

Guru Poornima also known as Vyas Poornima is the birth date of Muni Ved Vyas the writer of the Mahabharata. Just as Mother's day is celebrated to honour mothers and Bhai Duj is set aside to remember brothers, Guru Poornima is commemorated to honour the Guru.

In 1861 Babaji revived the kriya key for the benefit of you and me. He has promised to guard and guide all sincere Kriya Yogis in their path toward the Goal... "Whenever anyone utters with reverence the name of Babaji," Lahiri Mahasaya said, "that devotee attracts an instant spiritual blessing." That is why I offer from the depths of my heart my gratitude to Babaji.

I am also grateful to Lahiri Mahasaya for the example of his evenly balanced life by which he proved that householders too can find God by leading a life of meditation and looking after house holder's duties.

When Babaji initiated Lahiri Mahasaya he said, "*Bestow the Kriya key only on qualified chelas. He who vows to sacrifice all in the quest of the Divine is fit to unravel the final mysteries of life through the science of meditation.*"

*"Angelic Guru, as you have already favored mankind by resurrecting the lost Kriya art, will you not increase that benefit by relaxing the strict requirements for discipleship?" ... "I pray that you permit me to communicate Kriya to all sincere seekers, even though at first they may not be able to vow themselves to complete inner renunciation. The tortured men and women of the world, pursued by the threefold suffering (physical, mental*

*and spiritual suffering) need special encouragement. They may never attempt the road to freedom if Kriya initiation be withheld from them.”*

*“Be it so. The divine wish has been expressed through you. Give Kriya to all who humbly ask you for help” the merciful guru replied.*

I often reflect that probably Lahiri Mahasaya had me in his mind when he made that request.

I am grateful to Sw. Sri Yuktेशwarji for having trained a satguru, a jagatguru, for encouraging a hesitant Guruji in taking over the work of building the organization.

And I am grateful to Guruji for accepting us as disciples and bestowing the techniques of meditation that will lead us to the temple of salvation. Finally I also bow to the two great avatars of east and west, Bhagwan Krishna and Jesus Christ for their assurance of protection to us.

This we must do not only on the Guru Purnima day but often. We take them for granted. How fortunate we are to have an exalted line of Gurus. One may say, I follow Bhagwan Krishna and Bhagwad Gita and Krishna alone is my guru. Why should I follow someone else? Can we mortals understand the teachings of Bhagwan Krishna? No we cannot. It takes a saint to understand those sublime truths. Twice in the Bhagwat Gita reference is made to the technique of kriya.

**Chp. 4, Vs. 29:**

*apane juhvati pranam prane ‘panam tathapare  
pranapanagati ruddhva pranayamaparayanah*

**Other devotees offer as sacrifice the incoming breath of prana in the outgoing breath of apana, and the outgoing breath of apana in the incoming breath of prana, thus arresting the cause of inhalation and exhalation (rendering breath unnecessary) by intent practice of pranayama (the life control technique of Kriya Yoga).**

**Chp. 5, Vs. 27 – 28:**

*sparsan krtva bahir bahyams caksus caivantare bhruvoh  
pranapanau samau krtva nasabhyantaracarinau (27)*

*yatendriyamanobuddhir munir moksaparayanah  
vigatechabhayakrodho yah sada mukta eva sah (28)*

**A muni – he who holds liberation as the sole object of life and therefore frees himself from longings, fears, and wrath – controls his senses, mind, and intelligence and removes their external contacts by (a technique of) making even, or neutralizing, the currents of prana and apana that manifest as inhalation and exhalation in the nostrils. He fixes his gaze at the middle of the two eyebrows (thus converting the dual current of the physical vision into the single current of the omniscient astral eye). Such a muni wins complete emancipation.**

Both these verses, Guruji says are a reference to Kriya Yoga. But just by reading I would not know how to offer the incoming breath of prana in the outgoing breath of apana. I must be able to understand the inner meaning hidden in the plain words. Mere wanting to go back to God is not sufficient.

We have been hearing the word 'Guru' since childhood. But what is the meaning of the word. 'Gu' means darkness and 'ru' means dispeller. The soul is groping in the darkness, not knowing where to go. The very meaning of the word 'Guru' propels us to seek a guru.

"What is this guru? Paramahansaji explained it in a beautiful way in these simple words: "The guru is the speaking voice of silent God." We have for the most part prayed to a God whom we have not seen, whose voice we have not heard. We have faith in His word as recorded in the scriptures. We perhaps have faith in the experiences of the saints and the great ones who tell us that He is. But when the guru-disciple relationship is formed, our guru becomes for us the speaking voice of that silent **God**." Guruji did not invent the techniques. Autobiography of a Yogi, Chp. 26:

"Krishna also relates that it was he, in a former incarnation, who communicated the indestructible yoga to an ancient illuminati, Vivasvat, who gave it to Manu, the great legislator. He, in turn, instructed Ikshwaku, founder of India's solar warrior dynasty. Passing thus from one to another, the royal yoga was guarded by the rishis until the coming of the materialistic ages."

We are not able to commune directly with God. We need some spokesperson. There is another definition of the 'guru'. Master gave this definition: "The guru is the awakened God, awakening the sleeping God in the disciple." Isn't that beautiful? "Through sympathy and deep vision, a true guru sees the Lord suffering in the physically, mentally, and spiritually poor, and that is why he feels it his joyous duty to assist them. He tries to feed the hungry God in the destitute, to stir the sleeping God in the ignorant, to love the unconscious God in the enemy, and to waken the half-

asleep God in the yearning devotee. And by a gentle touch of love, he instantaneously arouses the almost fully awakened God in the advanced seeker. The guru is, among all men, the best of givers. Like the Lord Himself, his generosity knows no boundaries.”

I like this analogy by Guruji the most:

“A lioness gave birth to a little cub. But at that time there were hunters shooting in the jungle and in the commotion, the lioness ran for her life leaving the little one behind. By the time everything had settled the mother realized that the little cub was missing. A passing shepherd saw the cub, and finding that the mother was away, he picked up the little cub without the father and mother. He raised it along with his other sheep. Soon the little one started drinking milk, then eating grass, and started to ‘meow, meow’. He had the body of a lion, but the mind and heart of a sheep. One day the sheep were attacked by a herd of lions. As the lions started to chase the sheep, the little cub began to run. One of the lions wondered why this one who looks like us is running away from us. He left the other sheep and began to run after the lion cub and caught up with him. The little cub began to cry – ‘Leave me, leave me.’ The huge lion asked, ‘Why are you afraid of me. You are just a lion like me.’ He took the little one to a pond and made him see his reflection in the pond. ‘Look at your face and look at my face.’ Eventually the little cub went away with the herd of lions.

You have to remember ‘Ahambrahmasmi’. I am living the life of an ordinary mortal. I have forgotten I am perfect joy, perfect love. I am happy with sensory pleasures. Guruji took me to the pond of meditation and I realized the joy bubbling from within me. I feel the stillness within so that no matter what is

happening to me I still feel joy. Who made this possible? That big lion – Guruji. Until then I was roaming like a sheep. For me also one meditative experience is not enough. Guruji is the awakened God, waking the sleeping God within me. There is no way I could have convinced myself of the existence of God within me but for His grace. These words of Swami Shankara beautifully define such a guru: 'No known comparison exists in the three worlds for a true guru. If the philosopher's stone be assumed as truly such, it can only turn iron into gold, not into another philosopher's stone. The venerated teacher on the other hand, creates equality with himself in the disciple who takes refuge at his feet. The guru is therefore peerless, nay, transcendental.' What the guru has, he can give to you. If the guru has God, he can give you God.

Of course with time there is a degradation of the word 'guru'. There is the football guru, the science guru, management guru and all sorts of gurus. What they mean is 'a teacher'. And so we use the word 'satguru' to refer to the spiritual guru. As everything in the universe is run by law, so is our search for God guided by His divine decree: "If you would know Me, My child, recognize me in my spokesman, My representative: the guru."

Even Bhagwan Krishna had a guru – Rishi Sandipani and Bhagwan Ram's Guru was Rishi Vasishth.

Earlier whenever I used to hear Daya Ma or Sw. Anandmoyji speaking about Guruji with such reverence, I would feel very uncomfortable as I would feel that I could not feel the same reverence as these people did for Guruji. Then later I realized that the reverence comes with time, as one experiences more and more the love and grace and protection of the Guru. Mrinalini Mata has said, "When the disciple has passed through what he must as a disciple – the fires, the tests of purification – and has

been drawn to the point where he is ready to be introduced to God, he realizes ultimately and fully what he may already have known intellectually from the scriptures, what he may even have felt in his heart – that the guru was none other than **God**. This is the supreme realization of the guru-disciple relationship.”

Only a chemist will be able to recognize a medicine. I will not be able to realize what it is. At our stage of spiritual development we don't have that much reverence. Surely I am much better now than I was 30 years back. Although we don't have that devotion; it takes time.

Guruji is not in the body that we could serve him by giving him clothes, food, or by being able to serve him physically. Guruji has said, “When I am no longer in the body, this organization will serve as my body.” Once Guruji was working out the physical karma of some of the devotees on his own body. Sw. Bimalanandji and one of the other Swamijies were looking after him and moving him around in the wheel chair. At India Gate there were a few steps and so both the monks lifted Guruji's body to cross the steps. At that time Guruji said to them, “You lift my body, I lift your souls.”

Sw. Bimalanandji adds, “Guruji's organization is his body. Let us lift it. Guruji's organization is expanding.”

How to serve the Guru's organization?

If I have to take some medicine, I will have swallowed the medicine, or injected something, or gulped something, or applied some balm. All are equally effective. If you are meditating regularly morning and evening, you are serving Guruji. He is so happy to see you meditating. If you are attending group meditations, you are serving Guruji. Mere attendance is serving Guruji. Being a part of the world wide prayer circle, praying for others, helping run the dhyan kendras

and dhyān mandlis, monetary donations, setting an example for others, sharing Gururji's books with interested people, holding group meditations are the ways in which you are serving the Guru.

Another topic I am expected to talk about is – 'Surmounting life's struggles by Gururji's grace.'

'Surmounting' is a very frightening word. A devotee on the spiritual path would say, 'coping with life's experiences.' A saint would say, 'enjoying life's experiences.'

As long as we have life, we are guaranteed trouble. Physical, mental, social, environmental, problems. How do we cope with them? Here are a couple of principles which will help us to be better equipped to face the experiences:

**1.** Blame no one but himself for his trouble. We normally have the tendency – he did that, so now I am in trouble. God doesn't reward or punish anyone. But God doesn't want us to suffer. Don't blame someone else for your troubles. If this experience has come into my life it must be having some reason.

**2.** No guilt conscience or worrying – 'what have I done, how much of bad karma I must be having to deserve this. Why do I have to go through this pain again and again?' Use spiritual maturity. Don't curse yourself. There should not be an inferiority complex or guilt. We don't know how the soul works. Body, mind and soul are together. Soul wants to go back to God as soon as possible. The soul realizes that the past karma is preventing me from realizing God. We can work out our past karma in three ways:

A. By suffering



- B. By performing service
- C. By meditation.

To be able to go closer to God some souls choose suffering to work out a lot of karma. We may not be having such a bad karma but we may want to work out our karma by being brave. Sometimes a saint takes over the body of a lower animal. The soul is all knowledgeable and free but it takes on certain limitations. From childhood I used to wonder why saints take over the form of a lower animal, now I understand. Do you know the story of Jai and Vijay the two dwarpals (doorkeepers) of Bhagwan Krishna? When they had to incarnate on earth they were given the choice of being a devotee of God for 7 incarnations or the enemies of God for 3 incarnations. They chose to be enemies of God for three incarnations because they could not bear the separation from God for 7 incarnations.

*“The Kumar brothers are Sanak Kumar, Sanandan Kumar, Sanatan Kumar, and Sanat Kumar. They were mind born sons of Brahma. Even in their advanced age, they looked very young because of their spiritual powers. They had no attachment to any material possessions. Using their spiritual powers, they freely moved around the universe.*

*One day they went to Vaikunth to meet Lord Visnu. They were stopped by Jay and Vijay (the doorkeepers of Vishnu). Jay and Vijay thought the Kumar brothers to be children and made fun of them.*

*Kumar brothers did not like that the doorkeepers of Lord could behave like this. They got angry and cursed Jay and Vijay that they two would be born on planet Earth.*

*Vishnu came there. On seeing Him, Kumar brothers forgot all anger. They worshipped Vishnu and, after some time, left.*

*Vishnu told Jay and Vijay that He was capable of overruling the curse but He did not want to do so. When Jay and Vijay pleaded that they could not live being separate from their Lord, then Vishnu said to them, "You will have to undergo three births. In all those three births you will be killed by me. At the end of three births, you will come to me."*

*If Lord Vishnu personally kills somebody then that person is considered very fortunate.*

*The first birth of Jay and Vijay was as Hiranyaksh and Hiranyakashipu. Vishnu took boar incarnation and killed Hiranyaksh; he took Nrisimha (half man, half lion) incarnation and killed Hiranyakashipu.*

*The second birth was as **Ravan** and **Kumbhkarn**. Lord Vishnu took human incarnation as Ram and killed Ravan and Kumbhkarn.*

*The third birth was as Shishupal and Dantwakra. Lord Vishnu came to Earth as Krishna and killed Shishupal and Dantwakra."*

Had I been asked to make a choice I would have selected seven incarnations. I am not so brave. They were more brave because they selected the three incarnations of being enemies of God. The concept is that advanced souls willingly take over suffering not because they have a bad karma. In the present level of spiritual progress you are capable of taking up that suffering. So next time contact the soul and find out why you were suffering. There should be no inferiority complex. Sr. Gyanamata says, "It is not the event that makes me suffer, but the mind." It is not the pain caused by the problem but the damage done to my image. The ego feels ashamed not the soul. But let me go through it; don't worry about what others are thinking. What are you frightened of? The consequences of failure or of the image

getting tarnished? In one of the letters Sr. Gyanamata has written:

“When you visited Ramana Maharshi in South India, in order to draw him out you put to him several questions, one of which was, “Why so much suffering?” He replied by asking, “What suffers?” It is the self, the ego. If it did not suffer, would it not grow very strong and powerful? And if I did not die to self, how can I live in God?”

We don't invite troubles; they are coming fast enough on their own. There should not be a melancholy, why this, why that? A true devotee works it out as fast as possible to get back to God. One more important point:

**3.** Understanding should go within, it should not be superficial. Suffering and happiness can go together. They can co exist. Inner joy is the real state. Nothing to do with what is happening around us. At three o' clock I have a problem. I think of the pain. Then at 4.30 I go for meditation. I keep aside my pain. By 7 I realize that the pain has disappeared. We are not the problem, the event; we are not going to be affected. I can still be untouched by going within. That joy doesn't come always. You sometimes feel you have been so happy even for a short time during the tough times. The joy of meditation is sometimes so perceptible, so real. I am Ahambrahmasmi – satchitananda. Problems are there, we are not going to run away. A devotee feels even under those conditions – there could be so much joy, unconditional joy. It is a miracle this existence of pure unconditional inner joy. Most men say on a Monday, “Oh, again Monday” - because they have spent their weekend socializing and are tired by Monday. The devotee of God is busy with God, relaxed and joyful on Monday. We have to face life's

experiences with that joy within. Whenever Guruji was disturbed and went to Sw. Sri Yuktेशwarji's ashram he would feel relaxed. That ashram is there right here, in the kutastha. Give enough time, stillness, you are in the ashram. You can be experiencing life's experiences and still it is possible to be joyful in spite of adversities. Sw. Anandmoyji speaks of this incident: There were many examples of this in the life of Paramahansaji. I remember one time toward the end of his life, a period when he was physically disabled because he was working out on his own body the karma of many of his disciples. Guruji could not walk at that time, and he asked another monk and me to move him. When we lifted him, he groaned with pain; and at the same time I felt such joy inside that I could hardly stand it. I thought, "He is suffering so much and I am almost going out of mind with joy! If only I could take a little bit of his burden." (Can you imagine, me taking part of the burden that he took on?) Then he looked at me and smiled, saying, "Don't worry, your share will come."

Later on, when I was alone, I thought it over: "How is it possible that I felt such joy when he was in such agony?" Then it came to me: "Ah, he just wanted to show me.: Physically, yes, there was pain; but his inner consciousness was untouched – inside, he knew only the bliss of God." Because of my sympathy, I had perhaps tuned in to a higher level of his being and thus felt as much as I could take at that time of the bliss that is his.

So remember to go to the ashram (kutastha) and meditate. No matter what is going on around me, no matter what is happening to me, still I can be happy. Remember the chant:  
O life is sweet, and death a dream,

When Thy song flows through me.

It is possible.

When health is sweet, sickness a dream,

When Thy song flows through me.

When praise is sweet and blame a dream...

When blame comes there is no need to feel so upset. Why justify yourself, replying back. Only all this is possible 'When Thy song flows through me' I can handle the blame, or ill health only if I am in tune with God and Guru. Only by attunement allowing Guruji and God to flow through me I can face life. The saints say, "It is all God's love at work. God is poking, cajoling... All experiences have only one meaning – to get back to God." Our frustrations of worldly problems are there to remind us God is the only solace. If joy is pulling us towards Guruji, frustrations should push us towards Guruji. The beauty of nature, the love of human beings is just to remind us of the love of God. Although creation is designed in delusion, it is deeply rooted in love. Pain and sorrow are also products of God's love. E.g. we don't want a cough. But the reflexive mechanism of cough comes to help us get rid of the cold. Pain is a gift given to mankind by God. I know the doctors are staring at me. A cut on the wrist causes pain. But it helps me take corrective measures. Or I would ignore and it would lead to septic. Pain has a role. Leprosy patients have their fingers and toes eaten by rats. You and I don't allow rats to eat our fingers and toes because we have the sensation of touch. The same way when we feel pain in office, in relationships, at home, we then try to do something about it. Suffering has a role to play. Why do we scold or beat our children? Out of love, isn't it? There is no other reason. Occasionally Divine Mother also does that, scolding and beating us to put us on the right path. There should be no frustration, no

rejection; bear it with a sense of equanimity. Remember the prayer:

"I asked God for strength, that I might achieve. I was made weak, that I might learn humbly to obey ...I asked for health, that I might do greater things. I was given infirmity, that I might do better things ...I asked for riches, that I might be happy. I was given poverty, that I might be wise ...I asked for power, that I might have the praise of men. I was given weakness, that I might feel the need of God ...I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life. I was given life that I might enjoy all things ...I got nothing that I asked for-but everything I had hoped for. Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered. I am, among all men, most richly blessed."

Whoever wrote it, it's a beautiful prayer. No need to do greater things, just do better things. Need of God is better than the praise of God. It is all right to be meek.

"I got nothing that I asked for-but everything I had hoped for" – who is that who is hoping for? The soul. The soul is hoping in the end to get back to God. In spite of my prayers to have this or that, I got what I needed. That takes real understanding. This is what you get. Regular meditation can help you experience that.

#### **4. Guruji's hidden help.**

As we surrender our lives to Guruji, he takes control of our lives. We don't understand. Recall how Babaji was sitting around the fire:

"His disciples were sitting one night around a huge fire which was blazing for a sacred Vedic ceremony. The master suddenly seized a burning log and lightly struck the bare shoulder of a chela who was close to the fire.

"Sir, how cruel!" Lahiri Mahasaya, who was present, made this remonstrance.

"Would you rather have seen him burned to ashes before your eyes, according to the decree of his past karma?"

"With these words Babaji placed his healing hand on the chela's disfigured shoulder. 'I have freed you tonight from painful death. The karmic law has been satisfied through your slight suffering by fire.'"

That was what was to have happened but it was rectified by the blessings of Babaji. Don't keep on asking 'Why the fire incident, why this, why that?' Guruji knows how to best take care of your karma. Once one of the monks was walking towards the printing press when his finger got cut. Rajarsi was in the body then. He said, "If you were outside in the world now, you would have lost your arm." Remember He is in charge. He knows how to work out your karma. With Guruji's grace we will be able to surmount life's problems – experiences.