

Sister Ranjana - Class
Atlanta Regional SRF Day Camp: Parent Meeting
October 15, 2017

These are the notes from Sister. Ranjana's class at the SRF Youth Day Camp in Atlanta on September 14th.

Brother Anandamoy noted in the DVD - Part 1 of Spiritual Parenting- when expressing his excitement about the release of Master's CD, "Beholding the One in All", that once the SRF monks had cleaned up the audio with a technology not available in the world, it was so important to have the recording so we could hear how Master said it as well as what he said. Unfortunately, I cannot convey how Sister. Ranjana expressed herself so beautifully in this talk, and I missed many words. There are many places here where self-reflection is suggested as we look at our own ways of parenting in light of Master's will for us.

Our kids are coming into this world more evolved. They need something deeper. When we ended the overnight youth camps, we asked, "What does Master want?" We began the Encinitas day camp along with the regional day camps. We will be moving to two day regional youth camps and eventually five days. There is a gap between Master's teachings and the world. The world has gotten much bigger and more and more difficult. Our kids are asking why SRF has gotten stricter, but the fact is that the world has gotten worse. It makes it worse for them. They want to be accepted by other kids so they won't be ostracized. We show them Master's teachings. They learn that they can have friends but don't have to compromise.

This year's theme is on spiritualizing relationships and how to go about that so that their friends are real friends. Social media might tell them that they have 482 friends, but we ask, will those 482 friends buy you vegetable soup when you are sick. We remind them what real friendships are. If they are hanging out and two friends start talking about another one, what do they do? Why do we get here? Why don't we stand up for principle? They learn to decide, I won't go along with what isn't right. I can stand on my own and do what's right for me.

What is their biggest influence? You are. It doesn't have to do with what you say. It has to do with who you are. Growing up in your home, the vibration there is affecting them in either a good or bad way. They look at your way of speaking to others. They see your underlying motives and desires. Rather than focusing on, "I told her to take the trash out, and she didn't do

it", it's about where I am inside. Getting back to God is messy. We are in delusion.

Everything Guruji told us is true. We are the all-powerful, immortal children of God. Guruji told us that when he was in human consciousness he made mistakes, but not when he was in divine consciousness. He doesn't expect us to be perfect.

If you lose your temper, it is important to follow up with your children to talk about what you learn from that. Apologize, and let them know, I was in a difficult place.

A young girl of thirty told us that when her parents got a divorce, she was living with her mother. When she passed by her mother's bedroom and saw her mother on her knees in front of her altar pouring her heart out, from that moment she knew that where she would turn in the difficult times in her own life.

Parents want what is best for their kids-to be happy, fulfilled and successful. What Guruji says and what the world tells us is different. The world tells us we have to be the best computer programmer, the best at our jobs. People are stressed out. The only way to find peace is within oneself. When I talk to twelve year olds, they are so stressed about their schedules. Education can be so stressful. We need to help them to back up and think about what you want to see in them. Look at them. Consider the example that you set. What do I do? Do I procrastinate? Am I being an example because I'm trying to make a change? It's a difficult vibration. Not when it's on the surface. Kids know if it's not real, and that's what they respond to when they are in action.

We don't come into this life perfect. We pick up where we left off. It is up to us whether we will reinforce bad habits or not. Some things we do so easily, and we can be sure we did those before. They came with their own challenges. The morals and values are what they are being exposed to. You end up with different outcomes for different children.

The mother of two children, ages eight and eleven, was concerned about the impact of the computer on them. They were watching the news and using it all of the time. She wanted them to have a phone so that they could reach her. We asked her, how often do you look at your phone? She answered, every five minutes. She was so worried that she would miss something. What is it about these devices that we are meant to be served by that they pull us in and ensnare us?

There was a family who, when they sat down for dinner, always had their phones. The parents decided that there would be no phones at dinner. They felt they were reconnecting as a family. They were connecting, bonding. It's fascinating how far we have come in a particular direction when we haven't consciously chosen that. It sort of crept in. If you want to keep yourself going with your kids, keep help in mind. Give them choices. I will let you choose for yourself what you're going to do or where you're going to go. If you don't take the time to reflect, you can't live deeply. Ask yourself: Where am I going? Why? Is this leading me to what I want?

What gives kids a sense of confidence, a sense of self-esteem, is the company they keep? A social worker for social media said that even if they're not expressing it, the underlying thinking takes place. They have to see their parents doing it for themselves. I can make up my own mind. Very little children want to please their parents. The older ones want to make their own decisions- where will we go? What will we wear? One single parent commented that it was like having an alien in the house. My sweet little kid wants to push me away. She rolls her eyes. When she was little, she saw herself as her parent's daughter. As she gets older, she is stepping out into the world. She's asking, what's my place in the world? For kids in college, they may think, I am my parents' daughter, but I am really getting buffeted in college. It's part of a healthy process to become one's own person. I'm grown up. I can make my own decisions.

If you want to give them the responsibility you have to keep in mind if the child has the maturity to expand boundaries but with the right boundaries. There are so many choices. How do I know what my sexual orientation is? The message of the world is that you can choose what you want to be. It is a confusing time in the world because it's all about the body. We had had thousands of incarnations and male and female bodies. By the time we are on this path, where we're very close, we've evolved to that place where we're ready to be searching for truth. Words about the body and body fulfilment are distracting us. It should force us to open up a vaster realization of ourselves.

My mother was from Italy. I don't think that when I was growing up she was ever not holding us. Her way was to nurture and feed. I'm not saying that stereotypes should be there, but when the mom is working as long hours as the dad, the kids are not getting what they need. They see it, and their actions reflect it. Parents are there for dinner, maybe, and then on the computer. The family structure is taking big hits. It would be better if technology was not there for the kids. I've worked with over two thousand kids. I see kids who don't have a lot but only one parent is home. The child is growing up healthy and balanced with a healthy sense of self.

When both parents are working full time, or often, more than full time, the kids may have fancy clothes and all the technology they could want, but inside, they feel insecure. They don't feel good about themselves. They are drifting. It's about nurturing.

There was a family with two parents and children ages seven, 13, and 17. They did their own things, and spent most of their energy on the autistic child. They were concerned that their 14 year old daughter was hanging out with the wrong kids. She was very smart. I told her, "Don't blow it. You can get into a really good college. Study hard so that you can get a really good scholarship. The parents didn't know what to do. She asked to talk to them, and they would say not now, later.

I will tell parents, unless there is a fire or someone is having a heart attack, don't shut that door. Develop communication and trust so that there's an open door. They need to know that they can come to you in trust. There are many SRF kids that are good. You have to be prepared. Let them know, I'm here for you. I'm listening to you, loving you. Not many of them feel like they don't count.

Don't give them the message, my work is more important. That's when they get the low self-esteem. You have a lot of power. Don't edit or try to correct them in everything they do. You have to know where they are. You have to get into their world. Understand and hear them. From there, you can give them a piece of Master's teachings. They won't absorb it just by you telling them.

You have to be patient and approach them where they are. Acknowledge them. Communication is not just about what they're doing wrong. Make sure that you are in the right place to have these conversations. Don't think, she's done this a hundred times, or you have this reactive place you go and she has a reactive place to go. You have to change the scenario. You need to have a conversation that would otherwise test your patience. If you were angry when you talked to them about this after you've done the wrong thing, let them know where you were wrong and that you are sorry. They think when you are nagging that you don't understand. Instead of nagging, say, "How can I help you with this?"

If, for example, your daughter wants to come home at eleven o'clock, and you think she should come home at nine, having a conversation about it will make her feel valid. Ask, how can you address my needs? She may say, all of my friends come home at eleven. You then explain that there are a lot of things going on in the world that you don't want to emulate. Discuss compromise. Show her how to compromise. Ask her to show you how she

can be responsible so that you can trust her. Kids are different and may need different rules. One may know herself and her boundaries. She is ready. Another may be immature and a follower. She may not be ready for fewer boundaries. Even hearing that from you can be very validating. It needs to be balanced.

There needs to be lots of validation. Your support of your kids should not be about compliments on their clothes. She may be a clothes horse. In the world, there is too much emphasis on the body. Tell her, you can dress to be very pretty but not classy. You want to look like someone who respects themselves.

Catch them in good acts and offer lots of praise. Take the time to see what they're doing in their world. Don't belittle the problems of the little ones. If they talk about something that scares them, don't dismiss their feelings and tell them that they're okay. You are teaching them to belittle their own feelings. Acknowledge that it must be difficult. Teach them to listen to themselves. Acknowledge their problem. Most of their problems are very real to them. You need to get on their level and be where they are.

We feel the benefits of these teachings. Don't force the spiritual stuff on your children a lot. Don't tell them what friend they should choose. When you tell someone to do something they don't want to do, they will do the opposite. Nurturing can just feel like hugging. Sometimes we're not getting what it is that they want.

Look at your day and at the world. The world throws more and more at us. What is it that I really want in my world? How can I simplify my life keeping in mind that it is not quantity that is important but quality? Am I happier now...more peaceful now? Do I feel I know more about taking me where I want to go? What can I do in my world? Do I really need to work? Do I need that new Lexus? I remember thinking about a mom, that Lexus is costing her more than she realizes. It is not about the money.

We are all working for our stuff. We are working for an image that the world says what we should be living for or mass consciousness, mass vibration. Unless we just consciously choose, we do get pulled into the mess. It shouldn't just be that we work hard and find the day gone. We need to take Guruji into our meditation. Daya Ma has said that her day was one continuous act for God. Whatever she did was spiritualized.

Let your child know, I love my family and I love you in my family. It's about recovering that spark of God within. We should not be thinking, if I had more time I could progress now. We have to ask, what is my priority?

The girls at retreat learn simplicity. They learn to ask what is most important, what is secondary, and what are just fillers. Then, they ask, what does the world say? The eye opener is that they saw the contrast of the world side, getting ahead by being successful and power versus God. Remember that the world will never support you spiritually. We are experiencing the lows and dips of the yugas. Remember Daya Mata's experience with the dark cloud that she saw in the sixties. That is what we are in now. We are not to be afraid of it. We are not being pulled by it. Mrinalini Mata was in Encinitas in the seventies working on "God Talks with Arjuna". Everything was being put in her way to keep her from this important work. She even broke her ankle. She told us that this was Satan trying to prevent us from getting "God Talks with Arjuna" out. Then she said very firmly, "He'll go his way, and we'll go ours."

Reinforce boundaries for kids. Peer pressure has gotten darker. There's more at stake. As a parent, you need to set boundaries and make sure that you set forth whatever you feel is an appropriate boundary. If there are two parents, you need to be consistent. If one says yes and the other says no, kids will use that. They know how to play parents off against each other. If you have to argue, go where they can't hear you. Kids hear their parents fight and it wounds them. They don't want this disharmony in the house. If emotions get in there, nothing will be resolved anyway. Communicate. Let me be open and hear what they say so that there is a bridge where you can come together and work it out.