RARE QUOTES
FROM
A RARE MASTER

SWAMI KRISHNANANDA
His Holiness Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and
His Holiness Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj
Om Namo Narayanaya
Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya

The Goal of life is God-realisation. This is the foremost Duty of the human being, and all other duties are subsidiary to this duty.

Swami Krishnananda
21/1/1965
PUBLISHER’S NOTE

During 1967 and 1968, Param Pujya Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj’s office assistant would daily place before Swamiji a diary in which Swamiji would write a sentence or two as an inspiration and guidance for that sadhaka. Some of these messages were arranged into sections and brought out as a booklet entitled “Thus Awakens the Awakened One” on the occasion of Swamiji’s 70th Birth Anniversary, which was celebrated on 25th April, 1992.

Now these handwritten entries have been scanned and the typewritten versions added, and are being uploaded to Swamiji’s website on 8th November, 2016 as our worshipful offering on the occasion of Swamji’s 15th Punyatithi Aradhana.

May the blessings of Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj be with you all.
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I. PRACTICAL WISDOM

“See the Seer in the Seen.”

That is wisdom which can reconcile itself with actual life. When the realities of practical life conflict with or stare at the knowledge we possess, it should be remembered that such knowledge is immature and is a mere theory. Moreover, it is not knowledge ‘of’ life that we need; we require knowledge which ‘is’ life, and is inseparable from its daily vexations. We have to view ourselves in a universal context and then live life, not look upon ourselves as individuals who have to be at war with the world in our everyday life.
‘God helps those who help themselves.’ But we have to help ourselves in terms of God’s law which requires that we sacrifice ourselves in every one of our acts in such a manner that our acts help in exceeding the lower personality by degrees and approximating God’s existence.

What you have enjoyed yourself and what you have given over to others in charity or as gift is really yours. Everything else is of doubtful nature and you are merely a protector thereof.
A Sultan asked an astrologer to tell something about his future. The astrologer said: “Your highness will live long to see all your sons dead.” The Sultan was enraged and ordered the astrologer’s arrest and imprisonment. He consulted another astrologer on the same point. This second astrologer said: “Your highness will enjoy a long life and outlive all your family.” The Sultan was highly pleased and gave him rich presents. Both the astrologers knew the truth, but the latter knew the Sultan.

The distance between you and God is the same as the extent of your desire for the world.
In sense-desire the mind craves for union with the reality outside, seen by it in the form of objects. It hugs them physically imagining that thereby the desired union is achieved, but the union can never be effected thus, for here the body of the subject as well as the body of the object stand as obstacles to the intended union. The union is never attained. But then the desire can also never die, for the union has not been gained. Thus one’s whole life is spent in desiring but achieving nothing.

We cannot be really happy if we cannot enjoy a flower without plucking it from the plant.
In your dealings with another person try first to think through the feelings of that person and then try to avoid to overcome the limitations of those feelings by rational methods of approach. This will avoid much of the unnecessary tangles in which social life is caught up every day.

Do not keep anything which you will be afraid of showing to others.
Do not do anything which you would not like others to know.
In spiritual life secrecy has no place except in regard to one’s Sadhana.
We can judge ourselves as to the spiritual progress we make by the extent to which we are free from seeing defects in others. The wider we grow, the narrower does become the eye which sees defects in the world.

“Even this will pass away”: This is a good maxim to remember that our joys and sorrows are not permanent, and that we should always be therefore unattached and hopeful of a better future.

Where either the question of self-respect or sex is involved, the spirit of service goes to the winds.
They say that procrastination is the thief of time, postponing a work which needs to be done immediately. There is no use committing the same mistake again and again and resolving every day to avoid it, but with no success. Something positive has to be done with strength of will.
Often, what matters most is not the words that are said but the way in which they are said. People either bore or irritate others with what they regard as wisdom, when it is wrongly uttered or expressed at the wrong moment or told to the wrong person, though the intention behind it may be good. Judgement of circumstances is necessary to bring about the requisite result. Else effort may become a waste or even harmful.

Thus did a wise man pray: 'Give me the will to change what I can, the strength to bear what I cannot, and the wisdom to know the difference. This is the secret of worldly wisdom, that which decides the nature of one's success in life.'
Often it so happens that our contemplation on a vice which we feel we have and which we wish to avoid leads us more deeply into it until it is too late to recover from the shock of this knowledge of the fact about us. It is better not to think of a vice, even if we have it, and concern ourselves only with positive virtue and spiritual conduct.

The nearer you are to your desired object, the greater is the pleasure you derive within. The greatest pleasure is when the object is nearest to you, when you have the sense of its possession, nay, when its being is merged in your being in a self-identical experience.
Our joys and sorrows are just sensations or experiences and cannot be called either good or bad, even as we cannot say whether the heat of the sun or the coldness of water is good or bad. Goodness and badness of things are personal evaluations of situations which are themselves impersonal.

Dirt is matter out of place. Weed is a plant out of place. Nuisance is action out of place. Even those things, acts or words which are normally good and useful become bad, useless and even harmful when they are out of place, time and circumstance. A knowledge of this fact is an essential part of wisdom.
The ingratitude of man and the certainty of death are incentives enough to stir non-attachment in anyone. We can depend on human beings only to some extent, until we displease them or they are displeased with us. Human love is conditional. And it is futile to imagine that death comes only tomorrow.

God first; the world next; yourself last: follow this sequence in the development of the thought-process so that God’s Power and existence may be affirmed in everything.
"Love all, but trust a few" is a good policy in social dealings. To trust a few is, of course, not to be suspicious of everyone, but to be vigilant in every case even when things are entrusted to others for execution or when some situations are involved in other personalities. One should not trust even one's own self when the senses are in the proximity of their desired objects.

The temptation from the evil one comes first in the form of unsettled thinking which makes one immediately forget the presence of God. This is followed by the implementation of the evil move, whether in the shape of passion or anger, then the deed is done and the matter has ended, the remembrance of God might come in but it rarely appears in the presence of things which he either love or hate.
I. PRACTICAL WISDOM

The temptation from the evil one comes, first, in the form of unsettled thinking which makes one immediately forget the Presence of God. This is at once followed by the implementation of the evil move, whether in the shape of passion or anger. When the deed is done and the matter has ended, the remembrance of God might come in, but it rarely appears in the presence of things which we either love or hate.

The vision of God seems to be as far from us even now as it was many years back and there is no proper yardstick with which the progress made on the path can be measured. There is much difference of opinion as to this matter among wise men, and the wisdom of one does not seem to tally in all details with that of another. Perhaps self-confidence coupled with goodness and an immense capacity for adjustment, as well as continuous delight form a good touchstone.
When you have inadvertently done a wrong, switch on the situation, person or thing involved to the Absolute and concentrate on the former as an inseparable part of the latter. The wound shall then be healed and the determination to refrain from repeating the act shall make you stronger than before.

It is under the strain of mental pain that one loses one's psychological balance and deaf thing laboriously. This pain may come in either due to frustrated passions and ambitious or by occurrences in the world which take us by surprise. It is best for a wise man to expect the worst and not be taken aback when things go dead wrong and the
It is under the strain of mental pain that one loses one’s psychological balance and sees things erroneously. This pain may come in either due to frustrated passions and ambitions or by occurrences in the world which take us by surprise. It is best for a wise man to expect the worst and not be taken aback when things go dead wrong and the earth itself seems to give way under one’s feet. Nature is no respecter of persons who are ignorant of her laws.
It is necessary that we should make ourselves happy in spite of the usual vicissitudes, upheavals and oppositions of day-to-day life. For this, it is essential to have a permanent background of thought, to which one to has resort whenever there is any cause of outward disturbance. If we cannot be happy, we are the losers and not someone else. The cause of happiness is always with us. It need not be imported or purchased from without.
The energies that are usually dissipated get reabsorbed into the system by proper meditative practices. One of the ways of rectifying past mistakes is to forget them altogether and not retain any memories. Also positive effort should be made for rejuvenating one’s thoughts by deeper meditation every day. As much time is taken in the act of fixing the attention of the mind, all the time spent in a posture, in one’s meditation room, cannot be regarded as utilised in meditation. Though the striking of the match is quickly done, the making of the match takes a long time.
II. INSPIRING THOUGHTS TO PONDER

One is born alone, and one dies alone. Hence one should live also alone. This art of living alone is Yoga. Life is the process of the flight of the ‘alone’ to the ‘Alone’.

The more does one become fit for the practice of Advaita Vedanta, the less is the consciousness of body and world around. Advaita and body-consciousness do not go together.
Among experiences in the world, there are what are known as shocks which bring about a sudden change in one’s person, more rapidly than any other events regarded mostly as ‘normal’. The speciality of a shock is that it is always unexpected and comes as a bolt from the blue, tearing the mind and ravaging the emotions. It affects the nerves and makes them shrink, slowing down their function. It impairs the physiological system and can upset the liver and the stomach. The reason is that the personality is unfamiliar with many truths which the world holds within its bosom and which get released into action only when the time has come. The world does not care whether we want to understand it or not. It shall pound us under its unceasing wheels.
Narayana and Nara meditate together and are inseparables; which means that God and man coalesce in every action and form a union in which Karma becomes Karma Yoga and that spiritual meditation is not merely a human effort but involves Divine interference. Though we may lift our arms to touch a magnetic field, when once we raise it near it is pulled by the force of the field and here our effort ceases and we are under the influence of another power altogether.

God’s Grace is a powerful tonic which can cure the heart, lungs, stomach and the general condition of the body. This Divine Grace is drawn through meditation on God.
God’s Grace is a powerful tonic which can correct the heart, lungs, stomach and the general condition of the body. This Divine Grace is drawn through meditation on God.

All that we read and think does not get assimilated into the feeling of the heart. That is why a postgraduate scholar who is dead is not reborn with the same amount of knowledge. That which has gone deep into the heart becomes a part of our life. The rest is only a wind that blows over the surface of our mind.

There are no five boxes covering the thrones like five boxes inverted one over the other hiding a flame within. The boxes are not compartmentalized boxes but the pride, jealousy in which the desires of the mind obscure the vision spiritual.
There are no five Koshas covering the Atman like five boxes inverted one over the other hiding a flame within. The Koshas are not compartmentalised boxes but the graded density in which the desires of the mind obscure the vision spiritual.

Evil sets in the moment we forget the Presence of God everywhere. This is the beginning of the real Kaliyuga, and Kritayuga reigns when the consciousness of His Presence is vigilantly maintained.

You are alone with your God, and there is no one around you. This is the truth. Rest your mind on this, and attain peace.
If omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence are to be pressed into one being and this being is to be focussed into a jet of action, what will be the result? This is what happened when Sri Krishna lived as a Person in this world. This is also the difficulty which people feel in writing a biography of Krishna, for, to be all-comprehensive is a difficult thing for the mind to think.

The universe is a poised series of vibrations which appear to be grouped into configurations of matter in a spatio-temporal relation. When these relations vanish, the whole cosmos gets diffused into a unity of structure and being, a spiritual oneness which is inseparable from the One Self.
The universe is a graded series of vibrations which appear to be grouped into configurations of matter in a spatio-temporal relation. When these relations vanish the whole cosmos gets suffused into a unity of structure and being, a spiritual radiance which is inseparable from the One Self.

The being of man extends from the earth right up to the Absolute. Thus man touches all levels of manifestation in the Universe. But his eyes are shut to certain realities and open only to some. He is conscious only of the earth-plane and oblivious of the other aspects of reality. This happens due to the restrictive operations of the senses and the intellect which are always confined to the shackles of space and time. This is Samsara and the bondage of consciousness as Jiva.
That God helps those who look to Him for help is a fact that is not only incontrovertible but is visible before our eyes every day as the sole reality and solace of our life. It is said that this divine help comes even when it is not summoned, for, naturally, the eternal law shall operate whether one is conscious of it or not. However, conscious meditation on the omnipresent God does necessarily manifest tangible results which bring a joy the mind cannot contain.
Whether man is different from God, a part of God, or one with God can be known from the relation of the dreaming individual to the waking individual. The relation is similar.

Human understanding is a handmaid of sensory judgments and the social customs or human ethical values which are mostly the standards with which life is interpreted are based on such understanding. Just as a judge who is himself involved in the case he is supposed to examine cannot be expected to pass a correct judgment of the case, the human understanding, with all its boasts of science and rationality, being a party in the case set up in world-experience, cannot interpret this experience rightly, for it cannot stand apart from the object of judgment as an impartial witness or judge.
The thought of an object intensely entertained causes a proportionate stimulation in the body of the object by means of a certain affection of its psychic substance. There is, thus, a reciprocal action set up by the generation of any sustained thought of the object. The various things thought in various incarnations create a network of experiences which is called Samsara.

As the path of the birds in the sky or of fish in water is not easily traceable, the way of the sage of wisdom is unintelligible to the human intellect. Outer conduct is no sign of the nature of the inner illumination.
Rama was born in Uttarayana, Krishna in Dakshinayana; Rama was born in Shukla Paksha, Krishna in Krishna Paksha; Rama was born at midday, Krishna at midnight; Rama belonged to Surya Vamsha, Krishna to Chandra Vamsha; Rama was born in Punarvesu Star which is Sattvika, Krishna in Rohini Star which is Rajasa; Rama was Maryada-Purushottama, Krishna was Lila-Purushottama.

If the ocean were to get thirsty, no amount of rainwater falling upon it can quench its longing. Likewise no object of the world in all its totality can quench the thirst of the Infinite in man.
Many a time sufferings come not because man has done some visible or reasonable wrong but because he is placed under awkward conditions where he finds himself often 'between the devil and the deep sea'. These sufferings may look most irrational and may threaten to prove the non-existence of any such ruling power as God. But this is only proof that man cannot understand what is beneath his own skin and that there are 'more things in heaven and on earth, which our philosophies cannot dream of'.

The rivers do not flow for their own benefits; trees do not eat their own fruits; cows part with their milk for others' good; the life of a saint is not for himself alone.
Desires are like electric shocks which influence the whole body at once though it is only a part of the body that touches a live wire. A particular sense comes in contact with an object of desires and stirs the whole system in such a way that for the time being the entire person gets unified with the desireful thought. The hand which receives a shock feels a heaviness due to no weighty object but due only to the thrill of the current passing through the body. Likewise, the stimulated condition of the mind due to desire beholds beauty and value in things, though these are not really there.
The obsession of there being persons outside with whom we have to deal constantly does not leave us easily. The mind cannot believe or take in the idea that it is with God Himself that we have to deal everyday. His many forms stare at us, smile at us, tempt us and often threaten us. This is the divine play man cannot hope to grasp through the intellect.
Manu Smriti says: One-fourth of one’s knowledge comes from the Teacher, one-fourth from study, one-fourth from co-students and one-fourth by experience in the passage of time.

“Poison is not real poison. Sense-objects are the real poison. Poison kills one life, but sense-objects can devastate a series of lives.”
“He who is humbler than a blade of grass and more patient than a tree; who respects others but wants not any respect for oneself, is fit to take the name of the Almighty Lord.” This was the famous instruction of Sri Gauranga Mahaprabhu.

“By excess of passion Ravana was destroyed; by excess of greed Duryodhana was killed; by excessive charity Karna came to ruin; excess is always to be avoided,” says a Hitopadesa.
“He is called a ‘man’ who, when anger rises forcibly within, is able to subdue and cast it out as a snake casts away its slough with ease” said Hanuman to himself when he suspected that the fire he set through the whole of Lanka might perhaps have burnt Sita, too.

“By Pranayama one should burn all dross; by Pratyahara sever all attachments; by Dharana all distraction; and by Dhyana all undivine qualities.”—Manu

Each and every contact which the pristine nature establishes with the outer world is a piercing dart thrust into the heart of the person cherishing such nature.” —Vishnu Purana
Each and every contact which the desireful nature establishes with the outer world is a piercing dart thrust into the heart of the person cherishing such nature."

—Vishnu Purana

'Tena tyaktena bhunjithah,' is the exhortation of the Isopanishad. It means that our enjoyment in the real sense is possible of achievement only when we renounce everything. But what is this renunciation? It is implied in the earlier sentence of the verse, which states 'Īśāvāsyam idam sarvam': All this universe is indwelt by the Lord. As such, desire for objects is an impossibility. This is true renunciation, which is also the true freedom and joy.
These persons do not get sleep, says Vidura to Dhritarashtra: Those who are sick, those who have been overthrown by others and are deprived of power and assistance from any side, those who are afflicted with lust, and those who are scheming to deprive others of their possessions.

The Mahabharata says that the Vedas are afraid of him who tries to approach them without a knowledge of the correct import of the Epics and Puranas. Here is a covert suggestion that the Absolute of philosophy should also include the variety and conflict of practical life, in order to be real and not merely an object of speculation.
The four noble truths of the Buddha that there is suffering, that there is a cause for suffering, that there is a way out of suffering and that there is a state beyond suffering are proof enough to show that he was not a nihilist in the sense in which the word is used today, but a practical man who had an eye to doing something than merely conjecturing about Truth and its realisation.

“Our prosperity, our friends, our bondage and even our destruction are all in the end rooted in our tongue” says a famous adage.
‘Sarvam paravasam duhkham, sarvam atmavasam sukham’—’All dependence on persons and things is pain; all self-dependence is joy’. This has to be practised gradually, by rise from the grosser to the subtler, from the external to the internal.

Draupadi exclaims in the court of the Kauravas: “That is not an assembly where there are no elders; they are not elders who do not know Dharma; that is not Dharma which is not in consonance with truth; that is not truth which has crookedness behind it.”
“He who knows, knows not; he who knows not, knows.” This is a statement in the Upanishad, meaning that one who has realised the Truth has no personality-consciousness, and one who has not knows not the Truth.

The three great teachings of Sri Ramalingaswamiji were:

“Be hungry”
“Be alone”
“Be vigilant”
These are great instructions in Sadhana.
“All the wealth and grains and cattle and gold of this world are not sufficient to fully satisfy the craving of even one person. Knowing this, one should resort to tranquillity,” says the Mahabharata.

Condemn not heat, when the sun burns; rain when it pours cats and dogs; or food when it is not to taste. ‘Tapantam na nindet’; ‘varshantam na nindet’; ‘annam na nindyat’ are teachings of the Upanishad, for God works through all events and things.
Man is born with his death. The judge’s order gets issued at the time of birth itself, but the born being cannot come to know of what is contained in the judgment. Thus, the date of one’s death is never known, though it is fixed already at the time of birth. The conditions necessary for the death of a man are latent at birth, mature gradually in what is called life and fructify at the time of the actual passing. Hence it is said, ‘death is at the elbow’, and the scriptures say that one should be virtuous always, as if one is already caught in the jaws of death.
"For the sake of the family an individual may be abandoned; for the sake of the village a family may be abandoned; for the sake of the country a village may be abandoned; for the sake of the Supreme Atman the world has to be abandoned."

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IV. PRACTICAL HINTS FOR SADHAKAS

The more we try to depend on God, the more He seems to test us with the pleasures of sense and the delights of the ego. Finally, the last kick He gives is, indeed, unbearable. Those who bear it are themselves gods.

Īśvara, Jiva and Jagat are not three entities standing apart like father, son and their house. They are three presentations of reality or viewpoints of the Absolute from the level of the Jiva.
“Do the best and leave the rest” is the key motto in Karma Yoga. The ‘doing of the best’, of course, does not mean being foolhardy or going headlong without thought on consequences, but the harnessing of one’s full resources to the execution of a noble ideal which is calculated to aid one in the attainment of God-realisation. To ‘leave the rest’ is to resign the results of the work to God, for, when even the best that one can do falls short of the effort needed to achieve a desired result, the mind is likely to get upset, which is not the spirit of Karma Yoga. All work is God’s—even the Sadhana that we do.
Who is a fool? He who thinks that the world has any regard for him and is really in need of him.

Doubts on the path of Sadhana indicate that the spirit of Sadhana has not been properly grasped. When there is enough conviction about the correctness of the method adopted, Sadhana quickly bears fruit.
Mostly, the mind is where the eyes are. Look not at anything which may stimulate desire, or rouse egoistic ambition. The eyes have to be carefully guarded.

Every moment of life should be regarded as the last moment, as there is no knowing when this moment will come. When it is said that the last thought of a person should be God's thought, we are impliely admonished to remember God every day and every moment.

It may be that we try to remember God when we are comfortably placed. But the test as to whether He has really entered our hearts is whether we remember Him in sickness, suffering, opposition and times of temptation.
The highest fulfilment is the result of the highest renunciation. The less you want, the more you get. He who wants nothing from the world finds the world falling at his feet. Even the gods are afraid of him who wants nothing for himself.

The energy that leaks through the senses by way of excitation and pleasure-seeking diminishes the psychic force that is necessary for meditation. Hence before any attempt at successful meditation this energy-leakage has to be blocked, and the direction of the flow of this energy turned inward.
We should not try to be more strict on others than we are on ourselves. Our task is not so much to change the world as to change ourselves.

The Prarabdha Karma is like an extortioner who will not let loose the victim until the last vestige of dues is cleared out. It cannot be exhausted without being worked out through experience and the role of spiritual Sadhana in relation to Prarabdha is not one of negating or counteracting it but of bringing about a transformation in the vision that evaluates and judges experience, pleasurable or miserable.
The tiger called the mind is prowling in the dense forest of sense-objects. Let the seekers of freedom beware!

Avoid contact with such things as are likely to stimulate sense desire or excite the ego. This is necessary until strength is gained to stand the forces of the world.

There are three grades of self: the real, secondary, and false. One real is the Atman which is universal, the secondary is the person or thing which one likes or dislikes, the false is the aggregate of the five senses, meditation, etc., etc. The real from the secondary and the false.
There are three grades of Self: The real, secondary and false. The real is the Atman which is universal; the secondary is the person or thing which one likes or dislikes; the false is the aggregate of the five sheaths. Meditation disentangles the real from the secondary and the false.

The importance of Sadhana in spiritual life is great enough to compel the attention of anyone wishing to be freed from botherations. The vexations of life are due to entanglement in externalised forms, while freedom at once manifests itself when the universal nature of these forms is beheld. Sadhana is nothing but an attempt to withdraw from the particulars and sink into the Universal.

Just as, when we touch a live wire, the electric force infuses itself into our body, when we deeply meditate on God the power of the whole universe seeks entry into our personality.
Just as, when we touch a live wire, the electric force infuses itself into our body, when we deeply meditate on God the power of the whole universe seeks entry into our personality.

Buddha and Shankara-Acharya represent two sides in the picture of life. The purely phenomenal approach of Buddha empties the so-called solid content of the appearance called the world, and the spiritual doctrine of Shankara fills this emptiness with Soul, and completes the picture.
Space, Time and Gravitation divide and pull the body by isolating it from other bodies. With this division and pull of the body, consciousness also appears to be affected due to its association with the body through the mind, Prana and the nervous system. The overcoming of this distracting effect of Space, Time and Gravitation in one's consciousness is Yoga.

The strength to bear suffering comes not merely from a determination of the will but the discovery that a vast treasure is awaiting one who practices such endurance. Students lose sleep and comfort, a lover undergoes untold pains, and an employee tolerates the unpleasantness of work, not because of a mere determination of will but due to the sure promise of an enjoyment which is known to exceed the pains which pave its way. So it is with spiritual Sadhana.
The Sadhana that one does should speak through the actions and the words which manifest themselves through one’s personality. The personality is the vehicle of the aspiration that wells up within. And the face is the index of the mind.

No saint has been able to maintain the spiritual balance throughout his life. There have been occasional reversals though these might not have left any impression on their minds, any more than the mark left by a stick drawn on water. But the mark is there when it appears. Such is the difficulty of leading the spiritual life. The case of immature seekers is much more precarious, indeed.
The Ramayana and the Mahabharata are two great epics of the forces of lust and greed, respectively. The passion of Ravana and the greed of Duryodhana caused the wars of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. These are the twin forces of the devil which can be faced only with Divine Help.

Sadhana is a sort of constant remembering a thing against heavy odds and pulling up oneself from sinking into deep mires. To retain the thought of God in a world of colours and sounds that dazzle the eyes and din the ears is hard enough. This is Sadhana, a feat of will and understanding.
The test of spiritual advancement is a gradual attainment of freedom from doubts of all kinds and a conviction of having reached a settled understanding in regard to one's true aim of life. It is this conviction that brings inner strength and power to face all opposition.

Spiritual Sadhana is ultimately an effort to cease from all effort. This is the highest effort, because no one normally can be without exerting oneself in some direction. All activity is a process of moving away from the centre. The activity to cease from such activity is Sadhana.
The contacts of persons or things with others is brought about by the law of contiguity as determined by the pattern of the universe at any given moment. This pattern or structural form changes constantly with the Gunas of Prakriti, and the union of things which was called for once may be withdrawn and a separation caused as determined by the change pattern of the universe. Birth and death, union and separation are not in anyone’s hands and so man’s love and hatred are a mere phantasmagoria in his mind.
Passion is not merely a sexual urge. It is any form of vehement impulse to objectify or externalise oneself in relation to someone or something with which an emotional contact has been established. Thus passion is 'the devil', if there is any devil at all in the universe. It is the force which drags the mind impetuously towards an object either as love or hatred. It is therefore 'the' obstacle to all meditation.

There are ups and downs in spiritual life, even if one might have reached a high stage of development. The prominent hurdles are lust and ego. There has not been one who could overcome both these forces completely. Whatever caution we may exercise in this regard, we will find, when the time comes, that it is insufficient.
The proximity of the senses to their objects is a cause of their stimulation and the mind craves for that thing which the particular sense beholds as its desirable counterpart. At this stage, self-control is difficult, because the mind finds itself robbed of its discriminative powers and lodged in the mire of the senses. Physical isolation from sense-objects is very necessary, since even great sages had to fall a prey to the lure of the senses.
The more are we ‘ourselves’, the more are we satisfied and happy. Our pains are when we are not ‘ourselves’ but become ‘another’ through longing or desire, brooding over objects and affection for persons and things. The suffering of the mind continues so long as it contemplates an ‘external’ to itself, for this is called ‘desire’ which is the bane of all peaceful living. In love of God there is an abolition of this externalisation of oneself, and the mind evaporates into infinite bliss in meditation on God practised with earnestness and intensity of feeling. In meditation on the Selfhood of God or Godhood of the Self, human questions get solved and all problems are seen as tangles of thinking rather than facts in the outer universe.
The strength of Brahmacharya is seen in the prowess of Hanuman. The vitality of the body and mind gets accentuated and energised by the living force which is Brahmacharya-Shakti by getting transformed into 'Ojas' or the spiritual radiance that vibrates through the entire personality. Such a hero is a thunderbolt to all desire and evil.
V. THE EGO ANALYSED THREADBARE

The notion of oneself being identical with the body is the cause of egoism. It is this egoism that entangles all judgments of value in the preconception that knowledge is acquired through the senses and the mind or the intellect. This prejudice of egoism is Samsara, the persistent idea that all knowledge is in terms of space, time and externality.

When we feel irritated or annoyed in the midst of work, for any reason, it is to be taken as a rehearsal that our personality has entered into it, and the "unselfishness" of the work has been adulterated with such undesirable and unsatisfying factors. We feel, "the work is not mine, there is no reason for internal disturbance,"

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When we get irritated or annoyed in the midst of work, for any reason, it is to be taken as a caution that our personality has entered into it, and the 'unselfishness' of the work has been adulterated with that undesirable and vitiating factor, the ego. When the work is 'not mine', there is no reason for internal disturbance.

No amount of struggle, fretting and fuming by the ego can bring it salvation from a bondage which it has woven around itself. The difficulty is precisely in him who sees the difficulty around. It is a situation which has become a part of one's personality and so it cannot be examined as an objective condition. This is called Mūla-Avidyā or the ignorance which covers the seer himself and prevents the very process of seeing correctly. It is like a devil sitting in one's brain itself. Who is then to think of exorcising it?
It is futile on the part of a Sadhaka to attempt at sense-control when he or she is in the vicinity of objects of enjoyment. It is necessary that one should be wary of this truth of Sadhana, a truth which most people do not recognise due to vanity and foolishness.

“Man proposes; God disposes,” says an old adage. It does not mean that God is perpetually opposing whatever man does. What really happens is that when man exerts through his egoism in a manner which violates the eternal law of God, he naturally feels frustrated, being beaten back by the law of Truth.
If the hydrogen and oxygen that are in the entire atmosphere get mixed up in the proportion of H₂O, what will happen to us? And why should it not happen? Who controls the atmosphere and prevents such a combination? What is this mystery and this precariousness of life? Where then is the need for man to be proud of his powers?

What 'happens' is done by God. What is 'initiated' is done by the Jiva. We should be able to distinguish between what happens without our interference and what is done with it.
The body is an eddy or whirlpool in the ocean of Nature and identification of consciousness with any particular eddy or whirl therein is egoism. Thus the ego is a false assumption in consciousness and not a substance or a thing. Particular attachments are attributable to this mistaken attitude of consciousness towards the many forms of the vast Nature. The localisation of consciousness as subject and object is on account of a false interpretation of oneself in terms of the diversities of the universal Prakriti.
There are no human beings with whom we come in contact or whom we confront. We only meet forces or centres of energy, among whom we are also some. There is mutual attraction and repulsion of forces with various permutations and combinations and the idea of personalities, while there are only forces, arises by a concentration of consciousness in these centres. This concentration is called the ego-principle. Men, things and all variety are these dramatic dispositions of cosmic energy.
It is difficult to live in society with mental peace, because it is difficult to be charitable in nature. Charity of things is of less consequence than possession of charitable feelings, and resorting to charitable speech, charitable demeanour, and charitable actions through a general charitable temperament. This is, in short, what is called self-sacrifice, for it involves parting with some part of the delights of the ego.
VI. RARE INSIGHTS

The conclusions of physical science are as much true as the discovery that all the plays of Shakespeare are only combinations of the 26 letters of the English alphabet. This is a truth which no one can controvert or refute. And yet the heart will revolt against this conclusion since it apprehends in the works of Shakespeare something more than the constituents of the alphabet.

This is true in the case of every other observed phenomenon, also.
The difference between the natures of Ishvara and Jiva is something like that between the meanings of the words, ‘God’ and ‘Dog’. There is no doubt some relation between the two, and yet what a contrast of characters! In the Jiva the character of Ishvara is completely reversed in a topsy-turvy manner, though the relation between Him and the Jiva is, no doubt, there.

Hanuman is a combination of strength and intelligence. He was an Akhanda-Brahmacharin. His life demonstrates that the Ojas-Shakti generated through Brahmacharya heightens both understanding and vitality in a maximum degree.
Hanuman is said to have told Sri Rama: "From the point of view of the body, I am Thy servant; from the point of view of the Jiva, I am a part of Thyself; from the point of view of the Atman, I am Thy own self. These three standpoints correspond to the three great systems of philosophy propounded by Madhva, Ramanuja and Sankara."
The thought of God is like the centripetal cohesive force in a star or a planet, which drives its constituents to its centre by a pressure of inwardly directed energy, and it strikes a universally attuned equilibrium of the entire personality in relation to creation as a whole, provided the thought is deep enough and is sincerely raised in one’s mind. It produces a thrill beyond words.

The mind and the body get identified with each other, like fire and iron in a red hot iron ball, in such a way that thought cannot be separated from object. There is always a flow of thought with perpetual reference to the body and all human judgment is thus vitiated by the prejudice that the body is the thinking self. All science and even philosophy cannot help playing second fiddle to this erroneous hypothesis, and thus cut the ground from under their own feet.
The Ganges destroys sins; the moon destroys heat; the Kalpavrıksha destroys poverty. But the company of the wise ones destroys sin, heat and poverty all at once.

Principles have a meaning when they contribute to the realisation of the end for which the principles are observed. But when a particular mode of the implementation of the principles is going to defeat the very purpose for which they are observed, the principles lose their significance and become obstacles. Dharma is a flexible law, adjustable according to changing circumstances, though it is eternal in the sense that its main aim never changes.
While Maya follows Brahman, the Jiva follows Maya. It seems that while Rama was walking in the forest, Sita was following him and Lakshmana was following her. Maya obstructs the vision of Brahman by the Jiva.

The ‘Advaita’ of Sankara is not so much the assertion of oneness as the negation of duality, as the name of his system suggests. God is not one or two or three, for He is above numerical affirmation. He is not anything that we can think of, but however, He does not involve any difference; hence He is “Advaita”, non-dual. Such is the cautious name of Sankara’s system of philosophy.
Religion is the reaction of the human mind to its notion of God.

Brahma, Vishnu and Siva are not three gods, but the one God performing three functions. There can, thus, be no superiority or inferiority among them. They are like the three faces of a crystal where one face reflects the others.
When senses trouble you, remember the sages Narayana and Nara. They are the supreme masters over the senses, before whom Indra had to bow his head in shame.

The effect of one’s reading and learning can be seen in one’s behaviour. If the behaviour has not changed, it means the learning acquired is like water poured over a rock, which gets wet only on the surface without allowing the water to seep into it.

Forces which constitute the universe react and interact among one another for effecting a higher integration,—we may call them men and things, and so on in a state of ignorance. These activities of forces are the history of the universe.
When you are in a hurry, you cannot think anything except that God alone is everywhere.

It is impossible to use one’s common sense when one is in the grip of intense desire; for passions have no common sense. They have neither reason nor logic, like the overwhelming force of a mighty river in floods, or like a beast caught at bay. Conquest over the human passions is the same as self-control, for the personality of man is but a bundle of latent and patent forces which seek expression in various ways.
Death is the law of life. It is the law that requires a constant transformation of all composite elements and a reshuffling of all existent forms. Thus, death cannot be avoided. And it can take place at any time, though it has its fixed time.

As milk becomes ‘Payasam’, or water becomes ‘Sharbat’, by contact with sugar, and the like, anger and attachment get transformed into the joy of unblemished love by one’s mind receiving the touch of the Divine Element in life.
It is unwise to say that the world is good or bad, for the world is one of the conditions through which the ‘Gunas’—Sattva, Rajas and Tamas—evolve in the course of time. All things can be found always in different places and hence our narrow judgments confined to a limited perception of truth cannot be correct. How can we say that any part of ‘Prakriti’ is good or bad?

A well-guarded life of physical isolation from tempting objects of the senses in spiritual life. A pot kept filled with water to the brim for months together can be emptied in a few minutes if a hole is made in it.
Every adversity should stimulate more and more strength in us, enough to be able to overcome onslaughts of such types again. Every fall should propel us to a higher aspiration, a longing which should never be dampened, threatened or vanquished at any time.

The four Ashramas of life are not four different stages with a jump from the preceding to the succeeding. Each following stage is the flowering of the earlier, a maturing, including and transcending of the past conditions, like the higher and higher standards in education superseding the earlier ones.
There are some curious persons who think that they need not worry about God-realisation if only they have what they call Self-realisation. This is another kind of ignorance, for Self-realisation without God-realisation is a misnomer, and the notion of Self-realisation as knowledge of the individual self will raise the question “What next?”, because it is difficult to answer the question as to what would happen to the individual after it knows itself.

An individual has as many organs as are required to fulfill the wishes that are embodied in the Prarabdha Karma of a given life, and these organs are of such quality and capacity as the needs of the individual concerned. Nothing more, and nothing less is given to us in this world.
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Just as twenty-five paise are contained in a quarter rupee coin, the twenty-five manifestations of Prakriti are contained in the Purusha, though invisibly and intangibly. Though the variety of the manifestation is manifold, it is all inherent in its cause, like a chair present in wood.

There are two great wonder, the starry heavens above, and the world below within, neither can be fathomed, their depths and they will remain a wonder for ever, they are endless in their extent and no one can study there as external object.
There are two greater wonders: The starry heavens above, and the moral law within. Neither of these can be fathomed to their depths and they will remain a wonder for ever. They are endless in their extent, and no one can study them as ‘external’ objects.

When Maricha cried out: “O Lakshmana, O Sita”, Sita mistook it for Rama’s voice. She could not identify Rama’s voice as different from that of another, though she had lived with Rama for so long. So is the case with the Jiva. It has forgotten its association with the Absolute and cannot distinguish the call of the Spirit from the clamours of the senses. This is called delusion.

Rama advises: Not only one’s mother, daughter or daughter-in-law even atonely one share the same bed or seat; for the bandhas are imperious and can forcibly drag away the mind to even the wish.
Manu advises: Not with one’s mother, daughter or daughter-in-law even should one share the same bed or seat; for the senses are impetuous and can forcibly drag astray the mind of even the wise.

Krishna was a person of great enjoyments. Vasishtha was devoted to rituals. Janaka was a king. Jadabharata was looking like an idiot. Suka was renowned for his dispassion. Vyasa was busy in teaching and writing. But all these are regarded as equal in knowledge. Different forms serve different purposes, but their essential being is one.
Great men are not those who run fast and speak much but think deep and live wisely. More than doing it is being something—a change of outlook and attitude. We are great, not because we are something to the world but because we are something in ourselves, even if the whole world is not to exist at all.

Avidya is the disposition by which one mistakes the non-eternal for the eternal, the impure for the pure, the painful for the pleasant and the not-self for the Self. Avidya is the seed of egoism, craving, hatred and clinging to one’s body, so hard to overcome.

It is said that when the devotee takes one step towards the Lord, he is greeted by the Lord with a hundred steps. The Bhakti-Sastras state that the love of God for the devotee is more than man’s love for God. The power of the Whole is intenser than the force of the part.
If you want anything, you have only to cry before the Absolute. Things shall be provided to you exactly as you want them, at the proper time.

Dharma is the law which determines the progress in the direction of God-realisation. All acts have to be judged from this angle of vision and Adharma is anything which is irrelevant or in opposition to this principle.
Scientific advancement in the present-day sense of the term is a movement in endless darkness since no march in the direction of sense-objects is going to lead mankind to truth. Modern life is mostly an increase in speed and by this no one has become the better, just as a bullet cannot be said to be more civilised than man merely because it moves faster. After all, this fast motion of modern life is a heading towards unknown miseries from known ones, and who can be complacent in such a state of affairs? All our glory ends in dust and ashes, and we shall be forgotten one day as if we had never been born at all. This is man's greatness in his boasted pride and imagined importance in a speeding world.
‘God first, world next and self last’, is a maxim which is metaphysically and spiritually a complete method of meditation on creation. God created the world and individuality is a later development. The upward rise is from the individual to the universal and from the universal to the Divine Being in which the personal self and the universe merge into an indescribable Consciousness. Personality is least connected with the Reality, being isolated and externalised.

As there is no such thing as a big shirt or a small shirt, a tall man or a short man, except in comparison with another, there is no such thing as beautiful or ugly, good or bad, etc., except in terms of some other standard to which reference is made, such as a conception, an object or a mental condition.
As there is no such thing as a big shirt or a small shirt, a tall man or a short man, except in comparison with another, there is no such thing as beautiful or ugly, good or bad, etc. except in terms of some other element to which reference is made, such as a circumstance, an object or a mental condition.

Our feelings, prejudices and desires stand out in the world in front of us as our friends and enemies. They are the forces which stir the objects outside either to move towards union with us or to shake us up with violence. It is in this sense that the world is said to be an image of the mind.
The omniscience of God knows all the details of the universe. It is not merely a general knowledge of the structure of the universe, as some think. He is ‘Sarvajna’ and ‘Sarvavit’, all-knowing, both in the generality and particularity of things, and this knowledge which God has of the universe is perfect, for He is its Self, and it is not His object but a part of His being.
It is the opinion of Bhishma that it would not take more than six months to attain Samadhi if the needed precaution is taken to prevent the mind and the senses from hovering round their objects. That this achievement has not been possible in most people shows that it is easier to glorify God than to feel it in one's heart and the effort at self-control is more difficult than it is announced from pulpits.
Life is a process of entering into God. This is achieved by seeing God in the objects as well as the actions of the world, which is not the seeing of particulars but of the universal in them.

The highest meditation consists in the recognition of the Self in all things so that there is no object before the Self to think or deal with. It is here that the mind melts like an exhausted camphor cake in the process of self-sublimation.

The highest ‘Bhava’ which rouses ‘Para Bhakti’ in a devotee is that in which one cannot recognise even one’s own body as if forgotten since many years, for there is no body-consciousness when the mind expires in pure experience.
To be able to realise God, you have first to want God. It is almost a question of supply and demand. To want God is not merely to ‘think’ but to ‘feel’ through your ‘whole being’ that you cannot exist without Him. The entire personality vibrates with a longing that cannot be satisfied by the beauty and the grandeur of the world. There is a want for ‘That’ alone, and nothing short of it.

The sense of perfection slowly enters the mind, when it gradually learns to dovetail the various discrepant particulars of the world into a coherent whole. This stage comes when the existence and activity of the mind coalesce in an adjustment of oneself with God’s creation.
Brahmabhāvana, the art of the affirmation of Brahman, is called Brahmr̥bhyaśa in the words of the Yoga-Vasishtha. It consists in constantly thinking of Brahman, speaking about Brahman, discoursing to one another on Brahman and depending on Brahman alone for everything that one values in life. This is the final stage of meditation.

The depth and solidity of substance in the world is similar to the distance and substantiality of things seen in a mirror. This truth is not realised in life because the body of the observer is itself involved in the reflected appearance called the world.
The depth and solidity of substance in the world is similar to the distance and substantiality of things seen in a mirror. This truth is not realised in life because the body of the observer is itself involved in this reflected appearance called the world.

When the senses stand together with the mind and the intellect does not shake, the state of Yoga supervenes. The secret of meditation is this: The mind and the intellect should shine, but not shine upon things other than the shining awareness. This is the realisation of God within.

It is of little consequence to one who has awakened to normal consciousness whether he or she was a king or a beggar in last night’s dream. Likewise, what one is in this world matters little to one who has awakened to the presence of God.
In an act of Divine Meditation the soul recovers all that it appeared to have lost in states of its ignorance and gains back its eternal status of all-completeness. Errors are rectified, sins are destroyed, and even death becomes a matter of laughter in that experience supreme. All existence becomes one’s own consciousness which here assumes an infinite proportion. The tendency of the mind to view things sensuously, however, persists, and there is called for a perpetual vigilance to overcome this habitual urge to sensualise experience instead of universalising it. This is the culmination of Sadhana, which is an unsagging effort to rise from the particular to the Absolute.
When man's meditation on God ends, and God begins meditation on all creation, the consummation is reached. It is here that all questions are answered and all problems solved.

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Tapas is the process of stilling the senses and the mind and allowing the lustre of the Atman to manifest itself spontaneously. The power of the Sage is this energy of the Atman revealed by the cessation of the externalising activity of the senses and the mind.
The passing of the soul from plane to plane is all a process of consciousness within the Absolute, just as our movements in the dream world are actual spatial allocations of personality but are really within the circumference of mental activity.—all dream being only within the mind,—so is the transmigration of souls real empirically but are activities of consciousness within its bosom.

The first form of religion is worship through idols. The second stage is repetition of the Divine Name as this symbol. The third stage is internal meditation on a conceptual form of God. The fourth and the final stage is absorption of consciousness in universality of Being.
The first form of religion is worship through idols. The second stage is repetition of the Divine Name as His symbol. The third stage is internal meditation on a conceptual form of God. The fourth and the final stage is absorption of consciousness in Universality of Being.

The ups and downs of life are also part of the process of the evolution of the universe. Even a retrograde movement in this process is a part of the universal completeness. There is no forward and backward or up and low in the Universal Whole. These distinctions assume a meaning when experience is viewed from a localised, narrow standpoint but in the status of the Universe in itself, there is only perfection. This has to be realised.
Meditation is participation. All spiritual meditations are types of participation in Unity. In such meditations, we become larger than we are and develop a wider feeling than we entertain at present. We begin, then, to pulsate through bodies other than our own, and enjoy the pleasures which may be anywhere. We overcome the sense of want and feel filled with something which includes all things. Desires lose their meaning and dislikes likewise take to their heels. We step over psychological individuality and get consumed in spiritual existence.
Things which are distant appear to enter into us and space seems to shrink into our very being when we learn to recognise the Self in everything. Here it is that we have no needs or wants, because these are for ever fulfilled in their spaceless proximity to us, nay, their vanishing into our substance, when things and persons and the very world itself crave for us as the centre of everything, a condition where we have not been deprived of anything by desirelessness but filled to the brim, overflowing, with the fund of all existence. This is where one hails as ‘Svarāt’ or ‘Self-King’.
Do not look at but through the world.

Kaivalya is the Supreme Independence which one attains on account of freedom from the phenomenal vestures of individuality. Here the individual merges into the Absolute, which alone is. This contemplation is spirituality.