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# babaji Swami Shri Harish Madhukar LIFE SKETCH



Known to his disciples as 'Babaji', Swami Shri Harish Madhukar had no cult following, did not offer any advanced or beginners courses in meditation, nor did he formally teach any shastras or philosophy. He communicated the Truth through his life. Visitors from all walks of life and from all parts of the country came to him seeking answers, but in his presence their questions dissolved and they experienced Love. His expressions in words were direct and simple, "I am not this person, and if you see truth in me I am of use to you. I am only a tap to the great wisdom and vision of the Gurus. If you turn the tap on, the Truth flows, at other times there is nothing to me."

## **A BRIEF LIFE - SKETCH**

Born in Jadla, Nava Shaher district, Punjab, on 27th August 1923, in a family of five brothers and two sisters, Shri Madhukar revealed spiritual inclination at a very early age and could recite the Bhagavad Gita at the age of 4. An interesting story from his childhood was to foretell his later destiny. When Babaji was about 5 years old, some sadhus happened to pass through the village. One of them affectionately tried to catch hold of him, while he was playing with his friends, but Babaji ran away. The sadhu turned to Babaji's father and said, "how long will he run away from his destiny. He belongs to us and will eventually return to us!"

He did his post graduation in Hindi and English from the Lucknow University. Later he burnt his degree, vowing to never take up a job where they needed proof of his education. He married, had six children and in the years that followed, contributed as an art critic, ran a printing press, an advertising agency, and a leather goods manufacturing firm. He enjoyed life to the brim, full of material comforts and sense pleasures. Then one day a strange sense of renunciation crept



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over him, a feeling that he had to go beyond this ‘frog in the well’ existence. He used to lock himself up in a hotel room for days together poring over the scriptures, inventing and practicing different sadhanas by himself, coming out of his hibernation only when the needs of the family had to be met. One day, even this sense of duty fell off and overnight he sold off his leather goods factory, distributed the money among his workers and left for the Himalayas. “Surely,” he felt, “this philosophy of the Vedas, Tantras and Upanishads must live in some person. I must find such a guru.”

### **The Search**

For the next three years he roamed the Himalayas, often surviving only on banana peels, shelterless, penniless, and clueless as to the identity of the Master. Once, as he was lying broken and disheartened, he had a glimpse of a master whose touch revived him from his fatigue but instead of holding on to the master, he rushed to the river to quench his thirst. In a flash, the master had disappeared, but he knew now, who his master was. He was no more clueless. However, as destiny would have it, for another three years he relentlessly searched for the master he had glimpsed on that fateful day.

### **His Master**

Many were the gurus he met during this search, some pretenders and some genuine. But none of them was the face he was looking for. Finally, in the deep recesses of Tunganatha, in the Himalayas, he met his master Shri Svarupanandaji Saraswati Maharaj. The master was a silent teacher, who never ate and never moved from his asana (sitting position).

### **His Sadhana (Spiritual Practices)**

His master simply assigned him the task of grazing cows in the Himalayas. Every morning he left home with the cows only to return in the evenings, tired and hungry, surviving on a frugal meal of milk and chickpeas. Grazing cows in the hilly, jagged terrain was tough and took away all his energies, as care had to be taken that the cattle did not fall off the hills or go astray. Where was the time for real sadhana? For a man of intellect, in search of Truth, the situation was incomprehensible. Surely, truth cannot be found in this menial, mindless act of grazing cows. His ego protested violently. Many a time, in exasperation, he planned to run away, but always returned to surrender. Over two years had passed after meeting the master, with what seemed like no spiritual sadhana or guidance until one fine day, he dropped all effort at grazing the cows and sat doing nothing. In the evenings, the cows quietly followed him and looked after themselves as he returned to the ashram. A great lesson, which was later to become the foundation of his teaching, was learnt - ‘We do nothing, Nature alone does.’ The next day, he was summoned by the Master and instructed to live in a cave and do his ‘ekanta sadhana’, this being meditation done in seclusion. Six months later, he emerged from the cave. As he touched his master’s feet, he had the divine vision. Now he was given formal sanyasa-diksha and renamed Suprabuddhananda Saraswati. In the true tradition of the siddhas, the spiritual journey of Swami Harish Madhukar had begun.



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### His Ashram

On his return from the Himalayas, he lived and moved in the jungles of Sahyadri at Peth Shapur, about 150 km from Mumbai. Here, a small ashram was built and for the next 10 years, he guided disciples as they came. In 1992, his Gurumaharaj Swami Shri Svarupanandji Saraswati took mahasamadhi, passing on the responsibility of the guru-mandala on to him. He started initiating disciples and giving shaktipat diksha or mantra diksha in the tradition of sri vidya and sri lalita worship.

In 1995 was laid the foundation of Shaktiyogashrama Gurukulam, on a scenic plot of 30 acres of land at village Telbaila, near Lonavla, about 150 km from Mumbai. It was envisioned as a multi-dimensional educational complex in the form of a mini university consisting of Gurukulams (residential schools) of classical Indian arts of nritya (dance), sangeet (music), chitra (painting), vastu/shilpa (architecture/sculpture), and the classical Indian sciences of yoga, ayurveda (medicine) and jyotish shastra (astrology). The ashram-gurukul was meant to revive the values of holistic living, cultural rootedness and emphasise the need for spiritual orientation in education. It was Swami Shri Harish Madhukar's response to the deteriorating state of education in India. Pained by the pathetic state it (education) was in, he decided to found a gurukulam to give people the best in traditional and modern education. Towards the fulfillment of this dream, he worked like a man possessed. For a year, he worked feverishly, collecting funds, building, promoting and spelling out the vision of the ashram-gurukul. On 20th March 1996, on the auspicious day of Gudi Padva he inaugurated the gurukulam and started holding residential camps therein. On 26th October 1996, he presented the first Sharadotsava at the ashram.

**On October 31 1996, Swami Harish Madhukar cast off his physical body and merged with the eternal.**

### His Teachings

His teachings consisted of simple statements made as you sat, ate, chatted, joked, chopped vegetables, strolled, watered the plants or as you tidied his room. He constantly reminded his disciples - 'Realization of truth demands no apparent qualifications. It may happen to anyone, anywhere, anytime in any manner. Practice pranavabhyasa and be joyful each moment.'

He embraced both external and internal worship or the worship of the form and the formless. Consciousness, he stressed, exists both without and within. Thus, the sadhanas he recommended included pranavabhyasa or recitation of the aumkara mantra, meditation on the Self, mantra japa and recitation of stotras to harmonise and raise the kundalini shakti within. Above all, he advocated a 24-hour sadhana of living joyously, in full awareness, free of all conditioning, preferences and prejudices and preconceived notions, under the grace of Bhagavati Tripura.

The uniqueness of Babaji's style of teaching was that while most teaching focuses on the means and methods, Babaji made the end itself the means. He felt - 'Why not start living right now in That State in which you will eventually live after you have attained. Let the goal become the path, this very moment. There is nowhere to reach. Why waste time in future imaginings. Live the Truth here and now. That is the ultimate sadhana.'





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He expressed this philosophy in simple assertions that he repeatedly asked his disciples to live by. They were :

- *Always be in a state of good cheer - that is the highest sadhana.*
- *Whatever is, is for the best.*
- *Whatever is, is due to Her Will. Enjoy it, accept it.*
- *We 'do' nothing. Bhagvati 'does'.*
- *Renounce preferences and prejudices.*
- *Practice awareness. Be aware of all things at all times.*
- *You are the awareness of that Awareness.*

