

Sharad Sangam 2009
Fearlessness

-by Sw. Amaranandji

Fearlessness means faith in God, in his protection, his justice, his wisdom, his love, mercy, his omnipresence.

God is everywhere, not just inside you. He is in everyone. He is omnipresent. Everywhere. Tell Guruji free me from this fear. Much suffering is due to worry. Why suffer now when the danger has not come? Why suffer from fear of cancer because others are getting it. Overcome fear of illness, you will be freed at once. Healing will be instantaneous. In some healing therapies they take your mind away from your illness. Sometimes they put a T.V. in front of you and you watch comedies and laugh and you don't think of your illness. The medicine there is the T.V. or some soft music, a bhajan or whatever can make you forget your ailment. Don't always depend on drugs and medicines. Exercise, listen to music, watch cartoons, overcome fear.

There is this true story of a little boy whose sister was suffering from a life threatening sickness which her younger brother earlier suffered from. The 5 year old boy Tommy had conquered the sickness. He was miraculously cured of the illness and the little girl Kathleen was supposed to take his blood into her body to help her overcome the disease. The little boy was asked, "Are you ready to give your blood to your sister?" He took a deep breath and said, "Yes." As the blood was being transfused and he saw the energy entering his sister's body Tommy smiled. Then he said something with trembling lips, "Will I begin to die?"

He thought he was going to die in giving blood to his sister. Even in that one moment he had shown more courage than what most of us would be able to muster in a life. Without a thought for self, he gave blood and life to his sister. Wonder how many of us would have shown the same amount of courage?

Sister Gyanmata has said in God Alone: "The poet Browning said that courage was courage only when you felt the serpent of fear writhe beneath your feet. I believe I understand this. It was what I meant when I said to you that if you sent me out into the darkness, and I went without hesitation, though afraid, that was courage. For if one never knows the sensation of fear, can one be called courageous?"

In the heart you may feel fear but still you go and do it. For e.g. there was a flood in West Bengal. I hate water. Everywhere for miles it was flooded and I had to go in a small boat, canoe sort of boat, in which one sits all alone with the rower. All

around there is only water, I thought I would get drowned. For some time I closed my eyes. It would take nearly 2 hours to go from one place to another. Guruji was trying to teach me to overcome the fear. People were stranded on islands. I would be so happy to land on land. No matter how spiritually dead one may be outwardly, he still has the image of God within. Even the most tamasic person has a powerful image of God within. Outwardly the person may be spiritually dead, but inwardly he is very powerful. Never give up. There is the true story of this little girl scout Markita:

Ask,

Ask,

Ask

by: Jack Canfield and Mark V. Hansen, Chicken Soup for the Soul

The greatest saleswoman in the world today doesn't mind if you call her a girl. That's because Markita Andrews has generated more than eighty thousand dollars selling Girl Scout cookies since she was seven years old. Going door-to-door after school, the painfully shy Markita transformed herself into a cookie-selling dynamo when she discovered, at age 13, the secret of selling.

It starts with desire. Burning, white-hot desire.

For Markita and her mother, who worked as a waitress in New York after her husband left them when Markita was eight years old, their dream was to travel the globe. "I'll work hard to make enough money to send you to college," her mother said one day. "You'll go to college and when you graduate, you'll make enough money to take you and me around the world. Okay?"

So at age 13 when Markita read in her Girl Scout magazine that the Scout who sold the most cookies would win an all-expenses-paid trip for two around the world, she decided to sell all the Girl Scout cookies she could - more Girl Scout cookies than anyone in the world, ever.

But desire alone is not enough. To make her dream come true, Markita knew she needed a plan.

"Always wear your right outfit, your professional garb," her aunt advised. "When you are doing business, dress like you are doing business. Wear your Girl Scout uniform. When you go up to people in their tenement buildings at 4:30 or 6:30 and especially on Friday night, ask for a big order. Always smile, whether they buy or not, always be nice. And don't ask them to buy your cookies; ask them to invest."

Lots of other Scouts may have wanted that trip around the world. Lots of other Scouts may have had a plan. But only Markita went off in her uniform each day after school, ready to ask - and keep asking - folks to invest in her dream. "Hi, I have a dream. I'm earning a trip around the world for me and my mom by merchandising Girl Scout cookies," she'd say at the door. "Would you like to invest in one dozen or two dozen boxes of cookies?"

Markita sold 3,526 boxes of Girl Scout cookies that year and won her trip around the world. Since then, she has sold more than 42,000 boxes of Girl Scout cookies, spoken at sales conventions across the country, starred in a Disney movie about her adventure and has co-authored the best seller, How to Sell More Cookies, Condos, Cadillacs, Computers ... And Everything Else.

Markita is no smarter and no more extroverted than thousands of other people, young and old, with dreams of their own. The difference is Markita had discovered the secret of selling: As, Ask, Ask! Many people fail before they even begin because they fail to ask for what they want. The fear of rejection leads many of us to reject ourselves and our dreams long before anyone else ever has the chance - no matter what we're selling.

And everyone is selling something. "You're selling yourself everyday - in school, to your boss, to new people you meet," said Markita at 14. "My mother is a waitress: she sells the daily special. Mayors and presidents trying to get votes are selling ... I see selling everywhere I look. Selling is part of the whole world."

It takes courage to ask for what you want. Courage is not the absence of fear. It's doing what it takes despite one's fear. And, as Markita has discovered, the more you ask, the easier (and more fun) it gets.

Once, on live TV, the producer decided to give Markita her toughest selling challenge. Markita was asked to sell Girl Scout cookies to another guest on the show. "Would you like to invest in one dozen or two dozen boxes of Girl Scout cookies?" she asked.

"Girl Scout cookies? I don't buy any Girl Scout cookies!" he replied. "I'm a Federal Penitentiary warden. I put 2,000 rapists, robbers, criminals, muggers and child abusers to bed every night."

Unruffled, Markita quickly countered, "Mister, if you take some of these cookies. maybe you won't be so mean and angry and evil. And, Mister, I think it would be a good idea for you to take some of these cookies back for every one of your 2,000 prisoners, too."

Markita asked.

The Warden wrote a check.

If you have questions to ask then you will get what you want. It takes wisdom to analyze another human being. You see someone doing something wrong, you go to him and him in a nice way what is wrong. We can either turn away in anger or use the mirror to correct ourselves. If someone is pointing out our mistake don't run away. See the mirror and have the courage to correct yourself. Look at yourself, this is how you look.

The story of the painting, The Last Supper, is extremely interesting and instructive. The two incidents connected with it afford a most convincing lesson on the effects of right thinking or wrong thinking in the life of a boy or girl, or of a man or a woman.

The Last Supper was painted by Leonardo Da Vinci, a noted Italian artist; and the time engaged for its completion was seven years.

The figures representing the twelve Apostles and Christ himself were painted from living persons. The life-model for the painting of the figure of Jesus was chosen first.

When it was decided that Da Vinci would paint this great picture, hundreds and hundreds of young men were carefully viewed in an endeavor to find a face and personality exhibiting innocence and beauty, free from the scars and signs of dissipation caused by sin.

Finally, after weeks of laborious searching, a young man nineteen years of age was selected as a model for the portrayal of Christ. For six months, Da Vinci worked on the production of this leading character of his famous painting. During the next six years, Da Vinci continued his labors on this sublime work of art. One by one fitting persons were chosen to represent each of the eleven Apostles; space being left for the painting of the figure representing Judas Iscariot as the final task of this masterpiece. This was the Apostle, you remember, who betrayed his Lord for thirty pieces of silver, worth in our present day, currency of \$16.96.

For weeks, Da Vinci searched for a man with a hard callous face, with a countenance marked by scars of avarice, deceit, hypocrisy, and crime; a face that would delineate a character who would betray his best friend.

After many discouraging experiences in searching for the type of person required to represent Judas, word came to Da Vinci that a man whose appearance fully met his requirements had been found in a dungeon in Rome, sentenced to die for a life of crime and murder.

Da Vinci made the trip to Rome at once, and this man was brought out from his imprisonment in the dungeon and led out into the light of the sun. There Da Vinci saw before him a dark, swarthy man; his long, shaggy and unkempt hair sprawled over his face, which betrayed a character of viciousness and complete

ruin. At last, the famous painter had found the person he wanted to represent the character of Judas in his painting.

By special permission from the king, this prisoner was carried to Milan where the picture was being painted; and for months he sat before Da Vinci at appointed hours each day as the gifted artist diligently continued his task of transmitting to his painting this base character in the picture representing the traitor and betrayer of our savior. As he finished his last stroke, he turned to the guards and said, "I have finished. You may take the prisoner away."

As the guards were leading their prisoner away, he suddenly broke loose from their control and rushed up to Da Vinci, crying as he did so, "O, Da Vinci, look at me! Do you not know who I am?"

Da Vinci, with the trained eyes of a great character student, carefully scrutinized the man upon whose face he had constantly gazed for six months and replied, "No, I have never seen you in my life until you were brought before me out of the dungeon in Rome."

Then, lifting his eyes toward heaven, the prisoner said, "Oh, God, have I fallen so low?" Then turning his face to the painter he cried, "Leonardo Da Vinci! Look at me again for I am the same man you painted just seven years ago as the figure of Christ."

This is the true story of the painting of The Last Supper that teaches so strongly the lesson of the effects of right or wrong thinking on the life of an individual. Here was a young man whose character was so pure, unspoiled by the sins of the world that he presented a countenance of innocence and beauty fit to be used for the painting of a representation of Christ. But within seven years, following the thoughts of sin and a life of crime, he was changed into a perfect picture of the most traitorous character ever known in the history of the world.

Da Vinci helped the man to change. You look at yourself in the mirror. Now because of the meditation and sadhana you all have become so good. You all are yogis. Conduct your life with honesty, sincerity and above all have courage, faith and trust in God. Practice honesty, sincerity and regard for others by showing true real love for God. Love first. How? Love is God. So meditate and when you come out of meditation you will love everyone. Then you will want to serve everyone. Then you develop the courage and faith comes. All this will come.

When a devotee endures the greatest trial you strongly and sweetly feel the loving, understanding and comforting presence of God. Don't keep worrying about the world. Keep your mind in the sadhana and then go out into the world. Problems help you in feeling the strong, sweet, loving presence of God. A devotee makes the greatest spiritual stride at such times. Many miracles are happening in life – like that of the lady who healed herself and now she is healing others. St. Francis of Assisi was blind and yet he gave healing power to others.

Saints act differently. Not the same way as we are. Guruji's body was in pain and yet he was healing others. Sr. Gyanmata was sick and Guruji would send others to her and she would counsel them. Allow the difficulties to drive you to God. Face difficulties with faith and devotion. Sr. Gyanmata joined the ashram when she was in her sixties. Daya Ma entered the ashram when she was 17 years old, and Sr. Gyanmata wrote to her on one occasion:

‘When you took the vow before the Master in your seventeenth year, you said “yes” to all the moments that followed as a consequence. I have watched the work going on in you, the work of building into your character endurance and courage, without which there is no spirituality.’

Dhristadhyumnyu was specially created by Drupad. Dhristadhyumnyu means bold, daring confident. Dhru means ‘splendour.’ We get bold or confident splendor – defined as calm inner light and truth revealing intuition. Something that is calm and unerring can destroy habits. Habits are so difficult to give up. The sanskaras go along with you life after life. You need to go to the state where you can see the light of intuition that can destroy habits. Develop a brilliance endowed with courage. When I was young I would keep on asking questions to the monks as to how to destroy bad habits. Bad sanskaras. And they all answered – by meditation. Go into Samadhi. Every day when you meditate deeply you go into Samadhi, superconscious state and destroy all bondage of sanskaras. Drona and Drupad are close friends. Drupad looked down on Drona. Now I am a King, you come to me, and ask me for something. “Hello, I am your friend, can you give me ---.” And you say, “No, you wait.” That is what Drupad did to Drona. And therefore Drona became very angry with Drupad. With the aid of the Pandavas he defeated Drupad. After a humiliating defeat, Drupad lost his entire kingdom to Drona. But Drona out of kindness returned the southern half of the kingdom back to Drupad. But Drupad vowed vengeance. He held a sacrificial yagna and asked to be granted a son who would have the courage and the ability to destroy Drona – one who would be able to cut off Drona's neck. (You have seen that on T.V.) In the beginning when we are doing the sadhana, we want to know God, want to have an experience of God. Sanskaras are stopping you, even your good habits at time are stopping you.

Sanskaras more of material tendency will not want to be friendly with the spiritual desires. Bad habits of smoking, drinking will oppose the spiritual habits. Habit retaliates and seeks vengeance by making you a prisoner of past bad habits. Until the devotee is strongly established in God, you are bound by sanskaras and habits. Old habits will come back to you. It comes up from anahat, to Vishuddha to Agnya chakra. When doing om come down to Anahat and then up again to Agnya. Don't go all the way down. Drona sent Drupad to the southern half. But Drupad wants to come again. And he came up and destroyed Drona. Persistent deep devotion gave him the power to destroy drone (habits). What you need is courage, backed by will power. Let's work on it. By concentration develop and create will power - will power to overcome fear, to have courage. Do all that is right. Just meditate and get back to God. Many don't even attempt to work as they are desperately afraid of not succeeding. Failing and failure are two different things. This time you didn't concentrate enough you failed. But you are not a failure. Failure is a stepping stone to success. Like in a cricket match. I hope they succeed this time. In Bhagwad Gita even Arjuna was overwhelmed by fear. How can I kill my own relatives. But Krishna says: You have to fight. We all depend on cosmic energy. Doubt, mental fatigue, worry, fear, timidity, shyness, overindulgence, lack of interest in anything, lack of creative intelligence can be overcome by cosmic energy.

When doing Energization Exercises smile and be happy. If you are frightened you are tired even after doing the Energization Exercises. Forget the world and meditate with Guruji. When you meditate correctly you develop calmness, courage, unconquerable attitude, tolerance, patience, because the cosmic energy enters you and changes you. Guruji said - to live in harmony you need a strong will power and unite your will with the will of God. Always be smiling. Smile from the heart. When you are not happy your face is not smiling. Scatter the smiles wherever you go. People will say what a smiling sweet face.