

THE GOLDEN WORDS OF BABAJI

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My Spiritual Master

His real teachings consisted of simple statements that he reiterated a million times a day as you sat, “ate chatted joked, went through daily chores like chopping vegetables travelled in crowded trains, tidied his room, narrated instances from your life and listened to those from his. Each one of these statements was a mantra, a formula for living free.

The last year has required, a spelling out the main principles of Babaji’s philosophy, both for the sake of participants in our programmes, for Babaji’s disciples and for my own students. Personality too I find the whole exercise extremely elevating for it helps me to meditate on the golden words of my guru and ponder over its finer points. The fact that laws of spirituality apply equally and at all times in all walks of life, thrills and amazes me. Often I am moved to tears of gratitude at the great vision of Truth that he gave me so naturally effortlessly lovingly and in the very act of living.

What was this vision of Truth that he gave us, for it would be wrong to call it a system of philosophy or ideas? He never gave discourses and discussed heavy philosophy only rarely and only with some, as if this intellectual understanding was one aspect of his personality. His real teachings consisted of simple statements that he reiterated a million times a day as you sat, ate chatted joked, went through daily chores like chopping vegetables travelled in crowded trains, tidied his room, narrated instances from your life and listened to those from his.

Each one of these statements was a mantra, a formula for living free. He would tell us:

* Be of good cheer. This is the only true spiritual discipline. It is the means and the end. The path and the journey. Let nothing within or without you and no one disturb this good cheer. This is the purpose of all sadhana. All sadhana, he would tell us is self defeating, if it is not done in – good cheer and does not produce good cheer. Good cheer makes sense from the point of view of jnana yoga, bhakti yoga or karma yoga. For their instruments of discretion, surrender and selfless work are possible only in good cheer.

* But why should one be of food cheer? The answer lies in his second formula for Right Living. Whatever and whoever it is a form of Bhagvati and whatever happens, happens due to Her wish and therefore is perfect. True, life can be Cruel exasperating, unfair. Isn’t it only natural to regret, retaliate and feet frustrated? While he would be all compassion to the ups and downs in our lives, he would gently remind us to be of good cheer for whatever is, as it is, is best, for it is in consonance with Bhagavti’s wish and She knows best. Her Will is supreme, Her Judgement infallible. Whether we understand it or not, whether we like it or not, we get what we deserve in Life – no more, no less! This was his simple stand on the theory of karma and it was intimately linked with the doctrine of faith or surrender.

* Is life then to be lived passively? What about a philosophy of work of human endeavour? Indolence

was anathema to his Philosophy – This mind and body are instruments of Bhagavati and they must do Her work. This simple statement took care of the ego and sense of doer-ship that accompanies work and the attachment to fruits thereof. Waste no time he would exhort. Time is the currency with which all things, even money are bought. What must be done, must be done. Only the highest sadhana allows a neglect of one's worldly duties and sometimes not even that.

* In fact the concept of 'sometimes' played a very great role in his teachings. It liberated all ideas from rigidity and staticness and made them living breathing truth. All modes of thought and action were subject to qualification by Time and Space and Person. What is right at one time and place may not be right at another and with another person.

* This is what he called living Spontaneously and living in the moment. This concept of 'sometimes' also freed one from the bondage to any ideology, any personality trait, any concept. Spontaneity is the only principle that is to be followed without exception - It is the voice of God, the expression of an unfettered soul. It is not unreasonable impulse. It is rather the hallmark of Awareness that realises that all concepts, all personality traits, all thoughts, all moods and emotions, all relationships, are like garments to be worn when necessary, changed or discarded according to the needs of the moment. They all decrease or increase in importance and then pass away in Time. Do not identify or hold on to any of these. Respect them and give them their due place, This he would tell us is 'sanyasa' - To give each thing and person its due place No more, no less.

* A sense of proportion, he Would insist was the mark- of an Aware person. He encouraged us to have a sense of proportion in ordinary day to day acts - in how much one ate, how much one slept, how much money one spent, how much one talked, how much time, energy, materials one wasted. These were the things he noticed in disciples and through them sensed a deeper malice of the soul. These are the things he set about correcting as you lived with him. Most people who go to a Guru want to be initiated into high forms of meditation or want to listen to high fundamentals of philosophy. All these he would tell us come much later and were not half as important as the awareness with which one performs little day to day acts. He Would for example watch your level of awareness, patience and respect towards things as you chopped vegetables I would often tease him of how he had raised chopping vegetables to a very high sadhana.

* All things are concepts, ladders for the mind to grasp the essence. To guard them zealously, to propagate them or live rigidly by them is sheer foolishness. To have unbending standards of this and that right and wrong, good and bad, pleasant and unpleasant is sheer arrogance, and opinionatedness. It will make your nature graceless and judgemental. Have no strong-agrahas or preferences and prejudices for the beauty of life lies in its dynamism, concepts can only stilt life.

* Each one of these insights and expressions of Truth could be easily twisted, abused and used for one's convenience. In the absence of Awareness good 'cheer becomes simply a sense of fun, surrender a n alibi for inaction, spontaneity an excuse for senseless action, a sense of proportion mere miserliness, disbelief in concept would only create doubts . . . Each one of his' formulas' seemed to most people highly confusing, seemed to speak this way and that and often seemed to amount to philosophy of convenience. Living with him alone could reveal the dynamism in Truth.

If one were to sum up his entire philosophy in one word, it would be 'Awareness'. To remember at all times from moment to moment, that one is Pure Being, independent of time, space, thoughts and moods and even personality is the only condition of Spiritual living.

To identify only with that Pure Being cultivating complete objectivity towards the workings of one's mind- body complex or personality and to watch its fleeting, evanescent flux is what Awareness is all about -This is living in meditation.

It automatically unclutters the personality for how can one take seriously the play of gunas or the psyche when you can see them objectively. Up to a point, he would tell us, the personality should and can be sorted but after a point it is best to not give it too much importance. If traits of our personality blur your Awareness, or do not allow you to pursue your sadhana, or cause great difficulty to those around you, take hold of them with an iron hand and weed them out. Under other circumstances just let them be.

It brings clarity which is a result of viveka - buddhi or being able to discriminate between truth and untruth, permanence and impermanence, the flux and the still centre.

It automatically lightens the spirit as it expands vision and connects one to eternity. It brings good cheer for how can one not be amused by the games and tricks that one's psyche plays. As a mother while insisting on discipline, amusedly sees through a child's excuses, justifications and demands, the Self sees through the workings of the psyche and handles it in much the same manner.

It fills one with immense peace for with it you have reached your destination, with it all the pieces of the jigsaw puzzle of Life begin to make sense. With it there is vishranti as on reaching one's home. Our guru used to say, even a little bit of this Awareness goes far in sorting out life, even a mere intellectual understanding of this gives one a Power to face Life.

And the beauty is that it is not a static point on reaching which the game is over. Consciousness continues to expand. Babaji used to say that only after gaining full Awareness does one begin to enjoy the true beauty of sadhana.

Systems of morality, ethics of work and enjoyment and even prayer derive their efficacy and rationale from this one principle .. If any act, any thought, any mood, any person, any work- dims your 'Awareness', shun it forthwith Lack of Awareness is the only sin, Awareness the only merit. Quoting from the Buddha Babaji used to say - If a Right (Aware) person does a wrong act, the result will be right and if a Wrong person does an act which is right, the result will be wrong. In one the absence of the ego makes the act pure and in the other its presence makes the act selfish. Acts done in full and pure awareness alone can be Wholesome and beneficial to all concerned Prayer done in full Awareness alone has meaning and helps one's

Consciousness to expand, the rest is only mechanical ritual Even modes of entertainment and play should be rejected if they colour Awareness. Awareness alone can bestow the gift of Right living, Right thinking and Right feeling.

To be Aware is to transcend the play of gunas, the laws of karma and dharma

Awareness purifies all that it touches. In its absence everything is impure, egotistical and caught in the vice like grip of opposites.

Be of good cheer. This is the only true spiritual discipline .
It is the means and the end . The path and the journey .

How does one achieve this Awareness? Only in the company of a Master who lives in such awareness and through sadhana or a system of spiritual discipline that is prescribed by Such a Master can one hope to attain it Babaji's techniques of spiritual discipline belonged to Shaktiyoga a scientific discipline of yoga that raised the disciples level of Awareness from the lower centres of Consciousness to the higher ones by the devices of 'shakti-pat diksha', mantra diksha, pranayama, nama -japa and dhyana or meditation. The chosen ishta-devata was Bhagavati - Devi who was worshipped as one's very own Self, the form of one's Consciousness. Her thousand names- Lalita Sahasranama were nothing but descriptions of the Powers of One's own Consciousness. Bhagwati, the line of guru (guru-mandala) and the disciple were 'links in a single chain each drawing, strength and Power from the proceeding link The sadhaka is never alone in his sadhana, but is watched, nurtured, guided if necessary chided, in this most delicate of journeys by the fine of gurus Diksha or initiation is an entry into this spiritual family (gurukula) It is like an open ticket that the sadhaka can encash whenever he wants. It is valid for all births to come. Henceforth this becomes the sadhakas true and permanent family. One's biological family is only a result of one's past karma.

But the initiation and sadhana derive power only from the Power and spiritual prowess of the guru. In themselves mantras, yantras and dhyana have little meaning. A cheque has value only to the extent of credit that the account it is drawn on enjoys. In any case, a guru is a must. A vidya (be it of any kind) must be learnt from a living Master or else it cannot be digested, will create doubts and an ego Such a vidya is either dead or harmful.

For only a living master can energise and bring alive Truth, only a burning candle can light another.

Only a clear mirror can reflect dispassionately and clearly The guru is the clear mirror in which we see ourselves objectively Due to his pure love all defences, justifications and inhibitions of the disciple are automatically shed The ego melts because the guru has no identity. Egos manifest only if personalities clash or complement each other. But the guru has no personality and so you see clearly the games that your personality plays.

Only in pure space (akasha) can any sound be heard. The chattering of one's mind can be clearly heard in the presence of a silent master.

The Master is a medicine man who intuits the ailment of the disciple and accordingly suggests a discipline. Self-prescription may be wholly ineffective and even dangerous. It can only aggravate the ailment further. All sadhana is to tone down the ego and eventually dissolve it completely but a self – prescribed sadhana may only increase one's ego, justify one's shortcomings, increase one's sense of self-importance and strengthen one's 'agrahas' or preferences. It could be wholly off the mark for we know not our shortcomings.



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Learning from books is even more dangerous for books can only give concepts. However well one may understand them, they still remain concepts - rigid, static, and imaginary. They cannot shed light on the shifting spectrum of Life. Truth is dynamic. And truth is a circuit of positive energy that can only be transmitted. Such a transmitter is the guru. All sincere study of the shastras will lead the sadhaka to a guru. He alone can impregnate a disciple with a truth. Our guru used to express this with a very colourful simile. He would say, howmuchever an attractive woman (potential sadhaka) may ornament and decorate herself (through learning and knowledge of the shastras), till she finds a lover (guru) she cannot conceive a child (give birth to truth). Sheer proximity and surrender alone can help transmit the sweet fragrance of Truth. To give the master one's Time is the greatest sadhana. His love and compassion does the rest for the disciple.

If one were to sum up his entire philosophy in one word, it would be 'Awareness. To remember at all times from moment to moment, that one is Pure Being, independent of time, space, thoughts and moods and even personality is the only condition of Spiritual living

Yes, our path is entirely 'gurumukhi'. The outer guru is the form of the inner guru which is nothing but one's own Awareness. The guru- mandala is the chain of gurus both inside and outside the disciple. Complete faith and devotion to the guru is the 'sine qua non' of self-realisation. Only a person who has been to a remote destination can come back and lead another one there. Only one who has no ego can melt the ego of another, only he who is in perfect health can heal another. Only he who craves for nothing can win the bounties of truth and only such a one can gift it to another. For, yes, the vision of Truth cannot be exchanged for long hours of sadhana, it cannot be demanded in a given time frame or for sacrifices made on this path, for no price can equal it in value. All sadhana, however great, is puny compared to the glory of Truth. Truth can never be earned, it is a gift that can be achieved only by 'Grace' A grace that is showered on those who are humble, faithful and devoted and patient.
