

# Attitudes for Proper Sadhana

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Sadhana means achievement of the chosen aim and also the effort being put in for the realization of that aim. In general sadhana means the effort put in for one's evolution into a better person than what he is at the current moment. Perfect clarity of purpose is essential and the same shall be fixed in one's mind before he embarks upon the right path for the speedy and successful realization of the objective set by the individual himself for himself. He should have wise counsel from those who have already attained the chosen objective and be fully prepared to meet the demands made by the proper methods for the actualization of the desired aim. He should persevere untiringly with unswerving determination displaying fortitude and forbearance while meeting obstacles, setbacks, contrary opinions, discouragement and even ridicule from friends and relations as he moves along the path of progress towards the attainment of the chosen ideal. Different goals require different methods and ways in which the aspirant has to equip himself for meeting challenges on the way. We may cite as instances, the different goals such as running the 9 minute mile, scaling the tallest peaks in the world, solving the riddle of the God particle

and so on.

When we take up the case of the aspirant on the natural path, similar arguments apply. At the stage of introduction to the PAM practice, the aspirant is made familiar with the different items of practice covering the precise methods to be followed along with the purpose behind each one of them. The aspirant becomes an abhyasi when he does the practices regularly and diligently. We have to note here that a shift in attitude is required for the abhyasi to turn into a sadhaka. It would mean in effect that he has started the yatra or journey towards the goal.

Attitude is defined in the dictionary as, ‘a way of regarding things, disposition or reaction to a person, event or thing’. It may also be noted that attitude also refers to the body posture.

If the attitude that we are like soldiers in a parade awaiting the order of the commandant being alert with attention towards him has developed in us, the body will assume the alert straight posture as required in the first commandment. I would also use this context to define attribute which is, ‘a quality ascribed to person or thing,

a characteristic quality, regularly associated with that person or thing'. An attitude gets set once a particular attribute characteristic of that attitude is developed in the person.

The relevance of the above statement is in recognizing the fact that till the abhyasi becomes clear about the aim or purpose behind the efforts he is putting in and that purpose gets fixed in his mind, he does not become a sadhaka in relation to that purpose. In our case the abhyasi has to become deeply aware of the goal of life and also get convinced in his heart that that goal is the most desirable and noblest of all purposes in his life. That should be the only thing he regards to be supreme in relation to all other subordinate goals however legitimate they may be for leading a normal life of a householder.

The goal in the natural path has been stated in practical terms as realizing the potential of becoming Real Man, bringing forth the Man behind man. The Real Man is in turn defined as the person who is fully established in the natural observance of the Ten commandments of the Master whose real import has been realized in the core of his heart. He has to turn into an aspirant who has taken up the Master Himself as the real goal of human life, as the very embodiment and

expression of the commandments in every aspect of living. He must feel absolutely convinced in his heart that such a life, the spiritual way of living, is the only life worth living. Commandments 2 and 3 should be deeply understood and must be implemented by him in full measure. Now begins the life of a sadhaka proper.

The abhyasi needs to introspect deeply within and be brave enough to face the deficiencies, shortcomings in him. Master has stated that the recognition of the shortcomings along with the desire to overcome the same signals the dawn of viveka in a person. The evaluation of the progress made towards the final goal has to be continuous.

Stated in simple terms it is the transition from the animal level of existence to the human level and further onwards to the divine level. As all of us are well aware of the details concerning the above terms through our literature, I will not dwell upon them here except to reinforce certain aspects of the divine level attaining which should form the real objective of a true aspirant.

It has been well pointed out by our guide in his talk, ‘Way of living’ (Liberal exposition of PAM) that we have

been giving too much importance to the intellect, dry logic and the so called rationality at the expense of feeling. Independence has been trumpeted so much that the fact of our interdependent and mutually interconnected existence has been brushed aside almost to the point of extinction. God- given faculties such as love, empathy, feeling of mutual concern have long been neglected. Instead of being in tune with nature (4th commandment), man has decided to conquer nature, exploit it to the progressive environmental degradation and perilous deterioration in bio-diversity. The natural path is designed by the Master to restore us back to the fundamentals of being in tune with nature. The sadhaka is one who recognizes this fact, realizes that he like everything in existence is an expression of the divine and that his foremost duty lies in endeavoring to express the divine in full as shown by our Master. As put by rev. Lalaji sahib, we have so far been hiding the divine and expressing our little selves. Transformation lies in reversing the above, hiding ourselves and exposing the divine in our lives. The more fully we do this nearer we get to the Goal and vice versa. Our Master has been a resplendent expression of the divine in full measure. As He put it, ‘many people come to see me but rarely any one ‘sees’ me.’ It needs the pure heart’s eyes to experience the radiating divinity from such a personality as the Master.

What are the chief attributes of a person in whom the divine is expressing itself? We know them to be sacrifice, sharing and service. The oft-cited example for sacrifice is the Sun who is burning himself out every second so that we all may live and our planet is hospitable for the stupendous variety of life therein. We call such a person a mahatma who puts aside his self-interest for the welfare of his fellow beings unmindful of the difficulties and discomfort he may have to undergo in the process.

The other aspect in nature which is divine is the samavarthi attribute; everyone gets his due share there being no discrimination. There is no friend or foe. The 9th commandment addresses this aspect quite well. While on the subject, the Master states, 'we get power from our thought. It happens only when we create perfect harmony between things of our making and those of the divine.' Obviously this happens to perfection when we achieve complete oneness with God, the goal set before ourselves in the 3rd commandment. Our guide has said in his talk referred to earlier that we do not become one with Master, it is rather, the divinity which becomes one with us as we keep on improving in purity, shedding all the coverings accumulated through our unbalanced way of living. To succeed in the effort we should yield totally

and unconditionally to the Master our link to the Source with a yearning heart praying ‘thou art the only God and power to bring us up to that stage’ of complete oneness. It is the divine which is the means here helping us to achieve that stage. Giving the example of how a different view is taken when one is presented with an item made of clay as compared with the mass of clay from which it is made, the Master emphasizes the need for proper making/ moulding of oneself. He says significantly that God takes a different view of the soul when it approaches Him after such a proper making. We are exhorted to mould ourselves in such a way that it rouses feeling of love and piety in others. God is one who loves all and the soul that has attained complete oneness with Him becomes, just as our rev. Master has been, such a one who loves all and becomes a role model for the rest to follow. Thus it is not sufficient that the abhyasi tries to develop piety and love of God in him but he should grow in consciousness to achieve the level stated above. Master asks us to copy Nature’s example wherein every object receives its due share according to its capacity and worth by moulding our dealings accordingly with due regard to proper needs and fair rights of every one bringing them in close conformity with those of Nature. The abhyasi becomes a sadhaka when the above meaning of the goal is deeply understood in the core of his heart and he becomes fully convinced that this indeed is the

very object of his existence and thus the efforts he makes to achieve that purpose become sadhana.

Now we come to the most important attitude of all in sadhana, which if not adopted and not maintained with uniform intensity throughout, will result in failure to achieve the chosen goal. That is firm determination as expressed in the 3rd commandment, 'rest not till the ideal is achieved.' Master explains this through the analogy of the boat; treating the human form as a boat and the space it is plying in as the ocean of spirituality, it is but essential to put up the helm in order to be able to ply through the vast ocean successfully. In the spiritual field the helm is our strong determination which helps us to steer to the destination. There may certainly be countless whirls at places but the strength of our will and confidence- confidence in self that we have the capacity and worth for achieving the final success, in Master and the method- helps us in overcoming all of them and proceed on straight to the destination.

Elsewhere the Master defines the type of determination we need to have in saying that we should gird up our loins to sacrifice our pleasures and to shake off our idleness. Our guide has pointed out in this context that the meaning of orbiting straight, the expression used

by Master asking us to make our movement direct, our thought is to be centered only on Him; thinking of His attributes, we will be moving out of the direct path and in a circular orbit to be ever away from the Centre. The movement would have to be like that of a point orbiting another point. This is achieved through constant remembrance, remembrance being our nature. Ultimately the remembering entity goes out of the picture leaving only the remembrance behind.

I would like to invite the attention of the aspirants here to an article in Bodhayanthi Parasparam V1 (p.91) by our guide of the same title as the topic of our discussion in which a detailed discussion is presented on the subject. I intend to give only a brief outline of the salient points made therein with the recommendation that the article is to be studied in depth and its import to be assimilated by the aspirants for effecting significant improvements in their sadhana.

1. Learn to remain quiet within firm in the will to go through the process. A simple and sincere call and aspiration from the heart is the most essential thing. Sincerity is what is needed. (Refer also to 'Sincerity' article in BP V8).

2. Turn the attention inward to heed the call from the inner Presence of the Lord. We have to realize that what we are seeking in realizing our true nature is aparoksha jnana- non-sensory/direct intuitional perception as opposed to the sensory or pratyaksha jnana. Our meditational process demands that we go beyond sensory knowledge- meditation on divine light without luminosity.

3. Non-sensory language is one of feeling as implied in saying we feel the warmth of friendship. Fraternity is a non-sensory construct. We gradually come to realize the only true and everlasting friend, sakha, God, that indwelling divinity in us, talking to us as conscience, the voice of God guiding us to Himself.

4. Distinguish between desire and aspiration. Desire relates to lower levels of consciousness of the body and vital parts usually whereas aspiration refers to the higher values for which we want to live. Both pertain to the realm of the mind only, the former to the lower and the latter to the higher. When we seek the Ultimate, it is not desire but aspiration. Aspiration should be the feeling of one's soul need and a quiet settled will to turn towards the divine seeking the divine. Though it is difficult to get rid of desires entirely, it is possible through diligent

practice and availing Master's support (pranahuti) regularly. Satsangh with sadhakas and most importantly with one's spiritual guide is paramount being an indispensable help in this direction.

5. We would have noted by now that the proper attitudes discussed are not possible by mere intellectual awareness about them. But they can evolve and stabilize in us only through the progress (Yatra) made on the path across the various knots. The trainer's help in promoting the same via pranahuti is quite essential in realizing the objective in the shortest possible time. The attributes get set in us by diligent practice along with Master's support as we gain the realizations termed vijnanas by our guide pertaining to the different knots beginning from 1, 1a.

As the sadhaka progresses through them and also owns up the relevant states of consciousness, the corresponding attitudes get displayed in a consistent manner. I enumerate some significant attitudes below.

a. Viveka- remaining calm quietly seeking Him ultimately, waiting for Him. Detachment is to be practical without indifference or apathy (due attachment). These conditions relate to knots 1 and 1a. This leads to a

life within in a constant aspiration for the divine looking at life, its vagaries, with a smile and remaining peaceful whatever the outer circumstances are. This is equanimity of mind. In this context it may be noted that moderation is to be cultivated in all the 5 planes of existence. Balancing is the principle, a dynamic balance between opposing forces.

b. We should learn to yield to the method and the Master. Ekagravritti- thinking and doing only one thing is the watchword. As Master puts it, one Master, one method and one goal. Sincerity is mandatory.

c. Divinity is the means and divinity is the end as the prayer states. It is better to regard it not only as prayer, a mere wish though earnestly stated but as an attitude which is to be developed and maintained.

d. Love implies selfless service, obedience and sacrifice. As conscious remembrance of Master is not possible all the time, a method is to be developed for making it subconscious. Trust and faith in Master enables this process.

e. Surrender which is the indispensable step for the

successful completion of the journey is not possible without learning the principles of love, devotion, faith and obedience-A very detailed discussion is available in the article already referred to. Some of the salient points are listed here.

-realize that interdependence is the truth of existence and not independence. Interconnectedness is another fact which is to be realized and owned.

-eliminate the thought/belief that we alone are the doer of any action

-not sharing the results of any effort with others and enjoying it exclusively by oneself is a detriment to surrender.

-distinguishing between God and Master intellectually.

-enjoying the divine attributes as one's own, such as tolerance, helping others. This, if unchecked, leads to gurudom.

Realizing that Master is doer, knower, enjoyer is the key to graduating towards total surrender. This is possible only if we move on to knot 4 initially and much later in knot 9 with the help of Master's support. Meditation on A and B helps greatly in this.

f. We know that we are moving towards the balanced condition which we had in the beginning and which we have lost in the descent into manifestation. Our guide lists 4 ways for achieving this and refers to the instructions of the Master-

.. Live working and doing everything according to dharma, acting as if it is an order from Master

.. Live and act as if He himself is doing the same

The best way to handle the situation to realize and have faith in the fact that He is the doer, knower, enjoyer and owner of everything there is including ourselves and our attributes, knowledge and spiritual attainments. The best attitude would be to hold that God Himself is advancing in us in His own way to His perfection and that is the meaning of life. Master or God Himself is expressing through us displaying our capacities and

utilizing them in the service of His own cause, spiritual betterment of all. This will lead us to a balanced existence, which itself is the goal stated in a more meaningful and practical manner.

The aspirants would do well to study carefully and assimilate the import of the last portion of the referred article of our guide titled ‘some important points for effective sadhana’; a brief summary of the same is given below.

Basically these deal with various mental states which we need to recognize and come to terms with for satisfactory progress on the path. The generally unsettled state of the mind with the crowding and mad rush of thoughts is the kshipta state as encountered in the beginning of sadhana. The goal is to arrive at the settled state, samadhan.

In general the struggle with the tumultuous thoughts leaves the person in a state of torpidity – mooda, misunderstood usually as calmness or settledness. The abhyasi should attempt at least the vikshipta state- the domain of thoughts having some relation to the main object of meditation, such as thoughts of spiritual way of

life, Master's attributes, memories of meeting the Master in case of the earlier abhyasis etc,. This enables him gradually to get into the ekagra or the one pointed/centered vritti on the object of meditation. This paves the way for the absorbency or settledness-samadhan. The tough call now, having attained the above state, is to wait patiently for Master without expecting any reward. If the latter were to happen, we would return to the kshipta state.

Lastly, the books 'Three truths and three million doubts', a treasure-house of practical spiritual wisdom should be a constant companion of the aspirants. Assimilation of the wisdom contained therein would enable all aspirants to develop proper attitudes in every aspect of living not only the spiritual. I pray to the divine Master that He blesses all for the development of proper attitudes for effective sadhana and move on to the final state of evolution with speedy steps.