for the Holy Cause of the Master should serve as a beacon light for inner progress. It should not be a source of pride or fake ego which definitely become stumbling impediments and hurdles on the Path Divine.[193]

Selfless service is a great virtue and accordingly means some extra labor and sacrifice. It is the manifestation of love and goodness. Mind and body become sanctified through selfless service, provided it is undertaken without ego or vanity. Love knows service and sacrifice. A humble person knows best how to serve the holy cause, under the protective guidance of the Living Master. The climax of selfless service is the annihilation of the ego, considering oneself to be a humble servant of the Lord/Master, entrusted with certain duties to be carried out through him or her and deeming it to be a fortune of the highest order.[194] The little self or ego within has to be eliminated by dissolving it into service of humanity. For all are children of one God, no matter how and where situated, or in what inhibitions and limitations of one kind or an-

other they might be living. You may have to face heavy odds, for it is an uphill task, but all adverse winds blow over. If one is able to efface oneself for a higher cause, this in itself provides a shield and a buckler to the true crusader, and helps in overcoming the seemingly insurmountable obstacles. The tougher the struggle, the brighter shines the metal within. This helps to liberate the finer instincts, until one has risen to a great spiritual stature, towering like a beacon light, shedding rays of hope and encouragement to the lone and weary traveler, shipwrecked on the stormy and strife-ridden sea of life.[195]

No one can be said to have been born for himself alone, for none can be an island unto himself. To serve the needy, sick and starving, is also a sideline, more effective than mere preaching. "Service before self" stirs and kindles embers of sympathy, kindness and love. These virtues have a great purifying effect, and clean a person of all his dross, and entitle him to the highest knowledge of divinity. "Pleasure tastes well after service," is a well known adage.[196]

Selfless service is a great reward in itself.[197]

The more one serves silently, unostentatiously, with love and humility in a smiling, eager and spiritual mood, the more quickly does he earn the pleasure of the Master.[198] When you serve others, you are serving Him.[199]

Selfless service is done in two ways. The first is physical service. If somebody is sick, go and serve him. Shall I see somebody in need, hungry, naked, poor fellow? The Masters have always been for the poor, for the needy, to console them, to raise them up to the level of every

man.[200] If you attend a sick person or stand by an afflicted one, you serve the Divine Cause. Certainly you do not and cannot take away the sickness or affliction but surely you can help in assuaging the sufferings by your kindly words and deeds. Every sweet word uttered or helping hand extended to those in distress goes a long way in purifying the mind and the body. A loving heart is a fit receptacle for the Divine Grace, for God is Love.[201]

What does service to Satguru mean? Mere lip-service, saying "Ram, Ram," or merely putting one's head on His feet is no service. It is a mockery. But he who takes his Guru as the ever-present Power of God within him, lives in awe of that, and knows that Power has constant observation over all his thoughts and action, will he ever sin? Further-more, he will hold heartfelt respect for his Satguru's words—*Satguru's words are the Satguru.* This kind of devoted service will achieve salvation.[202]

If we come to a Satguru, we should do our very best to serve him—do something toward earning this rare gift he gives.[203] *Pride, force, or strength of intellect availeth nothing;* only serve the Sadhu. You will get nothing by giving orders, offering cash, or trying to force the issue; you can only receive by true service to the Master, the manifested God in man—the Word made flesh.[204]

Service done to sincere seekers of the divine Path is of far greater value than any other service. Helpful ways include, among other things, distributions of alms to the really indigent and the needy, giving sweets to those engaged in extraordinarily arduous pursuits in inaccessible

places, nursing the sick, and helping the afflicted ones. All these qualities are great aids in the Path and should be encouraged and cultivated by assiduous practice by all means possible. One should not, however, rest content with them alone, but one must push ahead with the help of these purifying processes, on the way to freedom as enjoined by the Master.[205]

Insofar as you can, try to do no injury to anyone. Be good to all and you will be at peace with yourself and be a radiating center of loving grace around you. The prayers of others to whom you may have done good will help you. The good thoughts of others will swarm around you with a benediction. The very idea of doing good will first affect you and will draw all good vibrations from the surrounding atmosphere.[206]

A true man is one who is truthful, leads a life of continence, radiates love to all others for the sake of God residing in them, and knows giving, giving, and always giving. We never lose anything when we give. When you give love, do you find that you have less love in your heart? On the contrary, you are conscious of an ever greater power of loving, but no one can be convinced of these things till he has applied them in a practical way. An ounce of practice is worth tons of theories.[207] So by sharing with others, our self expands. At the very moment of giving you feel a little joy within. That is the compensation you get, direct. But whenever you give, don't give with the hope that you will have a return. Give for the sake of sharing with others. Sometimes we give

for the reward that we will get in heaven. This is not the way; selfless giving is what is needed.[208]

Understand, the meaning and the purpose of knowledge in one single thought is *service* to all creation: men, beasts and birds, etc. The meaning of true life is service and sacrifice. So long as you want, first and foremost, to be blessed yourselves and you expect others to minister to you, you will remain strangers to the way of spirituality. When you will wish others to be blessed, you will begin to speed on your way back to God.[209]

Selfless Service: Financial

SO THE GENERAL rule is to earn your own livelihood honestly, in which nobody's blood is squeezed, in which undue things have not been usurped by you. God sees what you are doing. The other rule is that your earnings should be to maintain yourselves, and share with others.[210] Some part of your earnings must be given away for the good of others. History shows that one tenth of their income used to be given away by the old Christians, Hindus and others. Why? Because some part of our income might be due to our not having done our duty very honestly, even for half an hour or ten minutes. Suppose for example, you are paid for six hours work and you have not put in six hours for the job but have wasted half an hour. So whatever you have been paid for in that half hour is not yours. It has not been earned by you. This has been the custom with all Masters.[211]

But offerings should be free and voluntary and should

not be inspired by any thought of reward or be the outcome of impositions from without, for then instead of being a source of liberation, they become the source of bondage. Again, charity should not be misplaced but it should be given to alleviate the sufferings of the distressed in the world.[212]

The noblest service one can render in this world is to help people tread on their way to their True Eternal Home. No financial service would be too great for assisting such a noble cause. But it should always be loving and spontaneous. No compulsion, no taxation, no impositions.[213]

So the Guru will love His disciples, because it is He Who has given birth to them in the inner way. As He loves us, so should we love all. He won't let anybody suffer and you should not let anybody suffer. You must share with others.[214] Unless the riches secured by fair means are utilized wisely and well, one is likely to go astray and become egocentric and a slave to his ill-gotten wealth and is unknowingly caught in the golden chains that keep him in bondage.[215]

So by giving away, you don't lose. At the end of the year, you will see that money has been saved in some other way, by freedom from sickness or any other troubles that arise generally and which involve expenditure. Our Master used to say, "All right, you give away one tenth and at the end of the year just count. The very money you have given has been saved where you had no sickness."[216]

Spiritual Practices: Meditation

SPIRITUAL PRACTICES form an essential part in the spiritual aspirant's life and should, therefore, be a daily "must." The repetition of the Five Sacred Charged Names conveyed at the time of Holy Initiation, orally or mentally, is not a difficult task and carries a deep meaning. Although it looks so simple and easy at the outset, to obtain proficiency in it one needs extra love and fortitude. You will appreciate that the Holy Names carry the Life Impulse of the Master which works wonders in withdrawing the sensory currents from the body level up to the eye-focus, thus preparing the soul for the eventual inner journey on to the regions of bliss and harmony. Certain hours for meditation should, therefore, be fixed, set apart and pursued regularly and earnestly for each such repast brings in nourishment to the soul, and one is led within to the Divine Light which dispels the Darkness of Ignorance. It is like purifying the receptive vessel every day for receiving the Divine Grace. Daily meditations clear the gross dross that one gets at the sensuous level. The second important part of meditation is listening to the Holy Sound Current, the Audible Life Stream coming from the right side. It is equally an important aspect of the spiritual practices and should not be ignored or lost sight of. After initiation, it is the disciple's duty to enrich his spiritual experiences from day to day and he can certainly extend his field with the Grace of the Master to any length he may like, opening up new vistas of sublime glory and beatitude.

In short, self introspection helps in cutting the branches and pruning all that is undesirable while meditation (spiritual practices) strikes at the very stem of the tree of worldly life.[217]

God is everywhere, but He is not manifested everywhere. Why? Because our soul—that spark of the All Consciousness—is under the control of mind and senses, and through its sojourn in creation has become the image of the body and the image of the world, thereby forgetting its true self. It must just know itself, then it can have the experience of the Overself; if it does not rise above body consciousness, how can God be manifested? Do you understand this?[218] He resides within you. The body is the true Temple of God. When you have understood this, then where do you go to find Him? First within your own Self. Withdraw from outside. Withdraw from the mind and outgoing faculties and come up to the seat of the soul at the back of the eyes. When you concentrate there, your inner eye will be opened to see God within you.[219]

The Master exhorts us to realize Him in our souls, to rise in Him, losing all sense of the little ego in the living temples of our bodies. The Kingdom of God is within us. We have to recognise the Inner Man as the image of God, the physical body as the temple of God, the tabernacle of the Holy Ghost, in which the Lord makes His appearance. In these living temples we have to attune our souls with God and live in closer communion with Him.[220]

Many do say that they are soul—a conscious entity—

indweller of the human form—but have they come to prove it and thereby know it in truth? This is my watch, I can place it here. These are my spectacles, I can take them off and put them here. I can take off my clothes, whenever I wish to. But can I become separate from my body? Can I take my body off? It is a question of how to rise above by self-analysis; and who can give a demonstration of this scientific method? By the Guru's grace, you come to know yourself. Only then can it happen, and not before. When you know yourself, then like knows the like, and God realization is the next step. So God cannot be known by the senses, intellect, or pranas—only soul can experience the Lord, and this can happen only after it has come to know itself.[221]

To know our Self is not a matter of feelings, emotions or drawing inferences. It is really one of rising above body consciousness by self analysis to know, practically, who we are. When we know our Self and come in contact with all-conscious God, that is the Bread and Water of Life for the soul. All worldly information and outer sciences—the libraries are full of them. If our brain becomes full of them, well, it is not bread to the soul. It is bread and water for the intellect to grow on. So the Bread and Water of Life for the soul is the conscious contact with God or the Overself.[222] These things are to be understood and then lived. By speaking about bread, your hunger cannot be appeased but you must have bread to eat. That is why Christ said, "I am the Bread of Life. This Bread of Life has come down from Heaven. Whoever partaketh of it shall have everlasting life."

Partaketh of it—He is the Bread of Life, of course. He also says, "Eat me and drink me." What to eat? He is Word made flesh. The more you come in contact with and devour that Word, the Light and Sound within you, the more you will be eating of the Bread of Life.[223]

All imperfections will leave you, just as when you sit by a fire, all cold leaves you. By hearing the Sound Current you become the abode of all virtues. By hearing, you can determine the direction in which you have to go. By seeing, your inner eye is opened to see where you are going. Pity it is that we give little time to these things and only waste away our time in trifling things, I would say.[224] So put in more time, please, to your practices. Develop love for God within you. You will be blessed. You will have made the best use of your life.[225]

Concentration of Spirit Current

THE DEVELOPMENT of the elementary powers of spirit is, therefore, most necessary. It is the concentration of this spirit current which plays the greatest part in the achievement. If it is applied to the physical body, one gains strength. If it dwells upon the intellect, one develops great mental powers. In the same way, if spirit is made the object of concentration—spiritual life inevitably follows and supreme bliss is attained. There is an unseen nerve that connects all these centers which is called *Sushumna Nari* or *Shah-rag*. It is through this that the spirit current passes from the lowest region to that of the highest region of Truth.

The concentration of the spirit, then, is the opening process, so that the spirit may progress to higher regions. Until all outgoing faculties are self-centered or inwardly focused, the spirit does not gain strength enough to go up. There are ten outgoing faculties or Indriyas: five are the gross—eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin through which the five others—the subtle Indriyas—of sight, audition, smell, taste and touch keep man attached to the outer world. It would thus appear that it is the constant thought of these faculties which externalizes man.

We constantly think of the world through three main sources. First, we have the eyes that visualize the outward phenomena and bring them within the mental gaze. Through the eyes we gather in no less than 83 per cent of our impressions from outside. The second source is that of the ears which pull our attention to outward sounds and remind us of things in the objective world. Through the ears we get 14 per cent of our outer impressions. The third source is that of the tongue (palate) which, through taste and speech, keeps the memory of the outward world always fresh. The remaining three per cent of the outward impressions are received through the nose and the rest of the sense organs. It is through these three main faculties that man remains constantly in touch with the outer world and is ever engaged either in receiving impressions from without or impressing others with his own thoughts. The energy of the mind is thus drained away, leaving one bankrupt. The Master tells us not to exhaust our energy. We must accumulate and preserve our energy, so that we may be able to rend

asunder the various sheaths of matter which encase the self within us.

The spirit or soul is attached to the objective world outside, on account of objective impressions. Unless the outgoing faculties are controlled and the spirit is freed from the bondage of life, it cannot rise above body consciousness. The three faculties of speech or taste, sight and audition cause a constant outflow of energy through their respective sense organs. For the depersonalization of the soul, it is necessary to channelize our energy inwards and upwards through the processes of inversion and self-analysis.[226]

These organs of tongue, eyes and ears, etc., are at work in the physical frame while one is in a wakeful state and they work likewise in the astral plane when one is in a dream state. The faculties of these organs get enhanced and become powerful if one were to restrict their outward flow. It is then that one gains strength to fathom the subjective world, for without the quickening life-impulse of the soul they lie dormant.[227]

USES OF THE THREE RESTRAINTS AND THEIR PROCESS: The three restraints are to be exercised by training the faculties to work inwards. The first restraint, that of speech, consists in doing Simran or the constant repetition of the Names of the Lord with the tongue of thought. The agency of lips and tongue is not needed. The second restraint refers to the faculty of sight, and consists in contemplation of the spiritual patterns within, which open out in full effulgence. When you fix your inner gaze just midway between and behind the two eye-

brows (the seat of the soul in man), you see your own light inside. That light is yours and is already there and you have to fix your inner gaze on it. Where there is the Word—Holy Naam—there is light; where there is sound, there is refulgence, for the two are inseparable. The light patterns are of five kinds corresponding to the five different kinds of sounds, which are seen and heard as the spirit ascends upwards into the five different planes. The Monduk Upanishad speaks of these as the "five fires in the head."[228]

It does not mean that we are to neglect the use of these organs in relation to the outer world. But these are to be so trained that they may become positive aids in the way of spiritual development, thus conveying a two-fold benefit. The training is meant to make the mind self-centered and prevent its stuff from needlessly flowing outside. The first process, Simran, forms the basis of spiritual pursuit. It has to be continued till the goal is reached. The second and third, Dhyan and Bhajan, follow of themselves one after the other.[229]

These three restraints help in concentration to the highest degree. The first, Simran of the charged words given by the Master, brings back the mind from outside and withdraws the spirit from the body to the seat of the soul in the body. This is first sinking from the circumference of our being to the center of our being. This also keeps reminding us of the highest ideal set up before man, which is self-knowledge and God-knowledge. The second process—Dhyan—also helps in concentration and fastens the soul inside. The last process—Bhajan

or listening to the spiritual music in man—carries the soul into the beyond, to the source from whence the life current or Sound Principle of the Holy Naam or the eternal song, emanates.[230]