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# Sahaj Marg Study Group

## ***Cleanliness and Godliness***

Set 4, Handout 2 (*Principles of Sahaj Marg, Set 1. Pages 74-79*)

I don't know what my sister Antonietta has been telling you, but I propose to give you a short introduction to the Sahaj Marg system of raja yoga. It has been said for ages that cleanliness is next to Godliness, but it is a commentary on human understanding that, as with everything else, we have given a very superficial interpretation to this statement. Through generations of human life, we find that civilizations have concentrated exclusively on the physical cleanliness of our living conditions. And in most nations of the world, we have made considerable progress in this direction, although in countries like mine, and all over the East, we are still living under very dirty living conditions. At least the impression of the Easterner when he comes to the West is one of absolute cleanliness, and when the Westerner goes to the East it is the contrary opinion of absolute filth. Superficially, these personal impressions or opinions are correct. In my travels through Europe during the last twenty-five years, I have found that conditions of cleanliness have been increasing day by day, year by year, till today in the very advanced nations of the world, the cleanliness inside the house is almost clinically sterile. Of course much effort goes into maintaining it that way.

There is a surprising comment I have heard often, that in the East we employ a lot of servants to keep our houses clean. I have often tried to explain that when we use vacuum cleaners, detergents, electric appliances for cooking, etc., the energy that we use is nothing but the consolidation of the services of a vast army of servants. Now the use of servants, human servants, has some definite advantages. First, it provides employment for people who badly need it and, secondly and more importantly, it does not pollute the atmosphere and our surroundings. The most important advantage is the conservation of scarce energy resources. But of course human effort can only be limited to the number of people available for service. So we find a peculiar inversion that in the Eastern countries there is a lot of dirt around our life but we do not have pollution of our rivers, of our lakes, of our atmosphere, while here in the West we have clinical conditions of life inside the house, whereas in the lakes and the seas the fish are unable to live, and a stage is slowly coming when we will be unable to breathe the atmosphere we live in. I have not talked about cleanliness to make criticism of our ways of life, either of yours or of mine. I have tried to show you that when there is no balance between the outside and the inside, something has to suffer in consequence.

So far I have talked to you about the outside and the inside of our homes. There is a more important association of two sides within the human system itself. As we have an outside, we also have an inside which is within us. Here again, there is a big hiatus between the people of the East and the people of the West. My Master has often remarked that in the East, where people are so dirty outside, they seem to have an inner spiritual cleanliness which seems to be lacking in people of the advanced nations who are very clean outside but have a lot of grossness inside. I have deliberately used the word grossness because

grossness is not uncleanness *per se*. Now it is this inner grossness that is a bar to our advancement on the spiritual path. Hitherto, this subject of inner cleanliness has been largely neglected. Even advanced yogic systems, such as the hatha yoga and other systems, have restricted their efforts more to the perfection of the physical system than to the perfection of the inner life of man. I think it is one of the unique features of my Master's system of Sahaj Marg that the greatest importance is given to the cleaning of the inner system, the spiritual system, of man.

This grossness, my Master teaches, is an accumulation of the impressions of the past. Every time we think of something, and we become attached to what we think about, an impression is formed in the mind. That impression which the thought creates becomes the parent of an action or of an activity. And when the activity is indulged in, when the activity is undertaken, the impression becomes deeper. And as the impressions become deeper in this way, we enter into what we may call a repetitive cycle of existence. It is perhaps in this fashion that habits are formed. For the superficial habits like smoking or drinking we know the reason, but we do not inquire deep enough to understand the fact that a person's whole personality is a reflection of such patterns of impressions in his mind.

So when we talk of personality, we are talking of the grossness inside resulting from actions and thoughts, and as these impressions become deeper and deeper, they solidify. At that stage, we find that we are in a very real sense captives or prisoners of our own past. It is, therefore, an unfortunate fact that in reality we have no free will which we think we have. If each one of us would examine his life without bias or orientation to himself, we would find that we have been repeating our thoughts and our actions in very specific predetermined patterns, in very definite patterns too. But because we are unwilling to face the truth about ourselves we always think that we are original in everything that we do.

Now when we come to practice the Sahaj Marg system of yoga, the first thing that the Master impresses upon us, which is at the same time the most important, is that these past impressions must be removed from our mind. Now it is natural that if we had known how to do it, we would have already done it ourselves. But while we have absolute freedom and control over the creation of impressions, we are helpless when it comes to their removal. This is precisely why we need an outside force, or assistance from an external source, to help us. We call such a person who can do this for us a guru or a master. So the first thing is to find a master who can do this for us. Without a guru there can be no yoga at all. You see this is something that has to be understood very definitely, that there can be no yoga without a guru.

There are, I think, people who have tried to do it by themselves but in most cases the results have been disastrous because, as in everything else, we need somebody to guide us. We need a guide to help us. Now, when we call a person a guru or a master, there seems to be some feeling that we have become helpless and therefore we need a guru. In Sanskrit, from which the word guru comes, guru only means one who is great, and his greatness is in a particular sphere, as there are great people in other spheres: doctors of philosophy,

doctors of medicine, and so on. Now when we need medical assistance, we do not consider it a sign of weakness or helplessness to go to a doctor. Why should we consider that it is something demeaning to go to a guru? In a very definite sense, a guru is a doctor of the inside. When I say 'the inside', I don't just mean the inside of the body, I mean the inside of the inside! Because if the doctor is the doctor of our body, a capable guru is the doctor of the soul. So first of all we find a guru, and we accept his services in removing all of our accumulated grossness from us. That is the first step in yoga.

The second step is that we have to practice meditation. Meditation is a very simple thing. It means to think continuously about something. Unfortunately, here again there is a great deal of misrepresentation of this term, because most systems treat meditation as concentration. Now, meditation has nothing to do with concentration, at least not in the process. My Master says that meditation is the process that leads to the result which is concentration. The successful practice of meditation leads to concentration. In fact, what we achieve by meditation is a state of mind where the mind can be said to be concentrated. That is, we do not concentrate but our mind is in a state of concentration. You see it is very similar to happiness. I do not 'do' happiness, I am happy, isn't it? So similarly concentration is also a state. "I am concentrated," or "I am in a state of concentration," is the correct thing. When I say, "I concentrate," it is not correct. So, the practice of meditation enables us to achieve finally that state in which we can say the mind is in a state of concentration.

Now in meditation, as I said earlier, we think continuously of something. Meditation is such a universal activity that it is surprising there is so much misunderstanding about it. Because without realizing it we are meditating all the time on something or other. A man who is obsessed with the idea of becoming rich is meditating on the idea of wealth. Another person who is obsessed with the idea of being successful in business is similarly meditating on success. But unfortunately, because meditation has been used only in a spiritual context, we do not understand that it is a very commonplace human action, upon which unnecessary esoteric connotations have been brought to bear. Now all that we do in spiritual meditation is simply to change the object from a material object to a spiritual object. And we find that it is very simple and very easy to practice.

It is very necessary to realize that meditation is not something foreign to our nature, in which we have to be trained, because meditation is something we are naturally doing all our lives. Only what we have to meditate upon is what we have to achieve. So it is simply a diversion of the mind from its normal activity not even involving a change of direction, but merely a change of the goal that we have to gain. The spiritual goal that my Master offers in this system is the goal of perfection that we can attain. This perfect state is something that is abstract. We do not know what it is until we have achieved it. So my Master has specified for us a simpler goal, a simpler object of meditation which, while serving the purpose of being an object, yet approximates closest to our goal. And that is what we meditate on: light in the heart. My Master says light is the closest to the Ultimate, and therefore it is the most beneficial and effective object on which we should

meditate. So this covers the second activity. The first was the cleaning, which I have told you about, the second is the meditation.

Now, when you have cleaned something, something has to be put into it. We can clean a bottle but only with the object of replacing the dirt with something clean. What Master now puts into our cleaned purified system is Himself, or His spiritual essence, in the form of what we call transmission. This transmission is done by Him in a highly spiritual fashion and it does not involve any physical contact, or any mental contact, or anything like that. Therefore, it is possible that He can transmit from wherever He is to a person on the other side of the world, if not on the moon itself. Now, we are all familiar with wireless transmission where there is no physical contact between the transmitting station and the receiving station. It should therefore not be difficult for modern man to accept the possibility of such a transmission. And in any case, it is easy to prove because no instrumentation or receiver is necessary. Here is a transmission from one human person to another human person which both feel, and by which both benefit. In fact, the proof of his system is that the people receive his transmission and testify to it.

So, these are the three major components of Sahaj Marg Yoga: the cleaning, the meditation and the transmission. Master generally offers this transmission to people that come to attend our meetings, and it is for that reason that my Master comes personally to these meetings. He rarely delivers lectures in public, his purpose being to serve humanity in a much higher spiritual fashion by transmission.