

30/07/09

SATSANGA WITH SW. SHRADDHANANDJI

We have just inaugurated the new Dhyana Mandir in Rajkot and what impressed Sw. Smarananandji and me very much, was the spirit of harmony, peace, love, friendliness, servicefulness and humility manifested by the devotees during the construction of that sadhana mandir. When we just come for meditation and sit and go away it is easier but when we also are involved in the making of a mandir then there are many choices to be made. The natural tendency is to say – My choice is the only right choice. When colouring the wall one tends to feel that the only colour to paint is my choice of colour. If there has to be a fan then this is the only fan to have. There is scope for different people to feel differently when trying to accomplish something. There is a tendency to feel your choice is not good; my choice is very good and so it is very possible for very good friends to become very good enemies. Sw. Smaranandji told me that he was very much inspired by the tremendous amount of harmony, spirit of unity, spirit of kindness that he saw manifested in this place. Things may not be perfect, things will never be perfect and some things were not perfect but they were inspiring.

Today we will talk about: Inner and Outer harmony.

Inner harmony is the state of inner peace, inner state of non strife. When we are not agitated and there is outer harmony then the people with whom we interact seem to be very appealing, very satisfying, very sweet.

Harmony is a very important quality required for the spiritual path. If there is no outer harmony then it is difficult for inner peace. And if there is no inner peace then how can we meditate and practice sadhana. Therefore outer harmony is beneficial for inner harmony to be possible. However it is never possible to attain a state of outer harmony always. Perfect outer harmony is practically impossible. But perfect inner harmony is possible. A time will come may be many incarnations later when we will be in perfect inner harmony whatever the outer conditions. People want externals to be perfect. It won't happen. We are then expecting to be disappointed. Externals will never be perfect. The best way to achieve inner harmony is through practice of the exercises, practice of Kriya yoga, Hong-Sau, Om technique, practice the presence of God, being silently still, being absorbed

in the spiritual eye, in whatever we experience as a result of meditation, talking to God, being with God, establishing a closer harmony with God. Gurujī defines yoga as being in a state of inner harmony and through practice of yoga we can achieve inner harmony. There is a passage in 'God Alone' by Sr. Gyanmata. I like that passage very much and I must have repeated it earlier also because I don't get bored. I like it and keep repeating it to myself. Sr. Gyanmata says in *God Alone (Pg. 309 – Personal Diary)*:

"And when I think that I am permitted to approach a true guru, and pour out to him my longing for complete liberation, for perfect Light, I can only say, with Hans Christian Andersen, that "my life is a beautiful fairy story, told by God."

What she means to say is that everything in my inner life is just wonderful, so much so that it may not be true; it is almost too good to be true. But this could happen for Sr. Gyanmata only on one condition – ***"To be permitted to approach a true Guru and pour out to him her longing for complete liberation, for perfect light..."*** Perfect light? It is possible to have a lightless light and darkless dark. Perfect Light is not lightless light and darkless dark, and I am not interested in any other light. Most people understand what Perfect Light is. I don't know. But I do appreciate her longing for complete liberation. All of us want liberation, either consciously or unconsciously. Most of us are consciously seeking liberation when we want freedom from habits, from karma, for past mistakes etc. For Gyanmata that makes her life a 'fairy story.' She feels so blessed, so happy and so wonderful, so free to pour out her longing for complete liberation.

I few days back I made a big blunder. A devotee wanted to do something big, and she was describing what she was planning to do and I told her, "Unfortunately, that's not possible." The blunder was not that she could not get what she wanted to do, but that I had said, 'unfortunately.' What we may want may be spiritually admirable and divine but we don't always have the karma to be able to get it. But not to be able to have what we want is not 'unfortunate.' A devotee can never be 'unfortunate.' Everything that happens in a devotee's life is never 'unfortunate.' The so called 'unfortunate' things happen because of a little bit of bad karma. We all may have some bad karma but we also have a lot of good karma. Gurujī is in

charge of our lives, our bad karma. It is not our bad karma, it is Guruji's bad karma. It is kept in safe storage, safe custody by him. He sends it to us when he thinks it is good for us. He feels it is something that will be helpful to us for our spiritual growth. And everything that the Guru sends is a blessing. Never train ourselves to think of the word 'unfortunate'. Don't even use it because we may not be affected but someone else may have that meaning and will feel very unhappy.

The prayer that I used today, was **"Guruji please help us to manifest harmony, kindness, humility and love."** If you all work with love, humility, kindness and harmony this work will sweep the world. Even when we don't manifest all of these qualities, there are so many of us who will manifest even one of these qualities and the work will sweep the world. And even if we consider the other three qualities other than harmony, and manifest them, then we will automatically manifest harmony. If we manifest even some of these four qualities, we will ultimately express all the four qualities.

What does the word 'humility' mean? The dictionary gives the meaning of the word 'humility' as 'perpetual quietness of the heart.' We have heard our beloved Daya Ma often mention in her satsanga (*Finding You the Joy Within, Pg. 245*):

"For years I have had this inspiring quotation on my desk:

'Humility is perpetual quietness of heart. It is to have no trouble. It is never to be fretted, or vexed, or irritated, or sore, or disappointed.

It is to expect nothing, to wonder at nothing that is done to me, to feel nothing done against me. It is to be at rest when nobody praises me, and when I am blamed and despised.

It is to have a blessed home in myself, where I can go in and shut the door, and kneel to my Father in secret, and be at peace as in a deep sea of calmness, when all around and above is troubled."

- By Canon T. T. Carter (1809-1901).

In the state of humility we are not bothered by anything, not disturbed by anything, we manifest supreme calmness. Guruji says: **"Yoga gives you**

the perpetual quietness of heart, mind and consciousness."
"Yogaha chitta vritti nirodhaha" is the most famous yoga sutra of Patanjali.

2nd definition of 'humility' is constantly thinking 'Thou,' not 'I.' If you are constantly thinking of 'I' then you are not thinking so much of others but of ourselves. Gururji says, ***"When the ego steps in, God steps out; and when the ego steps out, God steps in."*** When I stop thinking about myself, then God steps in. So let God enter the heart.

The 3rd definition of 'humility' is, 'not to think that I am perfect.' I like this very much. I told you the mistake I once made in understanding the words in the *Autobiography of a Yogi* many many years ago. I should not use the word 'blunder', because that is a very harsh word, but use the word 'misinterpretation.'

In *Chp. 12, Years in My Master's Hermitage (Autobiography of a Yogi)* it is written: ***'Sri Yukteswar directed the study of his own disciples by the same intensive method of one-pointedness. "Wisdom is not assimilated with the eyes, but with the atoms," he said. "When your conviction of a truth is not merely in your brain but in your being, you may diffidently vouch for its meaning." He discouraged any tendency a student might have to construe book-knowledge as a necessary step to spiritual realization.'***

When I first read the *Autobiography of a Yogi*, I was very young. I did not understand many words (because the *Autobiography* uses some pretty difficult words) but from the context I would give a meaning to those words. I took the meaning of the word 'diffidently' to mean as per the context, that 'you can be sure this is the statement of truth.' After a few years I checked the meaning of the word in the dictionary and found that 'diffidently' meant, 'shyly, lacking in self confidence.' It doesn't make sense that you know the truth in every particle of my being, and yet very hesitantly, without being confident, very shyly you give the meaning. But that is how Sw. Sri Yuktेशwarji is asking us to express our knowledge of the truth.

When you get into an argument with someone, and someone is contradicting you, I told one devotee to say, 'Maybe you are right.' This

would mean that it could be that 50% of what you say could be right. This way the other person will also be happy even if the person is only ¼ in the right and there will be no quarrels. It doesn't mean you are right, it doesn't mean you are wrong – and then there will be outer harmony. So Sw. Sri Yuktेश्वरji says: When we are 100% confident of the meaning of truth, then we can very hesitatingly, without a lot of power, without confidence, humbly, shyly, sweetly say, 'probably this is the meaning.'

Guruji has explained in the *Autobiography of a Yogi* in the same chapter: ***'Men who were pridefully conscious of high worldly position were likely, in Master's presence, to add humility to their other possessions. A local magistrate once arrived for an interview at the seaside hermitage in Puri. The man, who held a reputation for ruthlessness, had it well within his power to oust us from the ashram. I cautioned my guru about the despotic possibilities. But he seated himself with an uncompromising air, and did not rise to greet the visitor. Slightly nervous, I squatted near the door. The man had to content himself with a wooden box; my guru did not request me to fetch a chair. There was no fulfillment of the magistrate's obvious expectation that his importance would be ceremoniously acknowledged.***

A metaphysical discussion ensued. The guest blundered through misinterpretations of the scriptures. As his accuracy sank, his ire rose.

"Do you know that I stood first in the M. A. examination?" Reason had forsaken him, but he could still shout.

"Mr. Magistrate, you forget that this is not your courtroom," Master replied evenly. "From your childish remarks I would have surmised that your college career was unremarkable. A university degree, in any case, is not remotely related to Vedic realization. Saints are not produced in batches every semester like accountants."

After a stunned silence, the visitor laughed heartily.

"This is my first encounter with a heavenly magistrate," he said. Later he made a formal request, couched in the legal terms which were evidently part and parcel of his being, to be accepted as a "probationary" disciple.'

Magistrates are people who know everything about everyone. So the more this magistrate realized he was not right, he became more and more angry and more and more arrogant. Often we say we are right, when we are not right. But we believe that we are 150% right. Only when reason forsakes us we start shouting. When reason has not forsaken us, we can gently, shyly, not confidently, speak. Then we can be humble. We should not be thinking, "I am perfect, I cannot make a mistake. I am confident, I am sure, I can shout."

4th definition of 'humility' is striving to reach the state where we are not expecting anything from God and from anyone else. This is a very important quality to inculcate. In human relationships, to the extent we do not expect anything from others; to that extent relationships become more pure, more satisfying, unconditional, more strong and lasting. As soon as we start placing conditions, we start buying and selling – I pay so much, you buy so many chocolates. Business dealings are not relationships. To be free from business deals, there should be no conditions. Regardless of what I do or you do or what happens relationship is unchanged. The most beautiful and the most satisfying relationship is the relationship with God. If that relationship is I will meditate and perform one million kriya and you have to give me cosmic consciousness, then that is a business relationship. You know Guruji is very good in drawing people to the path by saying, "Invest a few paise of self-discipline to get a million dollars of self-realization." So he catches us, because we are good business men and then we practice and realize that we didn't get self realization in spite of practicing so many kriya. Then we become selfless and give ourselves unconditionally to Guruji. When we are thinking what can I get, what can I receive, not thinking about giving but only receiving, then we are not humble.

Let us take another of the qualities out of the four qualities – harmony, kindness, humility and love. Let us talk about 'kindness.' Guruji said that **"there is no more liberating action than giving kindness inspite of unkindness."** Giving kindness to somebody who is giving unkindness doesn't seem to be the right thing to us. We prefer to either back off and have nothing to do with the person, or give just a little bit of unkindness in return. But Guruji said that the **most liberating** action is kindness in return for unkindness. One of the highest actions is to sincerely give

kindness in return for unkindness. Now, I can say, we are all very fortunate. We get a lot of opportunities to give kindness instead of unkindness.

Guruji has said: ***"God comes to us only when our life is sweet with honeyed thoughts."*** Honeyed thoughts are kind thoughts, gentle thoughts, sweet thoughts, caring thoughts, thoughtful thoughts. A thoughtful thought means thoughts for somebody else's welfare. In order to help us to be able to give kindnesses instead of unkindness remember also the quote of Gyanmata. She says (*God Alone, Pg. 109*):

"I saw that if the Master had [not disciplined me and instead had] treated me with what is called "kindness" I would never have known myself nor my spiritual needs. "Thou, O Lord, givest to each man his portion, and I, receiving it, acknowledge it to be good."

Sw. Sri Yukteshwarji had treated Guruji with strictness, and Guruji was in turn very strict with Daya Mata, Gyanmata and other great ones. You all know of that incident where Guruji was wanting to put the dunce cap on Daya Mata's head. *'Finding the Joy Within You' Pg. 249*:

"As a child, I used to be very sensitive, and extremely shy. So, one day, shortly after I had come to the ashram, Guruji was sitting with a group of the devotees. He was toying with a piece of newspaper, and was laughing and chatting with the disciples sitting around him. But I didn't join in; I stayed in the background. I saw he was making a hat – they call it a "dunce cap" in America – a three pointed cap. I said to myself, "What is he going to do with it? He's got something in mind." Reason said to me, "It's obvious that he is not going to put that dunce cap on any of these older disciples. He has it in mind to place it on the head of his youngest one; that means Daya Ma. Now I have just finished taking my vows, and I promised unconditional obedience to my Guru; but that does not mean I have given him the freedom to make fun of me before all of his disciples." That was my line of reasoning. I thought, "This is where I draw the line."

When he finished making this paper cap, he looked around at all the disciples. I should have been in the same lighthearted mood that they were. But I was holding on to sensitivity. As he motioned to me, saying, "Come here," I shook my head, "No." I thought perhaps he would just pass me by and call one of the other devotees.

I found through the years that Guruji did not do one thing without a deep-seated reason behind it; such was his divine understanding. So he said again, "Come."

"No."

Finally, once more, but he was losing his smile: "Come!"

I became more determined. The more he coaxed, the more determined I was. "No, Guruji, not this."

Finally, his smile evaporated, and he became very quiet. I can see him now, sitting there, his eyes withdrawn and stern. Whenever he looked that way, the disciples would begin to wonder, "What is he thinking; something is coming."

He said to the devotees, "All right, you go now." I quickly got up to go, too, because I thought, "Now is the time to get away."

He said, "No, you stay." Then I knew I was in for it; but I was still quiet determined.

"Do you think that was the right way to behave before all of these people?" he said to me.

I was still angry. "Master, is it right" – see, I was trying to match wits with him – "for the guru to make fun of a disciple before all of the other disciples?"

He answered, "To be bound by the ego like this will not take one to God."

I was still quiet fiery, and said, "Master, I cannot accept the notion that one should be scolded and ridiculed before others."

By this time, Guruji's words were becoming stronger. "All right, until you understand what I am trying to teach you, go stand in the corner."

I can still see myself, a young seventeen-year-old devotee, being told to go stand in the corner. That had never happened to me before.

Only a few weeks earlier Guruji had said to me: "When I went to my Guru, he told me, 'Learn to behave': and so I say the same

thing to you. The way to know the Infinite is to learn to behave." At the time I thought: "I don't have much of a temper, and I get along well with people. I don't think there'll be any problem in my learning to behave. This will be simple." But it is much deeper than one thinks!

"Go stand in the corner." I went.

"This is easy," I thought, "I can obey that."

"Turn your back and face the wall." I did that. "Now, stand on one foot."

By then, I was shocked at this first taste of discipline; and still a little fiery. You know the natural reaction of human beings. When we have trouble with one another, first we're fiery. Then, as a rule, we move from the emotion of anger to the emotion of self-pity; we dissolve into tears. Notice this the next time you get angry: first, anger; then tears, which are nothing but self-pity unless they're shed for mankind, for another human being, or for God.

And so I dissolved into tears, and began to feel sorry for myself: "I have never seen him make fun of others or scold any of the other disciples in front of me. Why does he pick on me before the rest of them?" This was my reasoning: "Poor Daya Ma, you are being mistreated."

But the longer I stood there by the wall, the clearer my understanding became. I thought, "Now let me ask myself: Why did I come here?" If you always honestly question yourself and your motives, it will bring you back to the basics of right behavior. Most of our problems in life are caused by the fact that we keep missing the point. Patanjali refers to this pitfall. We start toward some goal – whether spiritual or material – but the first thing we find is that somewhere along the way we have missed the point.

So there I stood, reasoning with myself. "Why have I come here? It's obvious; I came because I wanted God." I asked myself, "Are you going to get what you came for if you behave like this? Do you really care what people think of you? If you do, you'd better go back to the world. This behavior doesn't belong here."

The moment I understood this truth, I said, "I am wrong." I turned and went to the Master. "Forgive me. Put the cap on my head."

"It isn't necessary now," he said. "I wanted you to learn, to understand. Be absolutely untouched by what someone says or thinks of you. If the whole world is pleased with you, but God and Guru are displeased, you have failed in life. But if the whole world turns against you – criticizes and blames you – but you have won the praise, the approval, of God and Guru, know you have succeeded in this world." That is truth! Look at the world; study it. The very people that lift up a man and adore him become disenchanted in the next instant and cast him down.

If the Guru had treated us with kindness we would never learn the need for humility and unconditional surrender to the Guru. We realize I still have to cultivate unconditional surrender to the Guru and we recognize what are the qualities that are still not present in us. While we are attracted to God, we also have some desires, some habits, some attachments, some things that we like. Sometimes we can't hold on to something we like and to God simultaneously. It is a difficult battle. We recognize I have this desire, this attachment. I must give it up.

Someone had given Sw. Bhavanandji one metal torch and he gave it to me. I didn't care for it very much. One day I found it was gone. I didn't find it in any of the places where I could have kept it. So I made an STD call to Dakshineswar. In those days we had to wait 6 hours to get an STD call. I sat there beside the phone, waiting to get the connection for six hours and I made that call to Dakshineswar – to ask them if by mistake the torch had gone into the trunk that went to Dakshineswar. When I had the torch I thought I did not care for it. But when I lost it I realized how fond of it I was. Then I realized, "You are attached. You really are attached." Through these experiences which appear to be unkind, Guruji is trying to tell us: "If you are attached to a torch or anything then you have to give up that torch" and I was so attached I did some stupid stuff like sitting for 6 hours beside the telephone for the torch.

Okay, I will try to find something to close with – (*Journey to Self Realization, Chapter – Divine Harmony*):

"My prayers to God are not for things temporal, but for those that abide. Fame, which vanishes like a dewdrop in the sun, or wealth,

which passes like a breath of wind, hold no interest for me. I want a life that is humbly serviceful, and abundance that is more than material riches. What could be more desirable than to live a full, harmonious life that is all-reaching and all-giving? Disharmony is misery and death; harmony is the joy of life."

Outer circumstances are temporary; inner peace is abiding. Light is good, but outer shadows prove the presence of light. Fame is very fickle. It comes and goes. If we are humbly serviceful then others will begin to appreciate the humble servicefulness that we manifest and outer harmony will begin to manifest. We can feel very content with what we have even if we don't have much or we can be discontented even if we have a lot of abundance. Abundance is a state of consciousness. Irrespective of abundance, even though not in the eyes of the world, we can be content, joyous, peaceful and express harmony. The last sentence is:

"Disharmony is misery and death; harmony is the joy of life."

Swamiji then felicitated Shri Ramesh Bhatt, Usha Jain, Jimmy Ghaswala by presenting them with the token of appreciation sent by the Rajkot committee for their selfless service for the Rajkot Dhyan Mandir inauguration.

