



Ethics and Morality

What I said this morning covered perhaps one aspect, or two or three aspects, of the subject of character formation. It is of course understood that every human being has the two sides: the good and the bad, the wise and the foolish, the wicked and the not so wicked,

and without these two there would be no human life. But human evolution, human development requires that we suppress the bad and develop or enhance the good to the maximum limit possible, especially when we are in a spiritual pursuit like Sahaj Marg where we hope to develop into super humans, and then later on to be able to be divinized to the

extent that we permit, by our sadhana and our behaviour, our ethical and moral life. [...]

Now you know, we have to think of what is ethics. Most of us understand that ethics is to try to bring the best benefit to myself in this life. [...]

So you see, we are wasteful, we are violent, we are aggressive, we are acquisitive, we are selfish, we are taking; and we are wasteful, arrogant, proud, unwilling to accept the laws of nature, which Babuji sort of symbolized in one short sentence, summarized in one sentence: *When you leave this world, leave it a better place than you found it when you came in.* If you cannot do that, at least leave it as good as you found it when you came. That is, to my mind, the most concise form of defining either

ethics or morality.

What is morality? Unfortunately in India, I have said this before, in our conception in India, morality is confined only to sex. So long as you don't rape or abducted rape or all these things, there is



no immorality. But Babuji Maharaj told me, explained to me carefully, that misuse of any faculty - whether it is physical, mental, intellectual, moral - is immorality. He gave me as an example (perhaps in those days when we met fifty years ago), that in the Middle East desert countries, to waste water is considered immoral and punishable. To waste food should be considered immoral. [...]

So, in a society which is dominated, as I see it — please excuse me if I am wrong, as I see it — by greed, avarice and lust, where is the chance of the finer sentiments of human life which distinguish a human being from being merely a two-legged animal, as we are often described? Where is it to be found? How is it to be created?

How is it to be cultivated? How is it to be allowed to flourish and distinguish a human being as a human being full of love, compassion, mercy, tendency to share, tendency to give, tendency not to think of yourself but to think of other persons first. [...]

Now, I am not asking people to immediately surrender and volunteer and put on a langoti [loin cloth] and go out as a sannyasi [ascetic]. But we have to understand these principles: that human life will be safe to continue into the future and to evolve only if we develop love for others, share with others, think of others first,

never think of yourself, whether it is for food or self-gratification or for anything. If all of us develop that tendency, these ideas of living, human living, which we are calling moral and ethical and all that sort of thing . . . I don't think I should call it ethical or moral, it is a way of living in which I come last, everybody else comes before me. [...]

So all these are the things that are bothering, bothersome, to those who are concerned about shall we say the future of civilization, future of human beings, which concerns every one of us, since we are human beings.

Thank you.

Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari
10th June 2010, Chennai, India

Thus Speaks

Lalaji

♦*One thing I would like to tell everybody — rather by the beat of a drum — that every seeker should try to shape his moral condition. One should not utter any word which is unpalatable to others, nor do any action not liked by others. Keeping these two things in view, one should apply oneself to improve his conduct. This is the basic principle. I am a lover of morality rather than spirituality.*

Babuji

♦*The next important thing to be kept in mind is the moral discipline which every one must be very particular about. He must never do a thing which might bring a bad name to himself or to the sanstha he belongs to. His way of living and dealing with others should be simple, unassuming and cordial, inspired by a feeling of love and sympathy for others. This will be a source of satisfaction and peace to him as well.*

Chariji

♦*Most religions, while giving out their code of ethics or laws, have only told their people what not to do. Therefore these codes of behaviour can at best be termed negative codes or negative laws, because most of them do not tell man what should be done to attain a better life.*

In this Issue

Ethics and Morality	1
Thus speaks	1
Echoes of the centers	2-4
Whispers	5
Daily Reflections	5

Echoes of the Centers

A Regional tour

From September 23 to October 12, our Region-in-Charge, Brother Sharat Hegde went on a regional tour to South Africa and Madagascar. In the 2 countries, several centers were visited where he attended many activities and had fruitful exchanges with brothers and sisters. A brief introduction of his long trip is provided below, followed by Brother Sharat's travel notes and Sister Boda Ranjeva's report.

The trip to South Africa, from September 23 to October 3, started with a preceptor's seminar in Johannesburg on September 24 and 25 at the Lenasia ashram. The seminar was attended by 28 preceptors (26 from South Africa and 2 from Botswana and Zimbabwe). The trip also included visits to several centres respectively those of: Mmakgodu (near Polokwane), Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Durban and Pretoria.

On October 4, Brother Sharat flew from Johannesburg to Antananarivo, Madagascar, second part of his trip which lasted until October 12. Seven centers were visited: Antsirabe, Fianarantsoa, Tulear, Moramanga, Ihosy, Tamatave and Antananarivo. This was a fruitful tour in many respects, a very busy one as evidenced by the pictures as well as Sister Boda Ranjeva and Brother Sharat Hegde reports.

JN-MMK

First step: South Africa

"We need to develop Africa for the local africans and I trust this will happen."

"I was in South Africa for about 12 days and in Madagascar for 8 days. Master instructions during the middle of my trip to South Africa clearly spelt out his expectations of the overall region – *"We need to develop Africa for the local africans and I trust this will happen."*

SRCM in South Africa has been there since Babuji Maharaj's time. Since I have not met Babuji Maharaj, interacting with the abhyasis was interesting. For me, it brought back a lot of memories of how our Master feels when he recounts incidents from Babuji Maharaj's time, the pithy remarks of Babuji Maharaj, the humour and the subtle messages.

We had a perfect seminar for one and a half day at the Lenasia Ashram which was attended by most prefects. The interaction among the prefects brought about a lot of open discussions on what we need to do on ourselves and what we need to do to-

gether for the growth of the Mission. A sense of enthusiasm was felt during and after the seminar. The visit to Polokwane was special, the naturalness and simplicity among the abhyasis was heart-felt. When I asked one of the abhyasis to speak about what she feels about Sahaj Marg, she said, *"I like it – it makes me feel good"*.

Sharat Hegde



Lenasia



Durban

Echoes of the Centers — Cont'd

Second step: Madagascar

The visit to Madagascar was interesting. Not knowing what to expect, there was a sense of anticipation of the "unknown". The people are simple, very open-hearted and committed to understanding Sahaj Marg and practicing it. We had a group discussion in Antananarivo on the following topics, all relevant to Madagascar:

- How to attract youth in the Mission;
- How to develop Sahaj Marg in Madagascar;
- How to improve the quality of the abhyasis.

The abhyasis interacted and shared a number of points including the following:

- We must attract abhyasis with our behaviour/conduct, and become role models ourselves;
- We must learn to talk to people confidently;
- We must have workshops for abhyasis so that we get clarifications on the practice and are able to speak to others about it;
- We must do some service to the Mission

in whatever capacity it is possible;

- We must read available books;
- We must follow and live by the ten maxims.

ters, conducted satsanghs, gave individual sittings. There was no open house but a regional day in Antananarivo with a questions and answers session. Among the questions there was one I remember: "how to develop love for Maser when you cannot see Him?". The answer is given by the Master Himself: "work for the Mission and your love for the Master will grow by itself." This visit was also an opportunity for us to sort out the procedures for the acquisition of real estate and appointing a new board of directors.

Madagascar is one of the poorest countries in the world but I can tell you that the Malagasy abhyasis when they follow this path are very determined. Some

of them walk a long distance to get a sitting or to attend satsanghs.

When Master sends someone, He gives him the qualifications to perform the task he assigns. The "Master Emissaries" are His representatives and their work deserves respect and sincerity on our part, as it was during Brother Sharat Hegde visit in Madagascar.

Sharat Hegde

A lively and productive tour

Brother Sharat's visit to Madagascar was lively and productive, he visited seven cen-



Antananarivo



Antananarivo



Ithosy

Echoes of the Centers — Cont'd

Questions and answers session in Antananarivo

(Excerpts)

Q: How do I love the Master whom I have never seen, and will not have an opportunity to meet? How do I feel His presence with me?

A: We must build the connection with Master and this happens as we do our practice. We are connected to Master during meditation, and we can feel transmission, which is coming from Master. As we feel the benefit of the practice, we develop a sense of gratitude to Him. As we develop and practice constant remembrance, we will feel more connected with Him. Service to Master is also a good way to build the connection to Him. All of these lead to our feeling His presence with us. Gratitude, Faith and surrender will lead to Love. Service is also a sure way to develop Love.

Q: How do I know between right and wrong?

A: In most circumstances, in the innermost core of our heart, we do know what is right. Master talks of the following tests for finding if an action is right – it must be legal, it must confirm to the scriptures I believe in, it must be permitted by the guru, and it must be right for my conscience.

Sarat Hegde

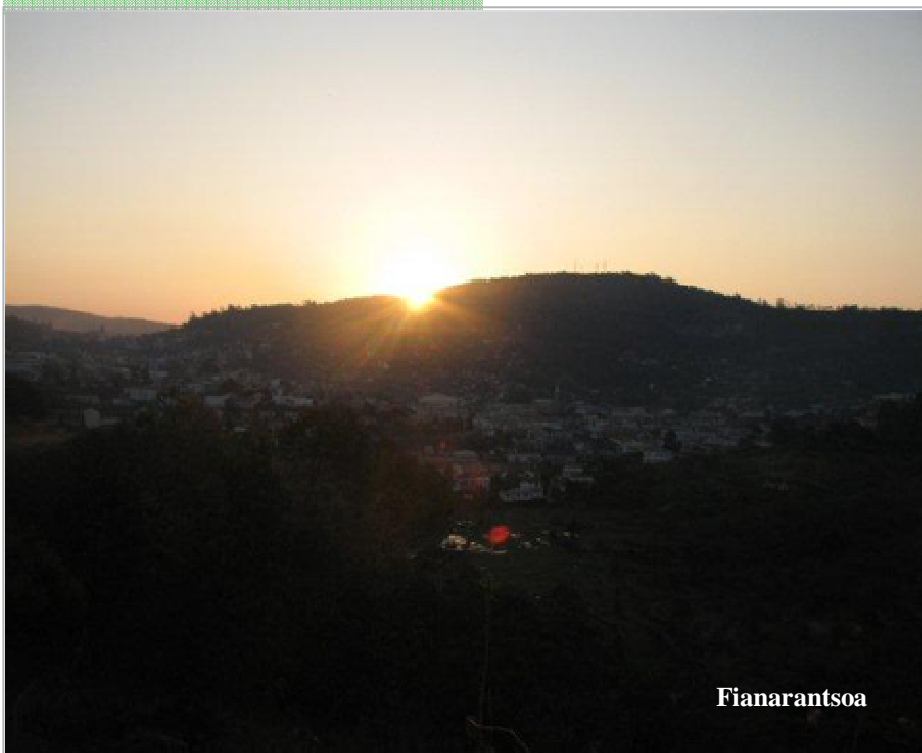
Echoes of Reunion Island

After meeting Master in July 2010 in Kolkata, we recently had the privilege of meeting him again in October 2010 in Chennai during the seminar for Latin America and Oceania. This time around, we were twelve of us. Each one of us got prepared with individual sittings over seven consecutive days before our departure. This seminar was an opportunity for two of our abhyasis to meet Master for the first time.

The pace of the seminar was intensive: three meditations every day, the 9:00 am meditation being usually given by Master and followed by speeches, and workshops in the morning and the afternoon ... sometimes in the evening the doors of the

cottage were opened for us... Those were magical moments when we could feel the unique atmosphere created by Master's presence. The group derived a real benefit from this experience that we could share with brothers and sisters who could not make the trip.

Odile, Marie-Ange, Lëila, Geneviève, Sonia, Gillette, Véronique, Raza, Ratnam et Richard



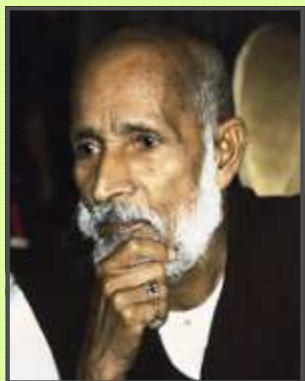
Echoes of Senegal

Senegal preceptors, Sister Sylvaine Chenet and Brother Babacar Top wish to share the revised schedule of satsanghs and sittings

Satsanghs-Sittings	Venue
1er Sunday of the month 7:30 a.m.	At Brother Babacar Top's place Villa 295 Unité 10 Keur Massar, Parcelles assainies Dakar - Sénégal Tel : +221701003900 +221772024179
Following Sundays of the Month 7:30 a.m.	At Sister Sylvaine Chenet's place L'Espace Sobobade Toubab Dialaw - Sénégal Tel : +221338360356
Mid-week satsangh Tuesday – 4:00 p.m.	At Sister Sylvaine Chenet's place
Sittings Each Saturday (contact Brother Top or Sister Sylvaine)	At either places above

Whispers from the Brighter World

Wednesday, September 8, 2004 – 10:00 a.m.



Come and rest within the immutable peace. This preamble befits your heart; it raises for it the veil of the limitations compelling this world to live in the ignorance of the essential truths. Disorientated, it does not know where to go; humans have no reference mark any more. The sense of duty and integrity is lost. Becoming increasingly fickle, they are living from day to day, without a real line of conduct.

“Opening out to spirituality constitutes for them the best process likely to give a real meaning to their current existence. Being unsatisfied by the pursuit of material properties and pleasures, they feel emptiness within themselves, which only this process will be able to fill. It will open prospects to them beyond the sight for life here below.

“When the appeal of the Divine is felt, no soul can remain insensitive. It opens out prudently to this new life, letting it foresee real relief. So, one had to reach this point to understand the meaning of this incarnation, of the ordeals it has in store, as well as joys, including those relating to self-control. It shows, beyond the human characteristics, the great and sublime aspects being hidden behind this facade of flesh, in the heart of the being.

“There is the secret, the only worthwhile treasure; we will never say it enough. May our brothers be fully aware of it and never forget it, which they often do. Letting themselves be carried by the swirl of material life, they waste an invaluable time in it. That which they are devoting to their spiritual process is the best possible investment. When the assessment time has come, they will note it and possibly be pleased with the results.”

Babuji

Whispers from the Brighter World volume 1, page 618.

Daily Reflections

Character Formation

My beloved Master, Babuji Maharaj, has repeatedly affirmed that while it was HIS duty to give the abhyasis inner spiritual growth, character formation was, and will always be, the abhyasi's personal business.

Taken from the book "Heart Speak 2008", "A Letter from my Heart" pg. 57, by Revered Chariji

Dualities of life

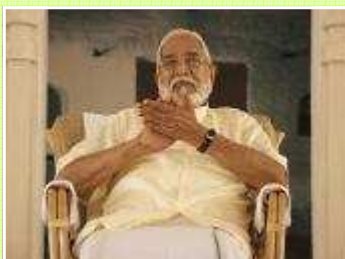
There is no undiluted good in this world; nor is there a bad which is totally bad. It is a mixture. It is an amalgam of both opposites of life. That which is more determines what is dominant; [that] which is less is hidden.

Taken from the book "Heart Speak 2004, vol. 1", pg. 88 -by Chariji

Purpose

We each have our place in this universe, a unique place for every one of us. Never question the purpose for which you have been created. Try to find it. Try to fulfill it. That is what I believe is the final message of Sahaj Marg.

Taken from the book "Heart Speak 2004, vol. 1", pg. 58 -by Chariji



Design & layout: MMK, JN

Editors:

JN: Jeanne Nanitelamio

MMK: Michel Mouyelo-Katoula

Translations: JN & MMK

Online subscription:

<http://www.sahajmarg.org/newsletters/africa>

Email Address

Communications intended for *Echoes of Africa and Indian Ocean* should be addressed to: echosdaf@gmail.com