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ECHOES OF THE EAST

Sept 2009

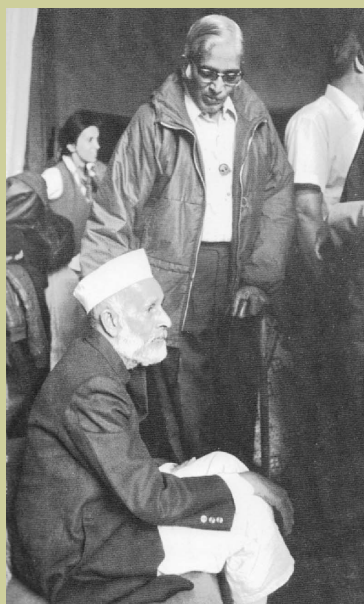
TEN MAXIMS

Now, we come to the attitudes. What are the attitudes we have to develop? Our Ten Maxims have stated very clearly. We have to have, basically and essentially, an attitude, recognizing the fact that we may not already have it but we are trying to develop it. I say this because Babuji has told us we start life as animal human beings, and then we have to develop to normal human being and then we have to go on to Divinization.

The greatest benefit of the meditation in the morning is that it trains us to regulate our minds. As Babuji Maharaj put it, instead of our being slaves of our mind, we have to become the Masters of the mind.

So, by holding one thought in the mind during meditation, we gain, progressively, more and more ability to regulate the mind. Many people are confused as to how this is possible.

But one example will make you realize that this is what we



do all our lives.

If you have a dog and you want to train it, you use the dog itself to train it.

Similarly, to master a horse, you have to ride it again and again and again until you have mastered that horse. In fact, I must say, that the modern educational concept of training coming to us from outside has somewhat perverted our thinking on the subject. So there is no training program, in that sense. Any program has to be used to train our selves, to regulate ourselves. This is incidentally the problem with the Ten Maxims. We appreciate their value, we recognize their merit, but we don't apply to our lives.

For our western sisters and brothers, the first maxim is the stumbling block. But Babuji once explained that If you are not able to do the first one, it is not necessary to forget all ten. Go on the second, go the third. Whichever you can do, please do it first.

There is no importance, specifically, in the sequence in which we adopt them. We can start anywhere and end anywhere.

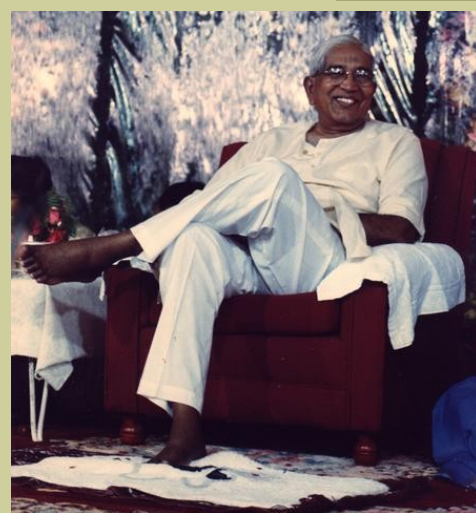
It is not like a staircase that you have to climb the first step first, and then the second step after that, then the third step and so on.

It is not like that. The important thing is to start somewhere and train your will by doing something positive.

This will is strengthened every time we do something, and it is weakened every time we fail to do something that we have to do. So meditation helps us to regulate mind and by regulating 95% of our problem is solved. Meditation therefore a process, not a goal in itself. But a process which helps us immensely, and therefore, we do it.

THE TEN MAXIMS OF SAHAJ MARG

1. Rise before dawn. Offer your prayer and puja at a fixed hour, preferably before sunrise, sitting in one and the same pose. Have a separate place and seat for worship. Purity of mind and body should be specially adhered to.
2. Begin your puja with a prayer for spiritual elevation, with a heart full of love and devotion.
3. Fix up your goal which should be 'complete oneness' with God. Rest not till the ideal is achieved.
4. Be plain and simple to be identical with nature.
5. Be truthful. Take miseries as Divine Blessings for your own good and be thankful.
6. Know all people as thy brethren and treat them as such.
7. Be not revengeful for the wrongs done by others. Take them with gratitude as heavenly gifts.
8. Be happy to eat in constant divine thoughts whatever you get, with due regard to honest and pious earnings.
9. Mould your life so as to arouse a feeling of love and piety in others.
10. At bedtime, feeling the presence of God, repent for the wrongs committed. Beg forgiveness in a supplicant mood, resolving not to allow repetition of the same.



In addition to the ten maxims, our Master has given two more maxims

11. Expect not for thou shall not be disappointed.
12. Blame not others, blame thy self.

MASTER'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION UPDATES

Balagolla Centre, Sri Lanka

The 82nd birthday of Our Beloved Master was celebrated at the Balagolla Centre, Sri Lanka. Satsangh took place from 7.30 to 8.30 a.m. with our beloved Master Chariji's glowing photograph on the chair.

After satsangh, we had a reading of a portion of a talk given by Master, from 'Sahaja Deepam' (Tamil) Vol. VIII (2) of April - June 2000.

A generous abhyasi distributed small notebooks to all abhyasis to record the experiences of their daily practice. In addition, photocopies under the heading 'Prayer' contributed by Master and which appeared in 'Sahaja Deepam' were also distributed. Abhyasis also exchanged their experiences and views on Sahaj Marg practice.

Afterwards, abhyasis as one family shared their breakfast and other sweetmeats they brought as Master's 'prasad'.

With tea, the proceedings of the day's birthday celebrations concluded memorably on a joyous note by 11 a.m.



Philippines Centre

We celebrated the birth anniversary of Our Beloved Master with a three-day seminar, from July 23rd to 25th. Morning satsangh were held on all 3 days. Abhyasis read Master's written works and discussed them afterwards; the topics were 'Love' from *My Master*, the 'Goal of Spiritual Practice' from *Constant Remembrance*, and the importance of environment, and the need for us to reach our ultimate goal spiritually.

On Master's birthday, abhyasis sang Happy Birthday to Master and shared a cake to mark this special occasion.

It was a day of joy and love for all abhyasis gathered at Melaka centre to celebrate our Master's birthday.

The program began with satsang at 7.30am, followed by a vcd of informal talk by Master in Russia. Many simple yet penetrating messages were received from the vcd, and coincidentally brother Arjunan's talk on "Change" also related to topics spoken by Master in the vcd.

Abhyasis were invited to share enlightening passages from

Singapore Centre

Master's birthday celebration started with morning satsang at 7.30am, followed by breakfast. The programme started with a presentation on aspects of "Love and Discipline" by Sis. Sangeeta Das and Bro. Arpan Das. They emphasized the link between the two for spiritual development. Then we moved on to another important topic, "Why Sahaj Marg" by Bro. Balakrishnan. This was followed by some devotional bhajans. After a break, Bro. Pandirajan gave a presentation on an interesting topic "Divinity - The Powerless Power" by taking Emperor Ashoka as an example. A small quiz was conducted by Sis. Roopa. Bro. Karthik spoke on "Pitfalls of Spirituality" by sharing his personal experiences. Sis. Madhavi spoke about "Mahapralaya". Then came the most awaited segment - watching Master's video. We concluded Master's birthday celebration with the Chinese version of *Auld Lang Syne* by Sis. Helen.

Melaka Centre

Sahaj Marg literature. In the session, a Danish abhyasi told us about the Vrad's Sande ashram in Denmark. Sis. Pushpa gave a talk on her experience visiting Shahjahanpur.

Alphabets in Sahaj Marg' and 'Pearls of Wisdom' were topics presented in slide form by sis. Jeyanti. It was enjoyed by all. A quiz was held on discipline and conduct of Abhyasis as prescribed by Babuji. The day ended listening to bro. Charanpreet's bhajan 'Master O Master'.



ABHYASIS' INSIGHTS

Applying Ten Maxims

Bro. B. Rajesh, Singapore Centre

During my school days, whenever I encountered certain idealistic concepts, I would mentally map them out and strive to abide by them. Over a period of time, I dropped some of these concepts after finding them to be either too shallow or too idealistic. Later, when I was made aware of the Ten Maxims of Sahaj Marg, I found that I no longer needed to keep my own list of these idealistic concepts as the Maxims encompassed all of these and much more. I recollect as an early sign of my whole-hearted adoption, I had framed the Ten Maxims on the wall and used to read them once daily to let them sink in. They have acted as the guiding light in times of calm as well as conflict. The Ten Maxims help to mould our life in all spheres - physical, mental, moral and spiritual. The body, mind and soul are taught to work in unison and bring about the ultimate balance in a human being's life.

Over the period of time I have practised Sahaj Marg, I have progressively understood the Maxims are like little instruction manuals of our daily life right from dawn to our bed-time. The first Maxim covers the needs of physical and mental cleanliness and sets the stage for our day and our regular practice of morning meditation. When we practice the next two Maxims, they inculcate the right physical and mental environment and reinforce the goal.



right physical and mental environment and reinforce the goal.

The fourth Maxim is extremely profound. An acid-test question that we can use to guide our actions in following this Maxim is: "Would it be alright if everyone in the world does the same?"

The next three Maxims are aimed at perfecting our character and moral well-being. When practiced, these Maxims place us on the fast-track to saintliness as they are essential to even highly-evolved saints according to Lalaji. Besides, these are also the solutions to individual as well as international conflicts.

The eighth Maxim is my personal favourite, where the perfect recipe for our attitude, thought and actions are spelt out very clearly towards our work-life balance. In my opinion, all aspects of physical and mental well-being are covered in this Maxim. It is an interesting observation from one new abhyasi that this Maxim even has a therapeutic measure for people under diet as he found it difficult to over-eat when he just remembered the Maxim.

The ninth Maxim is an overarching instruction for our character development just

Like what the eighth Maxim did to our physical and

mental well-being. How to mould my life to arouse love and others when I am only beginning to find it in myself? There is always a gap between reality and perception. This is the most difficult Maxim for me to practice until today for reasons mentioned earlier about the right environment and the experiments. The only practical solution or a shortcut that I have found so far is the daily practice of Universal Prayer meditation at 9pm.

When all our individual efforts leave a lot to be desired, we need to resort to prayer – this is the crux of the tenth Maxim. It emphasizes that it is fine to commit mistakes, but it is unwise not to learn from the mistakes and repeat the same. With the inner divine strength, one takes lessons from one's life and conducts it better and better. The asking of forgiveness and resolving not to repeat the wrongs itself is true repentance.

In the book, "Commentary on Ten Maxims" by Babuji, He explains a great truth in simple yet inspiring words: "*It is obvious that when a thing made of clay comes before us, we take a different view of it, and our liking for it is increased in comparison to the mass of clay with which it was made of. Similarly when a man approaches God, after proper making of himself, He takes a different view of him.*"

By practicing the Ten Maxims sincerely in our daily lives, we are attempting for that 'proper making'. Whether He takes a different view of us, is His responsibility.

SIGNIFICANCE OF TEN MAXIMS

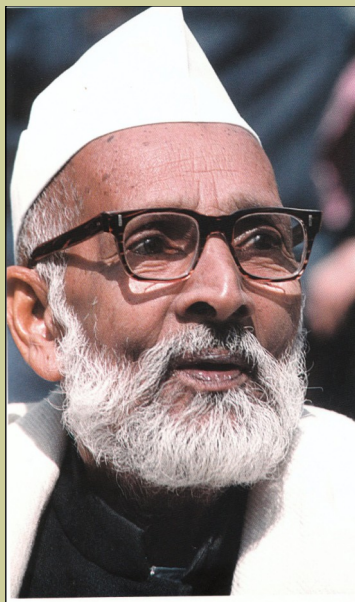
Sis. Naina P. Chandnani, Philippines Centre

The 10 Maxims of Sahaj Marg are very important for us to grow spiritually and to have a clear understanding of the purpose behind our practice.

Life is like a school where we learn lessons at every stage. The 10 Maxims really help to remind us of the underlying meaning behind all the good and bad experiences we go through in life.

Maxim 5, for example: Be truthful. Accept miseries as divine blessings for your good, and be thankful. We always expect happiness and comfort, but when faced with miseries, we start asking God,

"Why me? What have I done to have to endure all this?"



We learn from this maxim that whatever happens is a cleaning process where Master minimises the *bhog* of all the *samskaras* we have created by our thoughts and actions.

It shows His infinite and unconditional love for us. Our part is to accept them as Divine blessings. begin to take each day as it comes.

Another maxim that also touches a lot of people is Maxim 9: Mould your living so as to arouse a feeling of love and piety in others. How I live begins with my own little self. But it is amazing how Master's work on us awakens in us our true nature, which is love. Life becomes full of love and peace not only within but also in our relations with others. Brothers and sisters from different countries become close and compassionate to each other under the guidance and love of our beloved Master. We are thus very blessed to be part of the Sahaj Marg system.

CHILDREN'S CORNER

Ten Maxims,

Madhubala Deivakumar, Age 8yrs- Singapore Centre

Traffic rules help us to have a safe journey. Ten Maxims help us lead a safe life. When we do not know how to have a good life, it is difficult to come up with a method. Master has given us the Ten Maxims to make our job very easy. The rules are important because they make us better human beings.



Why should we follow the rules? We should, because Master has asked us to. We must always listen to Master as He is always right. We must always say our prayers. Master is the only light in this dark world. We should follow Master as He leads

If we are obedient we will progress steadily. If we are obedient children we will surely have a special place in Master's heart. So let us start now. I am going to be thankful for the food I eat every time and will remember not to waste it. By being thankful for the food, I also thank Nature and the entire chain of people that have brought this food to my table. Will you also join me and try to be Master's special children?

MASTER'S REQUEST ~ PRAY BEFORE EATING

Molena Ashram, August 2003

We are still worried about our food and its purity. I'm not talking of the biological purity of stuff that we eat so that we don't get sick. But the so-called spiritual purity.

Babuji taught us a way of making everything palatable and good for us spiritually.

He said, before you eat, meditate for a moment and offer it to your Master. I don't see anybody doing it, not one. ...

So just try that. Even if it's just a sandwich, or a cookie as they say in America for a biscuit.

Just close your eyes for a moment and think that the great Master is eating it.

And you'll find it becomes like nectar. It's no more Indian food, it's no more American food, it's not even food. It is nectar, and nectar belongs to all. There is no Christian nectar and Hindu nectar and Muslim nectar and Buddhist nectar. Nectar is of the gods.

So let us try these things in our assemblies.

Let us not try artificially to make everybody our brothers and sisters. Let us feel it in our hearts.

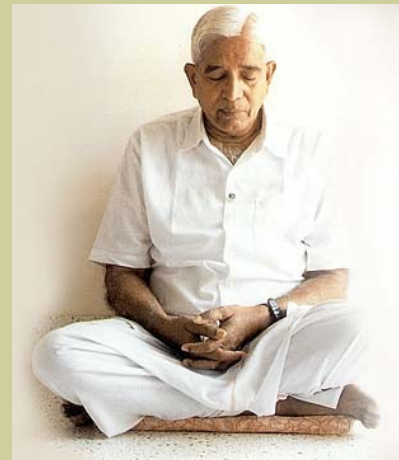


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