
The Highest goal demands the greatest discipline

I would like to begin with a small story, which my Master, Babuji Maharaj once told me. It concerns a boy of twelve or thirteen, who went to a famous guru of his time to be his disciple. So the guru told him, "My boy, my son, before I accept you as my disciple, I should like to tell you the duties that are involved in being my disciple. The boy was very happy. He thought, this is the first lesson of my discipleship – his initiation. He said, "Yes Master, please tell me." So the guru said "When I wake up at 4^o clock in the morning, you have to help me have my bath. Immediately after my bath, you will give me my milk with almonds crushed in it. Then you will wash my clothes. Then you will prepare my breakfast and feed me at 8 'o' clock, when my puja is over. Then you have to cook my food and feed me at lunch time and put me to bed at 2 'o' clock and wake me at five. "Then like this, through the evening, his meal preparation, his hookah and his bed and finally at midnight: "You have to press my feet, massage my feet and put me to sleep." So the disciple, the prospective disciple, thought for a moment and then he said, "Master, it is much better to be a guru than a disciple. How do I become a Master?"

So, Babuji used to tell this story quite often with considerable laughter and say, "You now, people are always wanting to be Masters without becoming disciples first." There is only one way a man can become a Master and that is by being a disciple; a disciple he defined as one who is absolutely disciplined. Without discipline there can be no disciple. So in the army there is an axiom that one who can obey implicitly, or who has trained himself to implicit obedience, he alone is fit to command. No one can command who is not able to obey first.

PSM – vol 7 – pages 194-195

The secret of spiritual success, spiritual growth, spiritual achievement according to me, brothers and sisters, today – perhaps I will change my opinion again – but today it seems to me more than anything else is obedience. Because if the practice should get us to it there are people who have practiced even in Sahaj Marg, very ardently, sometime meditating every day four or five times, one hour each time, systematic practice. Cleaning? There are people who are cleaning themselves every evening without fail. But in many cases, Babuji Himself confirmed, even their spiritual journey has not begun. If it was only the mission, then there had been giants in the mission, pillars of the Mission. So you see, I came by this process of elimination of one factor after another, responsible for progress, and I culminated myself, as of this moment, that obedience is a thing which gets you where you want to go.

I think if you have read Voice Real, you have read the story of Ayaz, the man who was a slave of a great Emperor. The Emperor had brought a tree made of diamonds and gold and jewelry and what not. The Emperor was fond of Ayaz, he loved him very much. All the courtiers were jealous. Even the courtiers, nobles, all were jealous of this Ayaz. And one day they determined to ask their Emperor, "What is the reason for this?" The Emperor smiled and said, "Well, let us see, we will have to think about this; but in the mean time, you know, this tree is proving to be a nuisance because it is in the hall of my court. I would like it to be destroyed." So he called his Prime Minister, "Please destroy it." The Prime Minister said, "Majesty how can I destroy this? This is a priceless thing you have brought back from Hindustan." And he extolled it for half an hour, praised it – as if the Emperor did not know, you see- put his sword back into the scabbard and very humbly went and sat back. Like this, one by one the courtiers were called, not one of them would do it. He called Ayaz – "Come here. Smash this tree to bits." He pulled out his sword and smashed it! He

said, "Therefore he is dear to me. Therefore I love him. He did not think of the value of the thing which is to be destroyed. He did not think how much trouble I had in bringing it here. He did not think of its beauty. He did not think of the diamonds or the gold or the jewelry. It was my order which was important to him. I said, "Smash it", he smashed it. Therefore I love him. So you see the importance of obedience.

PSM – vol 8 – page 24

There is no merit in delayed obedience. If the doctor says, "My dear friend, you are in serious condition! Take this medicine now," and you take it tomorrow morning- perhaps you may not be there to take it tomorrow morning to take it at all! If a train must go at two o'clock and it leaves tomorrow evening two o'clock there is no merit in it. Obedience means immediate obedience. "Take this and put it there," must be now, not tomorrow. I have known Babuji Maharaj giving instructions. The abhyasi feels he will do it later when the Master comes. Then minutes later the Master comes, and lifts up the thing and puts it there. This man is a failure. Why? In a small thing like "Take this and put it there," his obedience was lacking; he did not know the importance of the Guru's instruction; he thought that it could be delayed. Now, when he thought that it could be delayed, he was pitting his judgment against the Master's judgment. The conclusion is very clear. Is it an act of arrogance? Yes!

PSM – vol 7 – page 31/32

So, let us pray to the Master, "Please make me first of all, an abhyasi in the true sense, in the true spirit of what that means – one who lives by your principles; one who obeys your orders and commandments; one who is following the practice as established, sincerely, honestly with dedication. Keep me aware of the goal I have got to go to. Am I in this game for politics, for money, for this that and the other? No, I am here for personal spiritual evolution.

PSM – vol 7 – page 14

How to overcome the resistance of the human mind and what is this resistance? Because people ask again and again, abhyasis ask, "How can I cooperate, what is this cooperation?" So abhyasis have to be educated into a right understanding of cooperation. Cooperation means rising beyond your physical existence, not giving into the pulls of the lower life, the agony and ecstasy of the lower existence, but rising, with some understanding of the ecstasy of the spiritual existence, and trying to co-operate with the higher up-flowing path, and forgetting the lower pull is there. This is where the need for discipline comes that, when food is offered and there is a sitting, we must naturally prefer the sitting, not the food. When we can sleep or alternatively listen to a talk on spirituality, we must instinctively, naturally, spontaneously listen to the talk and not go for sleeping, because sleep is the pull for the lower life, food is the pull towards lower existence, and after all we are not asked to be hungry for twenty-seven days. It is for a half an hour or one hour or a couple of hours, may be.

PSM – vol 7 – page 202

I used to wonder, why there are certain cults, organizations, systems, where discipline seems to be inculcated the moment you step into that. You know, there are *margs* (systems), where the discipline is so absolute that a deviation from discipline can cost you your life, I mean physical mortal existence can be terminated at the whims and fancies of the leaders of the cult and sect. But it is not fear of death alone which makes people disciplined. There seems to be a fervor – an eagerness to accept that discipline.

And, I used to wonder why, in the so-called nobler traditions where man is thrown upon his own integrity and his own assessment of what he should become, or what he should be to start with - this discipline does not come? Then, one day I heard my Master's voice telling me that **"the degree of discipline depends on the Goal."** You see, hitherto I had imagined that discipline per se will make the goal achievable. That is, if I am disciplined enough, I should achieve the goal. It is like saying, if I walk long enough I must get to my destination. If I eat long enough, I must fill my stomach, things like that you see. But I have found this funny contradiction, that in many societies where the highest discipline exists there is no spirituality; and the other way, where the highest spirituality exists there seems to be almost a total lack of discipline. Now, I am not trying to justify the lack of discipline in a high-minded organization, or to decry the existence of discipline in those, where there is no apparent spiritual growth. But there is a definite hiatus, there is a definite incommensurability between these two things.

Even though Sahaj Marg offers the highest goal, how many of the abhyasis have really accepted that goal as their individual personal goals? If you have accepted the highest goal as your individual goal, you will also accept the highest discipline as being necessary for the achievement of that goal. The degree of discipline is linked very rightly with the greatness, the height, to which we aspire for. For instance, if I just wish to remain seated in my chair, I don't need much discipline. I have to sit in that chair, after that I can forget it. But if I have to walk, I have to remember that I have to walk on the left side; I should not cross the road where there are no crossing-indications, things like that, you see. If I have to go in a car, the rules become even more stringent. If I have to fly, they have to become much more stringent still.

The strict disciplinarian wants more discipline. The freedom-loving person wants less discipline, not understanding that discipline is neither interference with freedom, nor a lack of freedom, nor super-freedom. Discipline is discipline. Discipline is a way of life. It should have no restrictions. Essentially, we should discipline ourselves from inside. Now there is an old adage which says, "That country has a good government which has no government." "Oh, how can a country be governed if it has no government?" That is precisely the problem, you see, that is precisely the beauty. And I dare to venture to think that someday we should do away with our ten maxims too. If all abhyasis are disciplined, they wake up naturally before dawn, they have a nice place to meditate, naturally they go and meditate, they only eat pious food out of pious earnings, which all becomes natural. What is the need for ten maxims, and then for the commentary on the ten maxims?

So we have to create within ourselves the only source of discipline whereby, by being disciplined, we will not know that we are disciplined. You know, Sahaj Marg terminology, phraseology delights in these apparent contradictions. Freedom without freedom; freedom from freedom. If you know you are disciplined, you are still in bondage. Such a person does not know whether he is alive or dead. Therefore, of God it is said, 'He is.' He was not born; He can never die - ***anadi, anantam.***

So, what I would finally say is that discipline is regulating your own activity yourself, to lead to the maximization of your life's potential in all spheres of activity - mental, moral, spiritual, in everything. So, kindly try to start it from today. I shall pray for your success.

"Discipline is the elementary step of surrender."