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# Sahaj Marg Study Group

## ***Morality***

Set 4, Handout 5 (*Principles of Sahaj Marg, Set 1. Pages 130-140*)

Master's tour of Europe is coming to an end. As you all know, he is leaving tomorrow afternoon at three o'clock for India. On this trip, he has not been able to visit all the countries of Europe. Those of you who remember him from the last eight or nine years know that in 1972 he visited Egypt and then he traveled all over Europe. After that he went to England and then covered a small bit of the United States, after which he came back to Denmark for a second visit. He then traveled to some parts of Europe again and then fell sick in Germany. He was more sick in Italy and was almost on the point of collapse before finally returning to India. That was in 1972, and his tour then was of three months' duration.

In 1976 he came only to Europe. There were no visits in America. He did not visit England; nor was Cairo included. That trip lasted only six weeks. On that occasion Master came straight to Denmark. Then he went all over Europe and finally came back to Denmark. In between he fell ill in Switzerland, and this almost necessitated cancellation of all his travel plans. Then he staged a miraculous recovery, completed his trip and then returned to India.

His third tour abroad was to Malaysia and Singapore for a period of four weeks. That was in 1977. After about eighteen days in Petaling Jaya, a suburb of Kuala Lumpur, he had a minor accident and dislocated his left shoulder. He had to be in bed for three days. Once again we were on the verge of canceling the tour and going home. However, he had a quick recovery and went on to fulfill his engagements before returning to India.

This is his fourth tour outside India, and this time it is only for one month. He has been able to visit only two centers in Europe this time—Copenhagen and Munich. As we all know, his condition has been such as to cause us all a certain amount of anxiety. But this morning he has staged a miraculous recovery, as usual, and is going back home tomorrow evening.

On all these four travels of his, he has been emphasizing that Sahaj Marg is a community where people come together, all over the world, with the sole purpose of spiritual growth and spiritual evolution. This emphasis was not felt so much in 1972 because it was an introductory tour and perhaps he did not want to emphasize too much those things which might be considered as major sacrifices by the people of the West. He just sort of skimmed over the surface, and let it go at that. In 1976, the advices he gave to the abhyasis were more pointed, the conditions for sadhana were a little more stringent. He introduced principles governing our normal daily life such as the need to obey at least some of the Ten Maxims; the essential need for good behaviour; the essential need for good-brotherliness and sisterliness among the abhyasis; not to harm or hurt others by our talk or by our deeds—things like that, which come under the norms of behaviour and ethical principles.

Now for the last three years he has been emphasizing very much the need for morality—including the prohibition of alcoholic drinks too. Some of our American brothers asked me the other day when we had a meeting, "Chari, how is it that

he did not tell us these things in 1972? Why is he talking all of a sudden in 1980 about these things?" The only answer to this question is that when we bring up children, we give them a great deal of love and a great deal of freedom when they are young. But as they grow up they are expected to conform to more and more discipline and slowly come up to the norms of adult behaviour. They have to behave like adults. They have been given facilities to acquire knowledge and training and are therefore expected to behave in conformity with the principles laid down for adults. They are expected to know better than children. So we in Sahaj Marg have been treated by the Master in 1972, and the years before that, very much as children in the school of yoga, and he has given us all his love without much of these rules and regulations, obedience to which could not be expected from us at that time. You don't make such demands of children!

When a child becomes a youth of say sixteen years, there is still a great deal of freedom, but not as much of it as one had when one was six years old. But when one touches forty, one is expected to be fully mature, to know what he is doing—what is good for him, what is bad for him—and what his responsibilities are. He has now to participate in the building up of a society of which he is a part. Ours is such a society. Now we have wisdom; we have knowledge; and we have ability. It is now that there is the greatest possibility of doing good—or bad. At that stage if we go bad, well, as the English proverb says, "There is no fool like an old fool." When we are young it is expected that we will do some foolish things. But when we grow up, we are no longer expected to be foolish in our ways. We in Sahaj Marg, at least here in Europe, are quite young. No one here has been in Sahaj Marg for more than ten years. We can be considered to be entering the stage of youth in yogic life. This is the stage when we have to enter that stage of life when we have to be educated, disciplined, trained in following the ethical rules, the commandments of morality and last, but not least, we have to be trained to know what is good for us and what is bad for us.

It is for this reason that I think Master is slowly introducing us to these concepts of ethics, moral behaviour, etc., which, after all, are nothing new. They have been shouted from the mountain tops all over the world, literally and figuratively, for thousands of years. When we rebel against them, it is only because we have been flouting them for so long. Now when we are re-exposed to them, it is as if one is suddenly plunged into a pool of cold water. There is a shock! But every one of us knows inside that these principles are very important and very necessary.

Most of you would have read some philosophy. You will remember the Kantian ethic concerning the dilemma whether a particular thing should be done or not. Kant says when in doubt, one should universalize the proposed activity. If everybody in the world did it, would it be good for humanity? If it is, then do it; if not, don't! Now why I am giving this preamble, showing Master's step-by-step development in his approach to us, is to show you that his teachings have not changed over the years. If you study his teachings clearly, all these points are already there in his books, his articles, his speeches, his messages, etc. The only thing that he is now doing is that he is shifting the emphasis from the lower level to the higher levels. I am very glad about this. I am also very proud about it

because it shows that we here, in Europe, are growing to a level where he can give us the higher teachings that he has so far **withheld** from us. It is a sign of growth—our growth—when more demands are made upon us; when more discipline is imposed upon us; when more is expected from us as individuals, as individual Sahaj Margis, if I may use that term! It only shows that he sees in us that growth which now enables him to ask from us these things.

A father doesn't ask his little child for money! After all it is the father who is paying for the child's food, clothing and education. But when the son starts earning himself, and the father asks him for some money, the son may not like it. He may say, "Well! The old man never asked me for any money before this. All of a sudden he is asking me for some now." The son may resent such demands from the father. Most sons do! But the father asks precisely because he is now sure that his son has now come to a stage where he can give what is asked of him. Our father here is asking from his sons for more things. Now such an asking is not an imposition upon us. Please understand this very clearly. They are not impositions; they are not regulations; they are not restrictions upon our freedom. But they are things which a spiritual father is entitled to ask from those whom he considers his youthful, grown-up children. And I am sure that this tendency to expect more and more of and from us will grow in future years.

In his latest message at Delhi he has emphasized that he has been working alone single-handed ever since he started this spiritual work of his. There is a cry of pain in his heart that there is nobody who has developed to a level where he can help him in his work.

Now, it is not unwise on his part, or unusual on his part, to expect that every one of us would rise to his level. After all that is his work. Many of you are teachers. You don't expect only one child in your class to pass the examinations! One would be ashamed of such a teacher. More than that, we should be ashamed of such a school, and the school authorities should be ashamed of such a teacher. Isn't it? So the teacher is entitled to seek of every student in the class that he should rise to that level of expectation which the boards of education demand; for which the teacher is teaching them; and for which after all, the student has enrolled himself in the school.

We have joined Sahaj Marg not to be childish, not to be flippant, not to have that freedom which is license—mistaken freedom—but we have come here for spiritual growth which presupposes external changes in behaviour, in ethical and moral living, etc. The excuse is all too often advanced that our society is made that way; so how can we change? But if you look back sixty years, your society was not as it is today. If you go back a few hundred years, you will find that a Victorian code of ethics and morality prevailed—it was much more stringent. How does society change? Society does change, as we have seen. It changes because one individual enforces that change, and makes the change possible. Those were changes in a small, restricted society, applying possibly to a few hundred thousand people or to a few million people. But what our Master is seeking to do today with our co-operation is to change the world itself. It is not only for the Victorians, or the Danes and the French. It is a total change for the whole of humanity. It is a total change of humanity that he is seeking. If the

change is piecemeal, we get a society which is like bad toast, raw bread on one side and burnt on the other. Nobody will eat it. Our human society has been all along good in parts, bad in most of it—for one reason or another. Every society had in it something that was good and much that was bad. This is true of all countries, of all societies, all over the world through the history of humanity.

Now, here is a person who has undertaken the fantastic task—I would say almost impossible task—it is fantastic when looking at the task, it seems impossible when looking at us—but a great and glorious task looking at his achievements. We have seen what he **can** and what he **has** achieved. So his is a great and glorious task, a fantastic task and an almost impossible task all in one. It can be a success only if we offer our hearts to him in humble co-operation.

Now, it has been a disappointing feature of Sahaj Marg that in most places in the West, the Sahaj Marg society, whether it is a small one of ten abhyasis or a large one of two hundred abhyasis, is becoming converted into some sort of a social club where people meet to gossip. They meet not for the higher purposes of spiritual growth but for the lower ones of gossiping, of exchanging friendships, of exchanging so many other things which I would not like to talk about. It has become a market place. The commandment which says that we should not steal what belongs to another is broken in human relationships themselves.

Any institution can be created for the highest purpose, but in it the students can go for drugs and things like that and thus debase themselves, corrupt themselves, and possibly destroy themselves as well! It is not the fault of the school. It is the fault of the students. You can have a government where the highest ideals are laid down, but people lower them or totally trample them under their feet. A society can be free and noble, cherishing the highest values of human existence, or it can be corrupted and destroyed by the members of the society themselves.

The Sahaj Marg society is no different. The teachings of the Master are there before us. The values he wishes us to bring into our lives are there. The ideals are before us. And if we want to see what **can** be achieved, we have very fortunately still before us the Master himself to show us in his person, in his way of life, in his spiritual attainment of the Highest, what can be achieved. If we debase ourselves and convert this society into a house of gossip, where human beings are traded one for the other, and where the very roots of culture are being destroyed, and families are being broken up—it is a very unfortunate thing indeed. We are playing with people. We are playing with other people's hearts as if they were billiard balls. Billiard balls are made of hard ivory or plastic. They can stand all the knocking about and the shocks that they are subjected to. The human heart is not like that. And in this process, we forget that we are playing with the biggest and softest heart in all creation, the heart of the Master. We do not realize or understand how every single action of ours contributes to his health, or destroys it. I am not speculating when I say this. You can see this for yourself. There are places where even if you throw him down, he will bounce back like a rubber ball. There are other places where he is sick from the moment he enters it. And what is it that contributes to his health or his sickness? It is nothing but the atmosphere we create around ourselves. I do not think any one of us is

deliberately doing this. We all love the Master too much not to want him to be peaceful and healthy, and what we wish for most of all is to have him with us for as long as we possibly can. But what are we to do if we fail in the smallest things he requires of us?

The moulding of our behaviour, of our activities, the proper way of living a family life—these are the least things, things at the lowest level of our existence. These are the least things he can ask of us. These are things that we ourselves teach to our children. Every one of you is a father or a mother. You all know this. But what are we to do when adults themselves break down and seek to destroy that which they expect their own children to build? When adults themselves break down because in their utter selfishness they forget that the family life is what is important—not their own selfish desires and hungers of the body which we are seeing all around us—what are we to do? Such adults not only destroy themselves but also destroy the future about which Master has been emphasizing in his Delhi message, and again in Munich.

Master has repeated, again and again, the statement, “My teachings are difficult to understand today, not because I have made them difficult but because they have been designed and recorded for posterity.” Yesterday he gave us an example to explain this. He pointed out that at the time the Vedas were written, only a few must have understood them. Today, after thousands of years have passed since they were written, there are scholars who know and understand them thoroughly, and many ordinary persons also understand them. So Master’s teachings are for the future. Our presence in the present, and our good fortune in receiving the teaching direct from him, in having his guidance at every step of our sadhana, in being able to talk about and discuss his teachings and practice with him, this is an immense good fortune which we seem not to appreciate.

Those who possess valuable things rarely cherish them. We are forgetting the wonderful things we have, even discarding them thoughtlessly, and casting our covetous and lustful eyes on what is not ours. This is true whether it be objects or persons. We never value what we have, and foolishly seek what others have. This is most disappointing, not merely for us but for the Master. It is very important to realize this. If the Master becomes really disappointed, and he becomes really distressed, it will be a big tragedy for us. Forget yourselves. Think of your children! I think we all love our children too much to see their future destroyed. Who would like to see his children parentless, miserable, becoming a drug addict himself and thus adding to his already unbearable miseries—forgetting family, forgetting society, indeed forgetting humanity itself—all because the parents gave him nothing but a broken home full of misery, full of insecurity and without a foundation of love and security on which alone a child builds up its own existence? I don’t think any of us really wish for such things to happen. Many of you perhaps suffered all these things too vividly in your own younger years to want this miserable fate to descend upon your children.

If we want to see ourselves in a safe and sane society living in a moral society full of spiritual values, contributing to human growth and development in peace and harmony with all around us, without one seeking to steal from the other; without one seeking to rob from the other or kill the other; then we have to create

such a society for ourselves in our own lifetime. If we are unable to create such a society, then what will be the society that our children will inherit from us? We all have our failings. Our children are watching us all the time. Our children are much wiser than us. They seem to know intuitively what is going on. If this is the tradition, if these are the sets of values we are going to pass on to our children, what is going to happen to the future? Even in such a short span as thirty years or fifty years, what is the future going to be like? So this is not a plaything. Our lives are not playthings, and Sahaj Marg is not a joke, a plaything for us to play with.

If we are to follow Master's teachings, the minimum we have to do is to ensure that at least our own Sahaj Marg society is not corrupted. In a good brotherhood, we should not rob each other. But unfortunately this is what seems to be happening. The very growth of Sahaj Marg seems to be a menace for its own existence. The growth in numbers seems to offer us more choice. When there are just two or three of us, there is very little that we can do. But when there are five hundred of us, well, the scope for internal dissension and mutual misbehaviour on all levels, including the moral level, is increased. And this seems to be unfortunately the case in some places. It is a shame that we, in our own society, where each one of us is supposed to be trying to achieve the highest ideal of spiritual growth and development, we ourselves contribute to the debasement of our own society. Is it not something that we should weep over? We should weep for shame.

We all say we love the Master. We try to help him, we try to serve him in as many ways as we can. But what is the one thing he wants of us? It is our own growth. He does not want anything else from us. He does not want money. He does not want food. He wants none of these things. He says all that he wants is that we should grow into what he wants us to become. That is his satisfaction, and the fulfillment of his work. If in this we cannot support the Master and contribute to his happiness, then we are failures—total failures. I don't think any teacher or guru should ask less of us. We see them all around us. They seem to ask only for their own welfare, their own comfort and prosperity. They ask for our money, for our physical services and so on, all for their own benefit, not for ours.

Here our Master is only saying, "Please accept my services so that you can become what I have become." I don't think there can be a cheaper transaction than this, in which the very universe is offered to us in exchange for the pittance of a human heart. I deliberately say "pittance" because by our behaviour we have shown what little there is of the **heart** in our hearts. People who can trade hearts at the drop of a handkerchief—I don't believe they have hearts. They have only something else pretending to be a heart. Such persons have yet to develop that which we call a heart.

These are the few thoughts that I wished to place before you in clear and unambiguous terms before Master leaves for India. I am only telling you what the Master wishes to say but is unwilling to speak about. So on his behalf I have tried to explain to you the contents of his two messages given at Delhi and Munich. Our abhyasis have found it so difficult to understand them. Master speaks in veiled and allegorical terms. I once asked him why he doesn't tell people in direct

terms what they should and should not do. He answered, "If I give them such direct instructions and they don't obey them, then they are adding one more sin—the sin of disobedience of the Master. Then they really commit two sins—the first one about which I have to instruct them, and the second one the disobedience of the Master's instructions. I do not like to impose this upon them. So I don't give direct instructions to abhyasis."

So, this is the great charity of the Master, that he does not give us orders and instructions because he does not want to burden us with the sin of disobedience of the Master. So please don't expect direct advice. Master never advises directly. Don't expect personalized advice. He never says, "Mr. X, you don't do this." He only says things in a general way, and we should be alert and take up what applies to us. This is his way. He does not want to hurt our feelings by referring to our weaknesses and failings in a direct manner. Also advice given in a general way benefits every one of us.

So we must understand the Master's ways and his methods. We must understand how he behaves with us. Perhaps he is not a gentleman in the sense in which the English language understands it. But if ever there was a true gentleman he is it, precisely because he demands nothing while offering everything. He conveys his message and his thoughts and ideas on bits of paper upon which he scrawls these things for us. He is a gentleman precisely because he does not want anything of us—he asks for no money, he asks for no physical services; he does not ask for our obedience as we have just seen, and he does not want from us even our good wishes! He makes no demands of individuals, of society, not even of God Himself! This is my observation. Why? Precisely because he has risen to that level where such demands are unnecessary for his existence.

He does not need anything. But a man who needs nothing whatever, and who is willing to give us everything—if we have the good fortune to have such a person in our midst, and having him in our midst we waste our time in flippant activities, attending merely to the base and petty needs of the body, indulging in cheap romances and things like that—I again repeat that it is the greatest tragedy of the individual and, by contribution, the greatest tragedy of our society and our people.

I entreat you all to think over these things deeply. We make no demands. These are things which had to be said, which have to be understood, and most important, which have to be acted upon. The Master is there to give us the strength for all this. He gives us the teachings; he gives us the wisdom to understand them; and he also gives us the will power to act upon his teachings. He gives us all this so that we may develop to what he holds up before us as the highest ideal of human development.

Thank you!