

Uninterrupted Sadhana

Note: The below account is from Amma's earlier sadhana days as a householder.

For the thirty five years I had been doing "Tapas". How did I do it? You may be curious to know more about it. I am giving below a summary of my daily schedule. Mostly I would **get up at 3 A.M** . I would

look at both palms of mine and chant the sloka

"Karagre Vasathe Lakshmi...."

. "These two hands should always be giving; never receiving", I would pray. This sloka is there even in the Balavikas book of Baba.

Before putting my foot down on the ground, on getting up, I would pray and **offer my pranams to Mother Earth**

and seek Her pardon for trampling on Her. Then I would take seven steps towards north, and saying "Daily, Daily Sri Ranga Darsanam" offer pranams in the direction of Sri Rangam. Saying "Daily, Daily Puttaparthi Darsanam". I would take seven steps in that direction and offer pranams.

While washing the face and brushing the teeth, I would contemplate on slokas of Bhagavad Gita. Gandhiji used to keep a black board containing some slokas of Gita and while brushing teeth he would look at this board and memorise these slokas. This I have read in his book "My Experiments with Truth" and so I am following him in this activity.

Then I do meditation. After completing it I get into the kitchen where I keep vibuthi in a container. I take this and **write on the ovens and the gas cylinder**
"Om Sri Sai Ram."

Then only I light the oven. "Mathru Devo Bhava, Pitru Devo Bhava, Agni Devo Bhava, Atithi Devo Bhava" - so saying. I pray to the fire God, "May the food I cook with your help be

instrumental in growing sathva guna. I kindle only the fire of a yajna here,” so saying I light the oven and start my kitchen work. While cooking, I sing bhajans or converse with Bhagavan. His picture is there in the kitchen also.

Even while doing household work, I think of Swami. If I sweep the floor, I think I am sweeping the temple floor. If cleaning the vessels, I would say I am cleaning the pooja vessels. Whenever I attend to children, I say to myself, I am attending on child Lord Sri Krishna.

Before taking bath, I touch the water and think of Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswathi, Godavari, Mahanadhi, Cauveri, Tamraparni, Chitravathi, Krishna, Sindhu, Brahmaputra and seek their presence in the water. I pray to Mother Ganga so that she could wash all my sin. **Chanting vibuthi kavacham I complete my bath.**

“Let it protect. Let it protect. Sai’s vibuthi, Let it protect my head always. let it protect both my eyes.” So saying, for every part of the body using soap, I finish my bath. Then I do **“Abhishekam” for Swami’s Padukas**

I imagine that Bhagavan is standing before me on the Padukas. After the abishekam, I do naivedyam offering whatever I prepare during the course of the day all the time, tiffin or meals. **Without offering food to Swami, we never start eating.**

Even while doing household work, I think of Swami. If I sweep the floor, I think I am sweeping the temple floor. If cleansing the vessels, I would say I am cleansing the pooja vessels. Whenever I attend to children, I say to myself, I am attending on child Lord Sri Krishna.

Whatever be the pressure of work I would not allow my meditation time to slip out of my hands
; I would never compromise or alter the timings

Previously I used to **chant Sri Vishnu and Baba Sahasranam** in the morning; Sri Vishnu Sahasranam in the morning; Sri Vishnu Sahasranam in the evening. If I travel, as soon as I am seated in the bus, I would start chanting Vishnu Sahasranam. To be brief, our life should be a 24 hours pooja to God.

Any word you hear, immediately learn to connect it to God. For example, if you hear the word peacock, you think of the form of Madhava who wears the plumes of a peacock. If you hear about the cuckoo bird, think of the melodious music that flows from His flute.

If someone asks you "When did you arrive?" start thinking "When did I arrive? From where did I arrive?"

If someone asks you "when are you leaving?" start thinking "which is my place? Where Bhagavan resides, that is my place. But how do I go there?" It may be difficult initially to practice this. But in due course, it would and it must become a habit. While travelling in the bus, you may see name boards.

Any word you hear, immediately learn to connect it to God.

For example you may see "Sankar Sakthi Cements" - you should think of Lord Sankara and Parvathi Devi. If you read 'Mathura', think of Lord Krishna. If you see "Vasanth and Co". think of Vasantha Sai Mantra.

Getting trained like this, after sometime we would see God in everything. "Pleasure or pain everywhere in this world, I see You and You only". "My old desires and karma bindings are all gone." If you can say this, you will feel happy.

As the great poet **Subramanya Bharathi** wrote:

Wherever I see Nandalala, I see your green form Nandalala !
If I introduce my finger in fire, I feel as though I am touching you !

This is true. It was also proved by Prahalada. When he was thrown into flames, the Narayana mantra chanted by him without a break, saved him.

When the asuras set fire to the tail of Sri Anjaneya (Hanuman) He was unaffected. These are all

reported only in the Puranas - one may say.

But we experienced it in real life. On 15-6-2000, when we did **Panchagni Tapas**, the fire did not affect us. We did not feel the hot sun. The sacred name of the Lord has the capacity to control all the five bhuthas (elements). This is seen practically. Let it be any yuga. It has now been proved that His name would convert even fire into a cool breeze.

This has been my tapas for the past 35 years. All of you can follow this easily. **Remain all the 24 hours thinking of God. That is tapas.**

You need not go to a forest or cave; you need not even observe difficult vratas and fasting. You need not have this panchagni. Whatever you do, please do it remembering God. You would get everything.

First we have to do the sadhana. With control and steadfastness, with patience and perseverance, we have to purify ourselves and do sadhana. Then everything would follow automatically.

Purity of mind is important. Every second watch the thoughts that arise in your mind and keep them corrected. If we start purifying ourselves, God's grace will flow. Everyone of us can attain this stage. We have to. That is the goal of this birth as a human being.

After the morning meditation, I would stand before the portraits and pictures of God and worship. We have a large number of the pictures of Lord Sri Ranganatha in our house. When I pray to Him, like Sri Andal I should merge with Sai Ranga with this body. Standing before Lord Sri Krishna I would pray to Him and request Him to accept His Radha. Before the picture of Gandhiji, I would pray for an attitude when I would consider Sathya and Ahimsa as my two eyes. I would pray to Sri Ramakrishna and beg Him to banish my attachment to pleasures and money.

I would then look at the picture of my late father and say "My dear father, you brought me up like Sri Mahalakshmi; but she was taken by Sri Vishnu only; but you are not alive today to see this!"

"Purity of mind is important. Every second watch the thoughts that arise in your mind and keep them corrected."

Baba has told me a number of times that my father had the aspect of Periyazhwar in him. (Periya azhwar was the father who adopted Sri Andal). He adopted Sri Andal but Lord Ranganatha snatched her away. Today your daughter Radha (Vasantha) is snatched away by Sai Ranga. Before the picture of Sri Andal I would say

"You are my role model in life, I want to attain the Lord like you, with this body. Please grant me this boon."

As a general prayer, "All jeevas of this world! All aspects of creation! Jnanis, Bhakthas, Mukthas, Jeevan Mukthas, chiranjeevis, Siddhas, All Devatas! I bow before you all." This I utter everyday. Even if I forget, my lips would repeat them; that has become my second nature; that is the result of practice! Good habits can be built up by practice.

If everyone of us could spend every second of our life time like this in divine thought, definitely we can enter the kingdom of God. **Practice and detachment are important for spiritual sadhana.**

"Perhaps we could bind air and contain it; but not the five senses" lamented Arjuna. Sri Krishna then said in Gita, "It is possible to control the senses by hard and continuous practice."

It is not enough if you do it once, for one day and so on. Like a stream of oil, it should flow uninterrupted continuously. Doing it for a few days and leaving it totally is not practice!

Vairagya (Detachment) relates to the stability of mind. Avoiding evil thoughts, keeping vigilance and remaining alert, is part of it. If you can discover a path, be it after a lot of your suffering, it becomes easy at least for others to follow. Why should I suffer and work hard like this? Only if I do tapas, others can arrive at this point to follow the Prema Marga.

A man without sathya and dharma is blind.

There is a temple on top of a hill. Someone discovers and makes all efforts to create a neat clean path to reach the temple. It may mean hard work for him. But it becomes very easy for others to follow the path and reach the temple. After I completed writing all this, I received the June issue of "Sanathana Sarathi" in which Swami wrote like this:

'A man without sathya and dharma is blind , because these are like the two eyes of man. All the shastras were born from the vision of these. Without the eyeball and the pupil, where is creation? Where are shastras? All shastras, Upanishads and vedas are born out of the love emanating from the heart of man. Whether one is a multi millionaire or pauper, Prema is important.' This was spoken by Swami on the Easwaramma Day. I was praying that Sathya and Dharma should be my two eyes. Swami had written the same in the Sanatana Sarathi.

When we get involved in sadhana in the name of sathya, definitely it will get the approval of Swami. Now Swami speaks more about Prema only.

Likewise, "Na karmana na prajaya na dhanena thyage naika amrutatvamana su:" was quoted by me in this book. Swami echoed and wrote about sacrifice and approved of my statement. Also He says Atma is Prema.

Only our attitude is important. "Yat bhavam tat bhavathi." Thus, our daily routine work can be converted to yoga.

Daily, when I get up, very humbly, without any vanity or pride, I would pray to Him to grant me honesty, ahimsa and patience. This is my tapas, it is being done for the past 35 years. Anyone can follow this. Think of God all the 24 hours. That is it. No other extra effort. No need to run away to a forest or cave. Wherever and whatever you do, think of Him. That is sufficient.

Watch the mind and correct it. Purify yourself and then start sadhana. Keep trying. God's grace

will definitely flow in your direction. Anyone can practise this; that is the very purpose and goal of life.

Sri Andal became one with Sri Ranganatha then; but now Vasantha Sai should merge with Krishna when she turns eighty. This is my prayer.

It is only the job of daily cooking. The same fire, I consider as the sacred Homa fire. The oven itself is a Homa kunda. When you contemplate like this, you will get a power. Even small, ordinary and routine work, if you do it for Bhagavan, that becomes karma yoga. **Only our attitude is important.**

“Yat bhavam tat bhavathi.” Thus, our daily routine work can be converted to yoga.