

# Practice is our responsibility

-Sri.Sharath Ramanathan

On this auspicious occasion of the Birthday of our Grand Master, I humbly express my gratitude for the opportunity to share a few thoughts on the topic “Practice is our responsibility”.

The role of Master in the system of PAM is paramount, significant and beyond our capacity to comprehend. Without it, there cannot be much progress in the higher realms of spirituality. We are all aware of HIS assured support that is continuous, complete and permanent and is impelling us constantly by lifting us to higher levels of consciousness.

However, there is an onerous responsibility on the part of Sadhaka and his progress in the spiritual journey is also dependent on the labour he puts in towards attainment of the goal through his close adherence to the spiritual practice without any deviation and his participation in the endeavour of Divinisation of Man.

As lovers of The Great Master, we always feel that we

are showered by HIS GRACE and we are aware that we receive more than what we deserve. Everything is well appreciated by us and it impels us to some distance. Though one cognizes and concedes that the value of what one is getting easily is priceless, it is still not influencing one enough to divert significant amount of his energy and focus towards attainment of this ONE goal. Time and again, one does fall a prey to the externalities as mentioned by Sri KCN Sir this morning in his message. This is perhaps indicative of the present level of lack of preparedness to meet the challenge of the future. Our submission to Master and HIS support alone can lift us out of this situation.

Our institute led by the untiring efforts of Sri KCN Sir has published numerous volumes. There is a lot of desire to read and imbibe them and spread them, but the efforts are not commensurate with the thought. It just seems elusive. There seems to be so many activities that seem to come in the way. Work tensions, family tensions, interpersonal relationships, notions and perceptions and issues arising out these perceptions, attachments to people and possessions, attachment to one's way of thinking and actions, all seem to be erratic and imbalanced at times. However, the mistakes are realized only in retrospect and at the time of committing, one is not aware of what he seems to be doing, is it right, and

why one is compelled to act in a certain way. It may be a good excuse to blame it all on one's karma. But as Pujya Dr.KCV said, it is due to lack of awareness of presence of Master and not acting in accordance to HIS commandments at the time of action. Doership, conscious or sub-conscious awareness of oneself as a skilful or a competent or a successful person, exhibition of ego at various circumstances though one may be ignorant of it, are some reasons that makes one commits such mistakes. I have also done many such mistakes and painfully aware that it drains lot of energy and snatches away a lot time from one's hand. Not only sometimes this creates a helpless feeling, but also makes one feel agonized as there is awareness of the daunting task, unpreparedness and finiteness of time at hand. Also, when one's regularity in sadhana at the time of undergoing committing such mistakes is not proper, then one is vulnerable to continue on those mistakes. The monkey mind also plays its part in affecting our motivation to make the task appear like it is almost impossible for us. To quote Pujya DR. KCV here, "Too easily the old habits and practices creep in and pollute the pure spiritual atmosphere sought to be perpetuated by Master in his infinite zeal to better humanity. Amazingly great rationalizations are given for habits and actions which show human weakness rather his awareness of Master".

Time once gone is gone forever and is the only thing that cannot be earned. Recently, Sri KCN Sir told that “Time is GOD”. If we take cognizance of this fact, perhaps, it will help bring in more seriousness and sense of urgency in getting our act together and fall in line more closely with our sense of duty, responsibility and commitment to reach our goal.

Sincerity in thought doesn't always result in actions. There seems to be a lot of gap between intentions and actions. Sloth is very intrusive. There are also so many activities mostly superfluous and can be easily wished away, but still are becoming impediments due to our unwanted attention to them. Unless one takes a ruthless approach to adhering to the practices and girds up the loins, it seems to be difficult to tame the body and secure release from the shackles imposed by the Annamaya Kosa and the Pranamaya Kosa. The determination is often tested many times, especially when one make a strong resolve, it is most tested.

Owning up others problems makes our happiness conditional and dependent on other's happiness. Though we know we can do nothing about other's problems, we still feel disturbed and influenced as if we can do

anything about it. One's thoughts instead of making oneself insignificant, tries to assert one's significance consciously at times and sometimes sub-consciously. Any lapse in Sadhana unless one seeks repentance sincerely, does not go away easily.

There is one part of the mind that always challenges and says that it is very difficult to be truthful, virtuous, dedicated and to be able to implement the commandments in the present day environment, and there is another part of the mind that constantly says that Masters support is there at the back and there is no question of giving up. There is a constant struggle in the mind and mental tensions do occur over many things. Truthfulness is challenging albeit it is not impossible. Pujya Dr. KCV said "The ethical life is a life of tensions whereas really it is the life of vice that ought to be so." When one takes uncompromising stand to exhibit truthfulness, either he puts him in trouble or puts someone else in trouble. Also, "Selfishness" is deep rooted. Love for name, recognition of oneself as a righteous person, recognition of oneself as a truthful person, recognition of oneself as a good sadhaka, etc. do come in the way of spiritual progress.

I have also experienced that by not taking stock of my

defects and not evaluating whether my actions and behaviour are in accordance to the commandments through regular diary writing, they become part of my sub-conscious and slowly becomes second nature and automatic. This may lead one towards casuistry, complacency and even neglect sometimes. It then becomes even more difficult to get out of the weaknesses. Hence, in order to be more sensitive and to vigilantly guard oneself from the lapses, it is incumbent on us to maintain diary and I am endeavouring to do the same.

When we falter in our regularity, we find it difficult to peep into ourselves. We clearly notice that our own inner perception becomes obscured. One may not be able to clearly perceive the divine although he may not doubt the divine presence. This obscurity of vision goes away when one is regular in his spiritual practice and takes regular help of Pranahuti. Regularity also helps us in sustaining the clarity we develop through our meditations. Sri KCN Sir told me once that Meditations are a must even to maintain a balanced outlook to life.

The present day environment poses a formidable challenge for performing effective sadhana. The atmosphere also seems to promote indifference and

apathy. The amount of inputs that one is subjected to, surely has the possibility of polluting the internal atmosphere or the silence and can distract one from the awareness of the Divine. Our ignorant actions may reflect ingratitude though we may not feel so consciously. I read sometime back that “Ingratitude is a sin for which there is no atonement.” One must try sincerely to overcome difficult situations through maintaining stoic attitude and try not to reflect ingratitude even ignorantly.

There may be many within and outside our family and office circle, friends, relatives, neighbours, etc, who, when they come to know that we are practising a system, will watch us closely and try to pose questions and judge us. They may question if our happiness is real and whether our approach to life is normal. The onus is, therefore, all the more on us to behave in such a way that our actions represent conviction, uniformity and balancedness, happiness and are in accordance to the commandments of the Master so that they may attract them towards the Master.

I would like to conclude my thoughts by saying that we can rise above our desires and live in higher plane of consciousness and perform our duty only through assiduous practice and I end my talk with the prayer that

we all work hard so that we can move from “Willingness” to “Preparedness” to participate effectively in the Divine endeavour and radiate HIS Greatness through our lives.