

Before the last lap of meditation Sw. Shraddhanandji told the following story of the SRF sannyasini:

Her room had a single window which was facing the main road. One day a huge delivery van stood outside the window and the exhaust of the van caused the nun's room to get filled up with Carbon monoxide. By the next day the nun was in a very bad state. She was feeling very weak. She could barely stand, barely get up from bed, but in spite of that she went to attend one of the public functions that Guruji was holding. Guruji was looking at the nun from time to time. During the function Guruji walked up to her and told her, "there is nothing wrong with you, you are plain lazy. Go and do your work". Before the others could interfere to speak on her behalf, the nun quieted them. She told herself that Guruji wanted her to work and so she would go and work even if she did not have the strength, even if it was to kill her. She went over to the office where she was given work to do. By the end of the day she had begun to feel better. Later Guruji explained to her, "I had done for you whatever I could, now it was your turn to do whatever you could to help yourself."

Our progress is determined by 25% of our effort, 25% of the Guru's blessings and 50% of God's grace.

Swamiji spoke of another incident:

A young hermitage resident loved to play pranks. Life to him was a continuous comedy. His merriment, welcome at times, occasionally prevented other devotees from serenely keeping their minds on God. One day Paramhansaji mildly scolded the boy.

"You should learn to be more serious," he remarked.

"Yes, Master," replied the disciple, sincerely regretting his restlessness. "But, my habit is so strong! How can I change without your blessing?"

The Guru solemnly assured him:

"My blessing is there. God's blessing is there. Only your blessing is needed." So remind yourself that even if it is going to kill me I will do my 25% with full 100% effort. Then you will find that you receive the spiritual blessings. Then your 24.99%, Guruji's 25% and God's 50% will give you the full benefit. Let us be spiritual warriors conquering all physical and mental opposition for the next 45 minutes.

(After 45 minutes of meditation).

It is so inspiring to see so many of you sitting in stillness. If we live according to Guruji's wishes we will achieve freedom from our past karma. Think of what was done by the SRF sannyasini.

In one of the letters Sr. Gyanmata has written to a devotee who had questions about how to cope with physical suffering:

"One answer will cover all your questions: .."

From time to time we have different questions and if there is one answer to all those different questions it is this –

Turn to God and fill your consciousness with the realization of His perfection.

Every now and then we see that we could be much better than what we are. One of the devotees told me 'now I know that even if I do 0.001% of what Guruji wants me to do, which is tough, I will get spiritual blessings and will feel a spiritual transformation.' And he was transformed. I

compared him to what I had known of him a few years back. He had transformed a lot, there was less of the judgmental behavior.

Guruji has very high ideals for us and in trying to meet those ideals we will find that we are unsuccessful most of the time but because we are trying to reach those high ideals of Guruji we would be making greater progress. Others who have less higher ideals will appear to be more successful most of the time but since we have higher ideals we find that we are unsuccessful most of the time. We become aware of our imperfections. We realize it requires much greater strength, much greater application, much greater determination, much greater time, much greater effort to overcome those imperfections. Very often when we see lot of imperfections in ourselves and we try to focus too much on our imperfections then it does not make us feel very good. Then it means not making good use of our time – in concentrating on our imperfections. How do we overcome this tendency? By recognizing that God is perfect. Instead of spending time thinking of our imperfections think of God's perfection. Sr. Gyanmata says:

Turn to God and fill your consciousness with the realization of His perfection.

At least turn to God. How do we remove any weakness or darkness from our lives?

In the back pages of 'Only Love' Daya Mataji has written:

You cannot remove darkness from a room by beating it with a stick. Switch on the electric light and the darkness disappears. In the same way, repression of wrong habits is not the most effective way to overcome them. Rather, turn on the light of understanding that comes from deep meditation, and from a voluntary conscious effort to practice self-control. In the light of self-discipline and wisdom the darkness of wrong habits vanishes.

Darkness cannot exist where there is light. The way to remove the darkness is not by beating the darkness with a stick. So also you cannot remove the imperfections by beating them with a stick. People get angry and upset and then tell themselves, "I am not going to get angry, I am not going to be upset." They are trying to beat the imperfection with a stick by making the negative statement of 'I am not' . The way to bring in the light is by bringing in a positive statement and the darkness gets automatically removed. Instead of saying, "No anger" fill your mind with thoughts of kindness and peace. Then when the opportunity presents itself again then the focus remains on kindness and peace. Then the anger will automatically disappear. We don't overcome our weakness overnight. It will be nice if that transformation happens all of a sudden and eternally but to have any lasting effect it takes a lot of time and effort. On some occasions if it happens at once then it is the result of the accumulated effort from several past incarnations.

Then Sr. Gyanmata continues:

Let your weakness be dissolved in the worshipful thought of His strength.

We know from time to time that we are weak. But we have to shift the focus of our attention from our weakness to his strength. Our weaknesses will gradually disappear.

Sr. Gyanmata then says:

It is not necessary to explain things to God, for He knoweth your need before you speak, and is more ready to give than you are to ask.

Sometimes when we are telling God about our needs we have the concept that God doesn't know what we need. We feel we need to let him know what exactly our needs are and what permutations and combinations will be best. It is good to tell God what your needs are, not

because God does not know but because we want to spend time with God. We want to share with him all that is happening in our lives. God knows what our problems are and what the solutions we have planned are. And sometimes God will give us the second best, which is what you have asked him for or He will give us the best, which is what He has selected for you. When Divine Mother tells you don't eat that stuff; it is not good for you; we must not eat the stuff. It will harm us. If the child had listened to the Mother he would have got something more useful. There is that story which Guruji often tells and which has a solution to life's problems:

There was a great yogi and he was a very wealthy yogi and always one with God, but he was always sick. He was suffering from indigestion and he did not pray for his indigestion. So when he was dying the Lord comes and he asks, "Lord I want something in the next incarnation." The Lord asks, "What do you want? Think carefully." And the man said, "I don't care anything for riches. But I want wonderful health and communion with you." So in the next incarnation he was born healthy and very devoted to God but he had no money. No matter what he does, he could not get enough money to feed his hunger. As he was dying – he prayed, "Lord I made another mistake. What is health without money. In the next incarnation, I want to be healthy and I want to be wealthy and a great yogi." So in the next incarnation he was healthy, wealthy, but he was very lonely. All the time he was complaining of loneliness. He thought, "Why this loneliness? God has made companions and I must have a companion to be fully happy." So when he was dying he prayed, "Lord" and the Lord said, "What now?" I want to be healthy, I want to be wealthy and I want a companion. The Lord said, "Have you covered everything?" "Yes Lord, this time I make no mistake." So in the next incarnation, he was healthy, wealthy and had a wife that nagged the life out of him. He couldn't look at anybody; he couldn't go out of his house without being accused of being with another woman. He did not pray for his troubles so at last when he was dying and he had worked out his karma, the Lord appeared and he said, "Lord I made another mistake." The Lord says, "What now?" The man said, "In the 5th incarnation I must be healthy, wealthy, a great yogi and I want a wonderful wife." The Lord asked, "Have you covered everything." He said, "Positive". And it was so in the next incarnation and his wife was an angel following in his footsteps but she died after a few years. He wanted a good wife but he did not specify the time, you see. And when he was going with a great cry like a martyr and as he was dying he called, "Lord" and the Lord said, "What now?" He said "Lord for the next incarnation I will make an airtight prayer." "What is it you want?" "Lord I want to be healthy, wealthy, a great yogi and a wonderful wife that lives long." "Are you sure?" the Lord asks." "Positive." "Are you sure?" He says, "Positive." Now let's see what happens. In the 6th incarnation he had money and health and was a great yogi and he had a wonderful wife that lived too long and began to develop wrinkles. At that time a young girl secretary came into his service. So he says, "How wonderful is my wife." But with one eye he sees the pretty face and says, "Oh, but what a pretty face." He hasn't attained the last full realization; otherwise he wouldn't have been tempted. He looked at the 19 year old girl and says, "That face is so pretty, Oh what a wonderful face." And the girl was very much interested in his money and he was very much in love with the girl and when his conscience swayed to the little girl they eloped. And the little girl was in love with somebody else and when she had got enough cash from him she left him and went to her lover and he was left without his good wife and without his pretty wife and he was crying when the Lord came and asked, "What now?" and he said, "I know all your tricks. Nothing doing. I don't ask from you anything because always there is some trick some red tape. I don't want anything. I want you to be with me always; whether in Hades if you are there you are

my Heaven; or whether in Heaven; if I am with fools they will make it Hades. If you want me to do anything be with me first.”

Now what do you want?

I can't create a watertight list. It can have 3 or 4 or 5 items but there may be lots of loopholes. Have you heard of the loophole tree? We can have all kinds of possibilities. The more the laws, the more the lawbreakers we have. More the items on our list it will never be perfect, never be satisfying. So the devotee above finally said, “You give me whatever you think is best.” Our understanding is not as good as God's understanding. We can tell him what we want; it is perfectly all right to tell him what is on our list. But also tell him, “Lord I can't be perfect, you know better; now you decide what is to be kept, what is to be crossed out from my list; what is to be modified. I surrender my list to you. Do whatever you want. You decide what is best for me. You give me whatever you want.” It is not necessary to explain to God what your need is.

However it is good to talk to God to remind ourselves that God is there, and that he knows best. If we talk to God we know there is someone who cares for me, someone who is listening to me. Sometimes you feel I don't know whether God is capable, or wise, or great or whether at all He is in my presence. When talking to him we realize then that he is not on the moon or in Los Angeles when we don't have the mobile but here with us, close to us. It is not that if we are more in video conference we are more in his presence. Talk to him. Speak to him and tell him, “God, this is what happened today and this is what he did to me today, and this is what he said to me, and that this is how he is behaving and that he is building up a lot of negative karma. That I am going to fight with him and conquer him and that I feel like slitting his throat to help myself. But you tell me how you want me to react to whatever is happening in my life. I want to know how you want me to conduct myself. What somebody else does is none of my business.”

In another place Sr. Gyanmata has said,

The things that happen to us do not matter; what we become through them does.

I know a devotee whose father was in perfect health, but accidentally they discovered that he had 8 blockages in his heart though he had no problem. It was decided that he had to go through an operation and that operation was a turning point in his life. People do have turning point in their lives. When such a situation comes they cannot go about their normal work. They question their lives; “where am I going? Am I in the right direction? I have to make a course correction. I have to make greater effort in meditation. I must focus on what I should do rather than what I want to do. If all circumstances are good then there is no problem. But all circumstances will not be good – there may be 8 blockages, open heart surgery to go through; a turning point in life. It is a move in a different direction and we suddenly begin to recognize human existence. But remember what Sr. Gyanmata says,

The things that happen to us do not matter; what we become through them does.

Sr. Gyanmata also says:

You can only get your own and your own will surely come to you.

You can only get that which is yours. If it is mine it will surely come to me. Meaning if you have carried over karma from previous lives, if you have something nasty said to you in this life then it is something you have carried over from previous lives. Whether it is likeable, not likeable, pleasant or unpleasant there is nothing that you get that you do not deserve. Whatever it is it will

come to you. Don't think that person is more fortunate, I am not so fortunate. That person has earned whatever they are getting and you are getting what you have earned.

Sr. Gyanmata says:

He knoweth your need before you speak, and is more ready to give than you are to ask.

Through faith, devotion, surrender to God, you will be able to permit God to send to us whatever is best for us. Suppose it is necessary for us to have open heart surgery; we overcome some of the karma; we make important decisions in life.

Don't pray that you should not have any problems in life. Gurujī has said:

An easy life is not a victorious life.

And Sr. Gyanmata says:

It is not necessary to explain things to God.

God wants us to allow him to give. He doesn't want us to block whatever he wants to give. He doesn't want us to block whatever he is giving to us.

Remember the SRF nun, she couldn't get out of bed. She barely dragged herself to the function, she could barely eat, barely live, barely survive and Gurujī told her, "There is nothing wrong with you. You are plain lazy." So she forced herself to go to work even if it would kill her and through that tremendous effort she became totally well. We feel we can't do something, but Gurujī knows your limits.

We all like miracles, and if they happen it will be so nice. So we often go to Swamiji so and so and say, "Please pray for me and meditation will become easy for me." I don't have to work and to struggle. **We have to work.** Part of our responsibility is to work, to manifest obedience, to manifest strength. You have to **exercise** your physical, mental and spiritual muscles. There are times we must not talk, we must not say something nasty. There are times when it is difficult to meditate, times when it is difficult not to react nastily, when we have to work to think that this is a good person. There is a stage when a person thinks that if I am not killing anybody then I am practicing ahimsa. Then some time later he feels, if I am not beating him up I am practicing ahimsa. Then he begins to feel if I am not thinking about the wrong that the person did when he did wrong; and if I am not sending opposing thoughts against the person in the ether, causing the person to become weak then I am practicing ahimsa. Then he doesn't judge the person at all. Then there is no question of practicing ahimsa. If I think everything is according to God's will, no negative thought will be there in the mind as everything is God's will. Understanding comes in such a person. The ability to surrender needs tremendous amount of effort.

One of the monks said to me some time back:

"I decided last night that I will just do whatever (some senior monk) asked me to do. That person had a long list of complaints against me – 'you did this to me last year, and the year before last you did this to me, and before that you did this to me and several years back, this is what you did to me.'" And I listened to him and told him that he must learn to change himself. I am not going to change; the world around him is not going to change. And finally he said he had found peace because he decided to change, he decided to surrender to God.

Another monk in the ashram was working 18 – 20 hours a day while the others were working much less. And he would be working even when the other monks would be resting. The others tried to help him with his work when they could but sometimes it was not possible. He would

often find that he had just finished one work and the others came and enjoyed while he continued with his next job. Once he came and asked me, "Can I do this job later?" and I told him, "No, it must be done now." And in the beginning he was very frustrated. And then suddenly I found that he was quiet and not complaining, that he was going about his job with a light step and feeling enthusiastic and suddenly he seemed to be lifting heavy loads with such ease and I asked him and he said, "I decided to surrender to whatever Guruji decided for me."

Sr. Gyanmata has next said:

When you meditate, turn away from everything except the one absorbing thought of His overshadowing Presence.

Even when Guruji was alive, when he was in the body, Sw. Anandmoyji would everyday keep a picture of Guruji on a chair in front of him and he would look at Guruji and Guruji would look at him and he would tell himself, 'Guruji is looking at me and I am looking at Guruji' and he would meditate in Guruji's presence. And even after Guruji left his body, Swamiji continued meditating in Guruji's presence. Guruji was looking at him through that picture. Learn to recognize God's presence. He is present wherever we are present. If we are meditating in our rooms he is with us. God is always with us.

Then Sr. Gyanmata says:

In this way you will become receptive, and healing will flow through body, mind and soul.

God's blessings are flowing to us. The rains of Guruji's blessings will fall on us to the degree we are receptive. If the rain is falling on us and we have blocked ourselves with an umbrella the rain cannot fall on us. But if we remove the umbrella and become receptive, then the rain of God's mercy can fall on us. Then we become receptive to Guruji's blessings. We must focus on God's perfection, on God's strength. To recognize God is to have faith in his concern for our welfare; to recognize God is with me: and then we become receptive to his presence and healing flows through body, mind and soul.

Someone asked me questions about healing of body, mind and soul; how to meditate deeply and how to overcome weakness, physical pain and troubles. All our questions get answered, if we try to remember the following statement made by Sr. Gyanmata and I am repeating it:

"One answer will cover all your questions: Turn to God and fill your consciousness with the realization of His perfection. Let your weakness be dissolved in the worshipful thought of His strength. It is not necessary to explain things to God, for He knoweth your need before you speak, and is more ready to give than you are to ask. When you meditate, turn away from everything except the one absorbing thought of His overshadowing Presence. In this way you will become receptive, and healing will flow through body, mind and soul.

I was once with Sw. Bhavanandji and I read out to him this line which I read in the Yogoda magazine:

"You have the power to change the world."

Swamiji smiled and nodded and said, "Yes, one person has the power to change the world. We may think our power is very limited. We can't do anything for the difficult situation he is going through. Guruji asked us to pray for the healing of body, mind and soul - to recognize the power of the mind over the body; to recognize the power of the soul over the mind and to recognize the

power of the soul over the body. The rest is Guruji's business. There is nothing for me to say, how to heal. That is God's business."

We should not minimize our power to heal people. We should not consider that we don't have the capacity to heal others. Also don't think that 'I am changing anybody.'

Remember the incident in the Autobiography of a Yogi:

"A blind disciple, Ramu, aroused my active pity. Should he have no light in his eyes, when he faithfully served our master, in whom the Divine was fully blazing? One morning I sought to speak to Ramu, but he sat for patient hours fanning the guru with a hand-made palm-leaf punkha. When the devotee finally left the room, I followed him.

"Ramu, how long have you been blind?"

"From my birth, sir! Never have my eyes been blessed with a glimpse of the sun.'

"Our omnipotent guru can help you. Please make a supplication.'

"The following day Ramu diffidently approached Lahiri Mahasaya. The disciple felt almost ashamed to ask that physical wealth be added to his spiritual superabundance.

"Master, the Illuminator of the cosmos is in you. I pray you to bring His light into my eyes, that I perceive the sun's lesser glow.'

"Ramu, someone has connived to put me in a difficult position. I have no healing power.'

"Sir, the Infinite One within you can certainly heal.'

"That is indeed different, Ramu. God's limit is nowhere! He who ignites the stars and the cells of flesh with mysterious life-effulgence can surely bring luster of vision into your eyes.'

"The master touched Ramu's forehead at the point between the eyebrows.

"Keep your mind concentrated there, and frequently chant the name of the prophet Rama for seven days. The splendor of the sun shall have a special dawn for you.'

"Lo! in one week it was so. For the first time, Ramu beheld the fair face of nature. The Omniscient One had unerringly directed his disciple to repeat the name of Rama, adored by him above all other saints. Ramu's faith was the devotionally ploughed soil in which the guru's powerful seed of permanent healing sprouted." Kebalananda was silent for a moment, then paid a further tribute to his guru.

"It was evident in all miracles performed by Lahiri Mahasaya that he never allowed the ego-principle to consider itself a causative force. By perfection of resistless surrender, the master enabled the Prime Healing Power to flow freely through him.

Healing is God's part. Don't think this is too big a problem for me to handle. Don't minimize the effect of effort, of prayer, the power of prayer. Visualize the people who need prayer. Visualize the physical organ which needs the healing in God's light and love. Recognize that God's light and healing is creating health and harmony and visualize the body part perfect after healing is over. Whenever someone came to Guruji and described to him the ailment of the person, Guruji would tell the person not to describe the ailment or the nature of the person's problems. Guruji said, 'being told of the nature of the person's ailment would make it difficult for us to visualize the person being fully cured. We may find it difficult to visualize the person in perfect health. Through prayers you can bring about not just physical but even mental and behavioral or spiritual healing. Visualize the person manifesting that quality for which you are praying. Don't concentrate on the cells which have cancer etc. but visualize the whole organ affected and envelope it in the light of God. Don't visualize on the person not smoking, or not getting angry but visualize the light of God surrounding the person. "Replace any darkness with light." Visualize the physical, mental, emotional, astral, causal form and visualize perfection in that

form. It needs training to focus on health, light, perfection and wellbeing. It needs conscious, deliberate, forceful decision for healing to flow through and if we have prayed with conscious, deliberate, forceful decision then even at this moment that person is freed from his weakness. To that extent we will be able to help others.

Pray for those who have not approached you, for those who have asked for your prayers; pray for all on earth, in the other regions of the physical world and for those in the astral and causal world. Pray for everyone. Pray for all those whom you have prayed for sometime in your life earlier. The more we pray for others, the more our heart expands and we can manifest those qualities Guruji wants us to manifest. The light contains the love of God, the wish of God for that person.