

Nine Point Code of Conduct : MEDITATION (*DHYANA*)

*“Real Meditation is getting absorbed in God as the only thought, the only goal.
Think God, breathe God, Love God, live God” - Baba*

1. What is Meditation (Dhyana)?

Dhyana (Meditation) is a simple and exact procedure of becoming aware of whom you are? It is the process of learning to become aware of yourself as you really are. All of the training in your day to day living has been to know the outer world, and to become skilful for existence in the external world for our apparent material benefit so that one could live peacefully. However, unless you learn to know yourself, whatever you do in the external world will be insufficient and will not produce the level of peace and harmony we yearn for. If a tyre in a car is out of balance, no matter how wonderfully it was designed in other respects, no matter how much research went into composting the material, or designing the tread, it will not function properly and take the car forward safely. In the same manner, unless you achieve an inner balance, no matter how much you know about performing in the outer world, you will fall short of achieving the desired result. Meditation is the means of achieving this inner balance.

2. What is the aim of Meditation (Dhyana)?

The aim is to give attention to your thoughts. Attention does not mean - to entertain your thoughts, but to observe how the thoughts arise in you, what type of thoughts arise in you and what are the cause and effect of such thoughts arising in you.

3. Can anyone train another in Meditation (Dhyana)?

Swami clarified this beautifully - *“Can anyone train another in meditation? Or claim to train? It may be possible to teach a person the posture, the pose, the position of the legs, feet, or hands, neck, head or body, the style of breathing, or its speed. But meditation is a function of the inner self; it involves deep, subjective quiet, the emptying of the mind and filling oneself with Light that emerges from the divine Spark within. This is a discipline that no text book can teach and no class can ever communicate.”*

Swami further added, “You need not rely on another for success in meditation and repetition of the divine name (dhyana and japa) where one awaits contact with some sage or a saint in order to get from him a mantra for recitation. Pray to God within, with humility and genuine yearning and you will definitely receive guidance.”

4. How do we start Meditating (Dhyana)?

Begin with ‘Silent Sitting’. Silent sitting is not meditation but the first step towards meditation. How do we do that? Just find five minutes a day for yourself. Yes! Just five minutes a day. It’s better to find a time either early morning or in the evening so that you do not have to rush through in order to complete some other work that awaits your attention.

Let us say, if in the evening - Make sure you take your telephone off the hook. TV and Radio must be switched off. There should not be any distraction from worldly objects at all. Now, sit down in a posture, which is comfortable to you. If you are not adept in sitting in the traditional “lotus” posture – please do not worry. Just be natural

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and comfortable with your posture. For example, if you are sitting on the chair, rest your hands on your legs and completely relax for a few seconds. Then take a deep breath, look at the tip of your nose and slowly close your eyes.

Now be seated like this for five minutes only. Maybe you should put an alarm clock on to warn you after 5 minutes. You will be surprised that during these five minutes, your attention will go towards a number of outwardly things. In fact you are not meditating here. All you are doing is sitting silently. Maybe you will feel itchy and start scratching your body. No, do not move your hands from your legs. Let them rest there. During these five minutes, you might remember to do something very important. Your mind will start working a thousand times faster and you will feel that you are wasting your time by sitting silently as your work demands more time. Even you might get impatient and start wondering why the alarm clock is not buzzing. Maybe you forgot to put the alarm clock on at all. No, do not move from your seat. Do not open your eyes. Do not move your hands or any other part of the body apart from the natural acts like breathing, sneezing or even yawning.

That is the whole purpose of silent sitting. You will feel that to sit idle for five minutes without opening your eyes, without listening to the music through your ears, and without moving any organ of the body is so hard. This is the very first step towards meditation. You will wonder that during the time of silent sitting, a thousand of thoughts will pass away from your mind. Do not entertain them. Just observe them as a witness. That's all. You will observe after practising five minutes of silent sitting daily for a few weeks, the number of thoughts passing away from your mind will reduce. Your senses which are always yearning to feel some stimuli from the outside would now quieten up and start looking inwards.

Our beloved Swami says that *“Silence is the beginning of the art of communication. Learn to live in silence for some moment everyday. Just sit in complete silence and listen for the voice of God. You may not physically hear a voice though God can speak to you through the silence, but you will become aware of God's message, even though you hear no voice. So let your mind rest in God in all those moments of silence and then thoughts will gradually come into your mind. But, be patient and do not necessarily expect immediate results. Success will come, provided you persevere. Know always that I am with you, even though you hear nothing. For I am you and you are Me, so how is it possible that we cannot communicate? Just think about these things and do not give up easily. Devotees adept in true Dhyana are very rare; most people merely go through the external exercises only, without the deep yearning and focus on God. So they are unable to win the grace of God.”*

5. Saint Patanjali's method of Meditation - from Dhaarana (concentration) to Dhayana, from Dhayana to Samaadhi (Deep meditation).

Swami explains - *“The first step is Dhaarana (concentration). Twelve Dhaaranas amount to one Dhyana. Twelve Dhyanas equal to one Samaadhi. Dhaarana is a steady concentrated viewing of any object for twelve seconds. You have to look at a flame, a picture or an idol of your choice for twelve seconds only with total concentration, without winking the eyelids. This is Dhaarana.*

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Practising Dhaarana is a preparation to Dhyaana. The denotation of Dhyaana is twelve Dhaaranas. This means Dhyaana should be $12 \times 12 = 144$ seconds, that is, 2 minutes 24 seconds. Dhyaana does not call for sitting in "Meditation" for hours. Proper Dhyaana need not last more than 2 minutes and 24 seconds. It is only after Dhaarana has been practised well that one can do Dhyaana (Meditation) well.

Twelve Dhyaanas equal to the Samaadhi. This means 144×12 seconds = 28 minutes and 48 seconds, very much less than an hour. If Samaadhi is prolonged, it may some times prove very serious or fatal consequences. These are disciplines the yogis practised. These disciplines are not explained in any scriptures. Hence if you intend doing long sessions of Dhyaana, then you will need a Spiritual Guru to be with you to guide you. If you want to proceed correctly in the practice of these disciplines, you have to begin with Dhaarana. Start practising Dhaarana for 12 seconds a day from now on. This is very important for students. In the past, Yogis like Aurobindo and Ramana Maharishi practised these disciplines. Ramana Maharishi used to go to the terrace and concentrate on a particular star for twelve seconds. In that state, the mind also was still and steady.

By continuing this practice of Dhaarana, you can develop the capacity to perform Dhyaana for 2 minutes and 24 seconds. Continuing the practice of Dhyaana in this way, you develop the capacity to be in a state of Samaadhi for 28 minutes and 48 seconds."

Swami when he addressed the devotees one day had jokingly said that "God gave mankind 24 hours in a day to spend. Try and spend at least 24 minutes out of this day in uninterrupted contemplation of God."

6. What is Concentration (*Dhaarana*)?

Swami says, "Concentration is essential for all. It is the foundation of all successful endeavours. It is needed not only for Dhyaana, but even for worldly affairs and ordinary living. Whatever be the task one is engaged in, if one does it with concentration, one will develop both self-confidence and self-respect; for they are the result of the attitude of one's own mind. The mind may lean on towards either the bad or the good. Concentrated attention must be employed to keep the mind attached upon one point. One pointed focus will increase power and skill; it cannot be won without conquering the worldly cravings that distract the mind. This one pointed focus, this conquest of the mind, is acquired only by the exercise of Dhyaana."

7. From Dhaarna (Concentration) to Dhyana (Meditation)

Swami says, "Many people think that Concentration is the same thing as meditation, but there is no such connection between concentration and meditation. Concentration is something which is below your senses, whereas meditation is something which is above your senses. But many are under the false impression that concentration is identical to meditation, and they take to a wrong path. What we have to practice is something, which is beyond these normal senses. We must rise from being below the senses (that is the state of concentration) to the senses, (that is the middle position,

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called contemplation); and from there we must rise above the senses, that is called meditation. Between concentration and meditation there is a border area which covers both and that is the realm of contemplation. To be in that area of contemplation is to free you of worldly attachments. If you break away from all the worldly attachments – all the routine attachments in the world, then you will enter the region of contemplation. When you have completely broken away all your attachments, you then break through this area of contemplation and get into the area of meditation.”

8. What does Dhayana do?

Swami says, “*Dhyaana provides rest for the wayward mind. The mind is a wonder; its antics are even more surprising. It has no distinct form or shape. It assumes the shape or form of the thing it is involved in. Wandering from wish to wish, flitting from one desire to another is its nature. Hence, it is the cause of loss and grief, of elation and depression. Its effects are both positive and negative. It is worth while for man to know the characteristics of the mind and the ways to master it for one’s own benefit. The mind is prone to gather experiences and store them in the memory. It does not know the art of giving up. Nothing is cast away by the mind. As a consequence, grief, anxiety and misery continue simmering in it. If only the mind can be taught *thyaaga* (sacrifice), one can become a *yogi* (spiritually serene person).*

The clock, to all appearances, keeps on ticking away continuously. But this is really not the case. It is not continuous, for there is, one can notice, a short pause between one tick and the next. That is the interval of rest. But, the mind does not have even this short interval between one thought and the next. And in the continuous succession of thoughts, there is no order or relationship. This adds to the confusion and concern. This is the main source of ill health in man. We are at present planning and preparing for physical rest and recreation and we know that even machines need hours of rest! But, we have neglected the duty of ensuring rest for the mind.

Dhyaana (meditation) is the name for the period of rest we provide for the busy and wayward mind. The heart is engaged, like the ticking of the clock, in beats but, a new pulse of energy is generated between one beat and another. It makes for the flow, regardless of the past or the future moments. It is a constant flux towards a goal. The swimmer in a river has to push aside the water in front to the sides and kick the water to the back so that he can move forward straight and fast. Forcing the water back is the act that takes him forward. That is to say, do not attach importance to it, throw it back, and give it up, renounce it; that alone can help you to progress. Instead, man collects and stores, accumulates and takes pride in what he holds firm, regardless of the preciousness of the human trait of renunciation. So, we sink in material possessions, victories and vagaries. We do not float or swim across the temptations.”

9. Concentration to Contemplation and Meditation

These are the three stages: concentration, contemplation and meditation. Getting all the senses into action is concentration. Right from dawn to dusk, whatever activities we perform, they are one with concentration. There is a border area between concentration, which is below the sense, and meditation, which is beyond the senses.

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This border area is known as contemplation. When contemplation deepens, it moves naturally into meditation. Meditation is entirely above the senses, it transcends the senses.

A rose plant has leaves, thorns and flowers. Concentration helps you identify as to where the thorns are and where the flower is. To cut the love (rose flower) away from worldly desires (thorns) is contemplation. Concentration is identifying the various locations of the thorns and flowers by looking at the rose plant. To offer the cut flower to the Lord is meditation.

In meditation, there are these three aspects: the one who is doing the meditation (i.e. the subject), the object of meditation (i.e. God), and the act or process (i.e. the rapport that the subject is trying to establish with the object). Proper meditation or culmination of the meditation and the act of meditation – coalesce and merge into one. In the state of meditation, the aspirant, the object of his meditation and the process of meditation have fallen away and there is only One, and that One is God. All that may change has fallen away, and That Thou Art (Tat Twam Asi) is the state that exists. It is an experience of unity (without the aspirant being conscious of himself). As One gradually returns to his customary and habitual state of consciousness, the God he meditated on (jyoti or light) is again placed in the heart and kept there throughout the day whilst he carries on with his day to day activities.

One should understand that what comes about the meditation, as one move deeply into it, is not the thinking of the light but the forgetting of the body and the direct experience that the body is not oneself. This is the stage of contemplation, when the body is totally forgotten. It cannot be forced. It comes about by itself and is the stage that naturally follows concentration. Swami Vivekananda said that, in meditation, he was unable to feel or find his body.

Samadhi or Equipose is the culmination of meditation; it transcends all states of physical consciousness: conscious, subconscious and unconscious. It is a state of that transcends the mind; it is super consciousness – the intelligence is steady. “Sama” means balanced state, and “dhee” means the intellect. Samadhi means balanced and steady condition of the intellect – equal minded in all circumstances, heat or cold, good or bad, joy or sorrow.”

10. What to do if I start feeling sleepy?

As your body and mind relaxes you will start feeling sleepy. Either wash your face or start again or stop meditating for a few hours. Refresh yourself before you start again.

11. From what age should one start meditating?

The child must be given the right direction from the very tender age so that he grows with the right attitude and the desire to be with God each day.

12. For how long we should meditate?

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Swami says, “*Sitting in meditation, the question often comes up, “How long should we sit?” There is no answer. There is no particular time. Meditation is really an all day long process. Do this every day without break; for as long as you enjoy it. Do this deeply and systematically. A time will certainly come, when you can no more relish dark and evil thoughts, no more yearn for dark and sinister books, no more crave for toxic food and drinks, no more handle ugly demeaning things, no more suffer infliction of infamy or injury, no more formulate evil designs. You are then in the realm of the Divine, of Peace beyond words.*”

Swami also said, “*The main things to be considered are not at what expense one has prayed to the Lord; nor the number of years one has been engaged in it; nor the rules and regulations one has followed; nor even the number of times one has prayed over; but with what mind one has prayed; with what degree of patience one has been awaiting the result; and with what single-mindedness one has prayed for Godly Bliss, regardless of worldly happiness and delay, with no lassitude and with constant attention to oneself, one’s meditation, and one’s task. If one examines deeply how much he has succeeded in getting rid of all idea of self, he can himself gauge the progress he has made. Instead, if one is engaged in counting the rules, and adding up the time spent and the expenses incurred, such Dhyanam can belong only to the objective world; it can never come into the subjective and spiritual fields.*”

13. What is the best time for Meditation?

Swami says, “*The ideal time for engaging oneself in Dhyanam (Meditation) is Brahmamuhurta, that is, the period commencing at 3 am and ending at 6 am. Brahmamuhurta literally means the time of Brahma.*”

But regularity is most important. Swami also recommends a few minutes of meditation in the evening after dusk. Swami told the students that you have to look at an object – flame, idol or picture –for 12seconds with total concentration and without blinking the eyelids. This is concentration (dharana). Twelve dharana concentrations make one meditation (dhyana). This means that meditation should last for 12 x 12 -144 seconds. Thus, proper meditation need not last more than two minutes and 24 seconds. Twelve meditations equal one Samadhi, which amounts to 12 x 144 secs = 28minutes, 48 seconds.

However, it is not something that one does by sitting for a couple of minutes or hours. Contemplation of the Lord should be always, at all times and places.

Sri Ramana Maharshi was once asked, “How long should one practise meditation? 15 or 30 or 45 minutes or an hour?” His reply was “You should continue doing it till you forget that you are meditating. As long as you are conscious (physically aware) that you are meditating, it is no meditation at all.” The consciousness of the body and mind and the thought of yourself should become totally extinct. Only the experience of the object of your meditation should subsist, i.e. nothing else but the presence of Divinity. The stage of meditation is experiencing but without the consciousness that you are experiencing.

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14. How frequently should we meditate?

Swami emphasised, “*You must choose a fixed time for Dhyanam (Meditation) during Brahmamuhurta and meditate regularly at the same time every day.*”

15. Shall we meditate on any object or form?

Swami directed, “*If you so desire, you may in the initial stages, picture the form of the God which is dear to you. You must realise that the form has got to dissolve sooner or later. You must not try to confine divinity to say any particular form. You must see God in His all-pervasive form, as the One who resides in the hearts of all.*”

16. Where to meditate?

If possible, set aside an area that is used only to meditate. This will create a meditative mood. A small room or closet is ideal as long as it can be well ventilated. Your area can be kept very simple –all you really need is a chair or small cushion to sit on.

17. Posture to meditate

Swami says, “*Adopt a comfortable posture. Sit straight so that the Kundalini power is afforded unhampered movement. The Kundalini power is present in man in the Mooladhara chakra as a divinely radiant power. Sit on a special mat/piece of cloth/cushion that you use for prayers. This acts as insulation, for not earthing the body currents. Sit straight, because “when the body is straight and quiet, the mind is also straight and quiet. If you cannot control your body, how can you control your mind? Relax the hands in two ways: (a) place the hands in your lap, with one palm on top of the other with thumbs touching at the tips, or (b) rest your arms on your knees with palms facing upward and the fingers in chin-mudra position. To regulate the breath for Soham sessions, keep “the tip of the tongue gently on the rear of the teeth.”*”

18. What is Jyoti-Dhyanam or Light-Meditation?

Swami has gracefully given the wonderful meditation technique for this age as, “*Jyoti (light) is taken as the Dhyeya (Object) of Dhyana (Meditation) and not a form of Divinity such as that of Rama, Krishna or Iswara, for these forms too are subject to change. Moreover, a flame can kindle a million others without getting extinguished and is therefore inexhaustible. In this process of Dhyana (Meditation) on Jyoti (Light), the progression must be from restlessness to tranquillity and from tranquillity to Divine effulgence. Here is the step by step the most universal and the most effective form of Dhyana (Meditation) taught by Bhagawan Baba, as follows:*

- *Have a lamp, with a bright little flame, steady and straight flame, or a candle before you.*
- *Sit in the padmasana (a Yoga posture called - lotus posture) or in any comfortable posture, in front of the flame.*

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- *Look at the flame steadily for sometime and then gradually close your eyes.*
- *Mentally transfer or absorb the flame inside you, between your eyebrows.*
- *Let it descend down into the lotus of the spiritual heart, illuminating the path.*
- *When it enters the heart, in the centre of the chest, imagine that the petals of the lotus bud are opening one by one, bathing every thought and feeling and emotion and impulse in the Light and removing darkness.*
- *Move the Light on both arms and hands. Hence the hands cannot engage themselves in dark activities.*
- *There is no space now for the darkness to take refuge; it has to flee before flame.*
- *Move the Light on both legs and feet. Hence the feet cannot go towards darkness or towards the wrong or unholy path.*
- *Move the light on the tongue. Hence falsehood vanishes from the tongue. It can not more speak untruth.*
- *Move the light on both eyes. Hence the eyes can no more see evil.*
- *Move the light on both ears. Hence the ears no longer want to hear dark things, such as gossip, ill of anybody, etc.*
- *Move the light on the nostrils. Hence the breath is sanctified. Concentrate on the breath. Listen to the sound of the breath. It will sound like SOOOOO while inhaling and HUMMMMM while exhaling. This cycle of SO and HUM becomes SOHUM.*
- *SOHUM is the divine mantra, means "I am that", SO means "I" and HYM means "That".*
- *Move the light on the head. Hence all wicked thoughts flee there from.*
- *Bathe every thought, every feeling and every emotion in the light, so that it removes darkness from them. There is no space for darkness to hide.*
- *Imagine that the light of the flame becomes more wider and brighter.*
- *Imagine that the light of the flame becomes more wider and brighter.*
- *Imagine the intensity of the Light is increasing in you. Let it shine all round you.*
- *The Light is spreading from you, in every widening circle.*

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- *Visualise your loved ones, your friends and relatives, and even your enemies are bathed in that Light.*
- *Visualise that all the countries; even the entire universe is absorbed in that Light.*
- *If you adore God in any form, then try to visualise Him in the Light. For Light is God and God is Light. When Light meets Light, it is all Light. When the individual meets the Universal, all is Universal.*

The whole process of Light Meditation will not take more than ten minutes. Beware after meditation; do not waste your energy in excessive talking. Try to keep quite, if possible, for at least half an hour and let the energy get absorbed in yourselves. When you go on talking and talking, a lot of energy is spent. When your energy goes down, you develop allergies, the mind becomes weak. As the mind becomes weak, mental diseases start.

19. How do we know that we are progressing in Dhyana-Meditation?

Swami clarified, *“You sit in Dhyana (Meditation) for ten minutes after the evening Bhajans session; so far so good. But let me ask when you rise after then ten minutes and move about, do you see everyone in a clear light as endowed with Divinity? If not, Dhyana (Meditation) is a waste of time. Do you love more, do you talk less, and do you serve others more earnestly? These are the signs of success in meditation. Your progress must be authenticated by your character and behaviour. Meditation must transmute your attitude towards being and things; else it is a hoax.”*

Swami further said, *“Progress in Dhyana means the attainment of Ekagratha, concentration. Each one can judge for himself without doubt, how far he has been able to succeed in concentration, can't he?”*

20. I am contemplating very hard but cannot get into meditation. Why?

Swami says, *“As contemplation deepens, the stage of meditation comes about its own volition. It cannot be forced. If the mediator remains conscious of himself and that he is engaged in meditation, then he is not meditating but is still in the preliminary stage, at the beginning of concentration. There are three stages: concentration, contemplation and meditation. When contemplation deepens it moves naturally into meditation. Meditation is entirely above the senses. In the stage of meditation the mediator, the object of his meditation and the process of meditation have fallen away, and there is only, and the One is God. All that may change has fallen away and Tat Twam Asi, That Thou Art, is the state exists. As one gradually returns to his customary and habitual state of consciousness, the Jyoti is again placed in the heart and kept lighted there throughout the day.”*

21. Some say that they see all sorts of things during Dhyana; some hear all types of sounds. Do these indicate progress?

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Swami removed the doubts by saying, *“They are delusions. They handicap progress. They implant conceit and disperse concentration. The distraction of sights and sounds is no sign of Dhyanam.”*

22. Then what is to be done when such are seen?

Swami says, *“Don’t allow the mind to wander on to them; never lose sight of the divine form, which you have pictured for yourself. Be convinced that these are but obstacles designed to scatter your attention away from the divine form. If you permit these sights and sounds to creep in, the original form will be dimmed, your Ahankara (Ego) will increase and you will lose your way.”*

23. But some people do say that these things are signs of progress in Dhyana!

Swami says, *“That only means that they themselves are not practising dhyana properly! Besides, not knowing what Dhyana is, they delude their disciples also by talking like this, to please them. That is the only profit earned.”*

24. Well, does it mean then that, by means of Dhyana, we cannot see the Lord?

Swami says, *“Why not? Certainly, it is possible. If you fix your attention on the sublimely beautiful form of the Lord and concentrate on that alone, you will receive His grace in that form itself in various ways.*

While doing so, many a disturbance might intervene. You should be deluded; be on your guard, never forget the auspicious form. Picture to yourself that all creation is immersed in it.”

25. But really, can we not know at anytime what stage we have reached in Dhyana?

Swami said, *“You can identify the progress or decline of Dhyana only when you know this is stage number so and so, this stage is such and such etc., isn’t it? The dhyana-rupa is beginningless and endless and so is fruition also cannot be declared, complete and finished.”*

26. Then, is Dhyana endless?

Swami says, *“What is generally called the end is the end of the I and the merging of all in the one form. Dhyana has no end.”*

27. How are we to understand its stages?

Swami told, *“You can have an idea of the stage if you examine daily how you are able to concentrate, how far you have subdued the wondering nature of the mind, and how*

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deeply you taste the divine form; that is off. The stage reached cannot be cognised. What you receive and at what time, depends on His grace. The Sadhaka's mission is to practice Dhyana, without deviating from the path. The rest is all His grace. It does not depend upon the number of days or the length of time. Some may require many births; others may realise the goal in a few days even. It depends on each one's Sraddha, Bhakti and Sadhana. It cannot be calculated and reasoned out."

28. That means, we should not worry about our Sadhana, its progress, its stage, possible decline etc.

Swami replied, *"Exactly. Worry about the discipline needed for the Sadhana, but not about its fruition. The reality, the realisation of the reality, these have no steps or limits. Do not yield to all sorts of delusions or desires for this stage and that. Stick to the goal and the journey. Never give up the discipline of the Sadhana. Do not change the time of Dhyana. With one aim and unchanging attitude, strive to attain it. That will vouchsafe the fruit. That will bless you with the bliss. Do not be led away by what others speak about their imaginary experiences. For you, nothing can be as genuine as your own experience. Therefore, first attempt to gain undeviating concentration. Ekagratha; let that be your one aim."*

29. Dhyanam means vision of the form of the Lord, does it not, Swami? Yet they say it is not real and genuine! What do they mean by this?

Swami says, *"Seeing the form of the Lord is the goal of Dhyanam. To achieve that, is the aim. But before that goal is reached, there are some obstacles in the way. These are to be guarded against."*

30. What kind of obstacles are they? How are we to guard ourselves?

Swami guided, *"You have boarded a train to reach a village. You have heard that the particular village has a station. Many a station of the same type comes during the journey and the train halts at each of them. But just because the train halts, you do not get down at any of them with your luggage, do you? If you get down, you will not be reaching the place where you have to go, is it not? It is no good, alighting at intermediate stations; for you miss your goal and suffer many hardships, not to speak of delay. The wiser course is to note even before starting on the journey, the names of the intermediate stations etc., by approaching some persons who have travelled on the same routine before."*

31. Every one appears as if he is a seasoned traveller on the route!

How are we to distinguish between those who pretend and those who know? Swami says, *"Of course, this has to be pondered over. Each one might have travelled by a route of his own. Some might tell you the details of the route, the stations etc., with the aid of maps only. If that is so, you should not follow their directions on that basis. Consider where from they started and where from you are starting; consider the route they traversed and the route you have to take. Moreover, it is impossible to consult those who have travelled as far as the goal, for they will not come back; they won't be available for consultation, at the stage where you are. Therefore, you need not take*

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the trouble to search and secure persons who can tell you their own experience of the route. It is best to take the help and the advice given by the learned souls, in the Gita, the Sastras, the Vedas and the Upanishads; rely on the words of the Lord and follow the Upadesa of the Avatara Purushas. Besides, there are countless great souls who can guide you as far as they themselves have travelled, and not beyond. For, how can they tell you things they have themselves not experienced?"

32. Well, then; how can we get the opportunity to reach that path and attain that goal?

Swami says, *"If they are destined for it, it won't be difficult at all. The chance will come seeking them; you must have heard the saying. "The man who went in search of a creeper, tripped over it on the way." You need not doubt; this will happen."*

33. Some people say that if we do not get some visions we have not progressed!

They say that if there are no visions, sounds or lights during Dhyanam, we can take it that there is no progress in our meditation. Are they right or wrong?

Swami clarifies this doubt - *"It is the image of their own idea. Perhaps they do Dhyanam in order to get such sights and sounds! Therefore, they experience them. They are things by which each one of them is deluded; they do not analyse the truth underlying the visions! Really speaking, they should not seek these impermanent delusions."*

34. Then what are we to seek?

Swami says, *"Seek and desire the principle of everything: that which, if known, everything is known; that which, if seen, all is seen and understood; do not seek for the drops, in your attempt to know the flood. When you have attained the ocean (the basis of all the drops), you will not have delusion of the drop."*

35. Some Sadhakas picture to themselves during Dhyanam with the Guru; is that correct?

Swami says, *"The Guru shows the path; he teaches what is beneficial. So he has to be shown respect and gratitude, of course. But the Guru should not be taken to be all-powerful and all-inclusive. Of course, the Lord is in every one, as the Atma; give each one the status that is his due and not more."*

36. But some great men declare that the Guru is both father and mother; that he is Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara, all in one.

Swami says, *"Based on the Atma, that is correct. But such Gurus are rare. You can speak of him as father, mother, God etc., on account of love and regard, which is all. How can he be so in fact? As loving as the mother, as protective as the father, you can say. But then, what do you say of those who gave you this body and brought you up, even before you got the Guru? First and most important, be grateful to the mother and the father; serve them; make them happy; respect them. Respect the Guru as the*

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person who shows you the path, who looks after your progress and is interested in your welfare. Worship the Lord as the witness of everything, everywhere, as the master of creation, preservation and dissolution, and as the all-powerful one. Remember, you can consider only the Lord as the universal form and as the universal friend and protector. All others have to be treated for just their individual status: the mother as mother, the father as father, the Guru as Guru; in truth, these cannot be one. Ponder over this. If you seek Atmasakshatka, (the indwelling God) you have to install in your Dhyanam the form of the Lord (the universal Atma) which you like most, and not the picture of your Guru. It is not proper. The Lord is of a status higher than the Guru is, is it not? Of course, have his words as the foundation and try to attain the origin of all things; that will give the fruition of all efforts.

You are asked to treat the pebble as a gem, the gem as a pebble! Of course, through compulsion and bound by order, people may obey and accept, but can that feeling be genuine? It is no sign of Dhyanam to have one idea outside and another inside. Unless this conflict is resolved and there is the same idea outside as well as inside, there will not be any stability in Dhyanam; nor will there be any success.”

37. What are the benefits of meditation?

Swami says, “Through meditation, the weakness of the body can be overcome, the restless nature of the mind can be controlled, and progress towards the Seat of Grace made easy; one can then attain experience of Primordial Power. Swami also said, “One pointed concentration increases will power and skill and gives success in all endeavours”. Meditation will give you a tranquil mind. Meditation will make you aware of the reality deep within. Meditation will make you fearless; meditation will make you calm, meditation will make you gentle, meditation will make you loving. These are the results of meditation. If you understand these goals and want to do meditation, then it will help you, but if you are expecting to become rich through meditation, then do not do it.”

38. Does Meditation belong to any particular religion?

Real meditation has no brand name. It has nothing to do with beliefs. Thus, it is not allied to any religion whatsoever, but teaches one to systematically explore the inner dimensions. Meditation should be therapeutic and systematic. You are a human being and you have a body; not matter where you are, you learn to rest. You should learn to have a healthy body, and you should learn to calm your mind. Meditation is a practical means for calming yourself, letting go of your biases and seeing what is, in an open and clear way. It is a way to train the mind so that you are not distracted and caught up in the endless meandering. Some communities are uncomfortable with the word meditation, and think that meditation is an eastern tradition, forgetting that the Bible clearly says, “Be still and know that I am God”. Learning how to be still is the method of meditation. Meditation is beneficial for physical, mental and spiritual health.

39. How many types of meditation are there?

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Swami talks about three types of meditation, namely Satwik, Rajaswik, and Tamasik meditation, as follows:

a) **Satwik**

This means that one considers Japam-Dhyanam as a duty and suffers any amount of trouble for its sake; one is fully convinced that all this is just an illusion; and so, one does only good under all conditions and at all times; one desires only the good of all; being always loving towards all; one spends time uninterruptedly in the remembrance and meditation of the Lord. He will not crave even for the fruit of the Japam and Dhyanam; he will leave it all to the Lord.

b) **Rajaswik**

Here, one will be craving at every step for the fruit of one's act. If that fruit is not available, then gradually, laxity and disgust overpower the Sadhaka (aspirant) and the Japam and Dhyanam (meditation) slowly dry up.

c) **Tamasik**

This is even worse. The Lord will come into the memory only in times of danger or acute suffering or when one is the victim of loss or pain. At such times, such people pray and vow that they will arrange this Puja, offer this particular food, or build this kind of temple to the Lord. They will be calculating the quantity of food they placed before the Lord, the tribute

they offered at His feet, the number of prostrations they did and the number of times they circumambulated the shrine, and ask for proportionate awards! For those who adopt this attitude in Dhyanam, the mind and intellect can never be pure.

Most people now follow only the Rajasik and Tamasik paths in Japam and Dhyanam. Their very intention in doing Japam and Dhyanam is to purify the Manas and the Buddhi, the mind and the intellect. In order to achieve this, the best path is the first, the Satwik Dhyanam. When the Manas and the Buddhi become pure, they will shine with the splendour of the understanding of the Atma. He in whom this understanding shines fully is called a Rishi."

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40. Helpful References:

Conversations with Sathya Sai Baba, p 133

The Art of Joyful Living, Swami Rama, p 221-22

Sathya Sai Speaks VII Q & A

Sathya Sai Speaks VII Commentary on Message

Know Thyself, p 30

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Sathya Sai Speaks, Vols 2, 6, 9 & 16

Sandeha Nivarini

Aum Sai Ram – Peace be with you.