



SPIRITUAL MASTER AND SEEKER

The relationship between the *Sadguru* (spiritual Master) and the disciple is in the plan of the Divine. It is not man-made as other relationships are.



This most strange creature, the Guru on Earth, is such that it is impossible to know him. Nobody can fully understand the *Sadguru*. You understand what is lower than you but not what is higher than you.



Undoubtedly the relationship between a Master and a seeker is the greatest relationship - the purest and the deepest and in every way the best relationship. It is without any selfish motives. Only true love binds the seeker and the Master, and where there is pure love only, the relationship has to be the best. Not all relationships are of that kind. The relationship between a mother and her child is very fine and one of the best but in it there is also attachment. Attachment pollutes it in some way. In the relationship between the seeker and the Master there is no place for attachment. The Master never desires anything from the seeker except that he or she should become Enlightened as soon as possible. That is all that the Guru wants. It is a relationship in which there is great faith, love and surrender.



Self-realisation is not borrowed and it cannot be given; it is not a gift. It has to be acquired. Yes, there is no doubt that it is very important to have a guide who can explain problems at every step of the path, but you have to walk the path yourself.



The important thing in the whole spiritual journey is not to find a true guru but to become a true disciple.



A true spiritual Master never wants anyone to remain a disciple for ever. He wants everyone to become a Master one day.



When there are real saints, it is very important to listen to them again and again, even just to see them, and to be with them. It influences everybody. They have an aura of spirituality around them. The very atmosphere is charged in their presence, which makes an impression on the seeker consciously or unconsciously.



There is a difference between a student and a disciple. A student only learns by mind; a disciple follows the discipline. A student only lives in the world of words, away from experience. By following the discipline of the Master, a disciple has the experience.



The difference between a spiritual Master and a teacher is this: a teacher knows a subject and has some information - while a spiritual Master is a Realised person and is, in fact, just what you are seeking - the existing Truth!



When a seeker reaches the right state, the Divine sends someone in human form to that person. In this way the true path of spirituality can never vanish from Earth. If it did, it would be the end of humanity itself. If all the books and all the scriptures were destroyed or thrown into the sea, this path would still remain. The description of this path comes at a late stage in books but even before that it arises in the hearts of men. It is a natural process of human development. At one stage everyone wants to be peaceful and happy and then the seeking starts by itself. As before the birth of the child there is milk in the breast of the mother, so, before the seeking starts, someone appears to show the path. There is nothing to be worried about. Just be happy and enjoy yourselves!



The real spiritual person works till the end of his life for the happiness of others.



A person might have completed a very long journey, and from inside, the person may be ready for flowering. If such a person meets a great saint only once or twice, he may realise the Self. Another person may sit for twenty years at the saint's feet and still not understand.



Interpretation of the teaching will always be made according to the capacity of those who are listening.



Many times the spiritual guide descends to the level of the seekers. The Master himself, voluntarily and willingly, due to compassion, comes down to the level of the seeker for his or her evolution.



A spiritual person is not concerned about who listens or who does not. In this respect he is like a flower giving out a fragrance without caring whether someone is there to appreciate it or not.



There are many people who have their backs against the sun and complain that the sun is not shining on their faces. It is not the fault of the sun. If they turned towards the sun they would feel its rays. In the same way the Guru radiates his love towards the whole world. Those who are facing towards him start receiving his love.



One who is realised was once a seeker. Those who are seekers today will be realised one day. This is the trend of the spiritual path.



We all have had the experience when small children say: "Papa, I want to ride a horse, will you become a horse?" And he replies: "Yes, of course, come on, get on

my back." The boy or girl climbs on father's back, saying: "Yes, here is a horse walking round a room." Has the man really become a horse? He's just becoming a horse for his child. In the same way the Master also comes down and says: "Oh, yes, I love you like a child, and I come down to your level for your evolution. I become a horse for you. It is due to pure love without any attachments."



From the side of the seeker attachment may develop sometimes, because what else can the seeker do, when his or her stage is like that? But if the guide is truly a realised person the attachment will not stay. It will go away. Pure Love will then come into existence in place of attachment.



In a truly spiritual relationship the Master or the guide needs nothing. He is simply available to those who seek him, and seekers may or may not have a meeting with him. This has its own purpose and meaning. The meaning of almost everything in the spiritual field is the destruction of the individual ego.



A seeker keeps comparing himself with his Master because the seeker does not know anything about the experience. However, it is wrong for any seeker, however advanced he may be, to compare himself with a realised person. It is impossible to make any comparison. No example can be appropriate, but it is somewhat like this: a donkey can be compared with a donkey but can a donkey be compared with a horse, or can a donkey be compared with a human being? A donkey is a donkey and a human being is a human being. He who tries to compare a donkey with a human being is a senseless person.



You should give up your curious and crazy ideas about a holy man - that he has special powers and he can wave his hands in the air and produce gold watches or other objects. No! These are foolish trivialities. No truly spiritual person ever does such things.



A flower does not care who comes or does not come, but still its fragrance is spreading. But remember that, whatever may be the intensity and effectiveness of the fragrance, only those with a good sense of smell can appreciate it. People with a bad sense of sight and smell will pass by the flower without knowing about the flower and the fragrance. In the same way in the field of spirituality, people may be living in the vicinity of a spiritual person but, if they are not receptive, they will never discern the presence of the spiritual person near them.



In the life of a truly realised person, the fragrance of spirituality spreads without him doing anything. There is no more any 'doership' in him. He is in his own blossoming and happiness. Even if thousands of people were around him, he would not be attached to any of them.



When you come into contact with a spiritual guide, the requirement for advancement in spirituality is that, you surrender yourself completely to him. Remember that when you give him something or do something for him you are doing

it not for his advantage but for your own advantage. He needs nothing in the whole world. What could you give him? You are doing it for the reduction of your ego.



The real spiritual guide wants nothing from anybody. Paradoxically, he is the very man to whom the disciple is required to give everything.



After a certain stage of evolution on the path of spirituality, higher things happen when a seeker has the opportunity of living in that spiritually charged environment around the Master. Those inner experiences which do not happen, even after long years of practice, start happening just by living with a realised person without you having to do anything.



In the closeness of a Realised person one of two things are bound to happen. After some time either the person living in the vicinity will be unable to bear the energy and will run away from there or he will change. There is no third alternative. Generally people run away because they cannot withstand the fire. It is a sort of fire - a sort of burning energy which in the beginning is very difficult to tolerate. For some days the disciple may feel sweet, fine and full of love, but one day something may happen which he cannot comprehend. For some days one may feel that one has gone to heaven, but after some time the same person may feel that it is hell to live in. These things happen and are part of the process of transformation.



It is desirable if one can live with the Guru because that has always been the tradition. There must be some reason that, for thousands of years, millions of seekers have been living close to a Master.



Should we consider a realised man as God? My answer is that you can consider such a person to be whatever you like. You will definitely consider the person to be whatever you are capable of considering him, and not more than that. This is the experience of thousands or even millions of people. After a certain stage of evolution on the path of spirituality, more profound experiences happen when a seeker has the opportunity of living in the spiritually-charged environment that is around a Master. Inner experiences, which do not happen even after long years of practice, start happening without doing anything but just by living with a Realised person. It happens without doing anything: you are there and he is there. You become changed and transformed.



No method will suit everybody equally. People have different situations and circumstances around them. There is no doubt that the path can be followed without living with a Master at a particular place, but it is also true that there is a great difference, when someone has the chance to live with the Master.



Q: Does a person, who really wants to achieve the aim (Self-realisation), need to live with a Master for several years or even for decades?

A: Although it is the tradition it is not necessary, but, if possible, it is very desirable.



On the question of 'nearness to me', the nearness is not physical. If it could happen through physical nearness I am ready and you can sit in my lap! It is inner and spiritual nearness which grows from inside. There is nothing wrong in desiring it. It develops step by step. This 'nearness' is internal and not external. The inner nearness grows step by step, and it grows more and more as you follow the path. Soon you will be able find me in your room there in London, Prague or Moscow!



No one can be closer to me by being physically closer (sitting in the first row). Even if someone tried to sit in my lap, he would not get any advantage! There are people who for various reasons are unable to come here but they are very close to me even so. The closeness has to be from inside, through the development of the finer qualities of life.



Different saints have their own traits. Realised people have their own way of life. The ways of their training and teaching are different but the inner experience is the same. The same God comes to us in a different manner.



It is not beneficial to discuss your experiences with others, but your experiences can be conveyed to the Guru or Master. If you want to express them, you can. You can tell him what happened with you and, if there is a problem, ask him what you should do. But if you do not want to tell him, you do not need to. Among seekers themselves it is not beneficial to exchange notes about what happened to one or the other. This is not a college or a school, where you can be benefited by exchanging notes for passing an examination. Keep your notes to yourself. They may be useful to you but they may be misleading for another seeker. The journey is an individual one.



The question arises when Truth is everywhere and Truth is in our own existence also, why do we run to find Truth elsewhere? Why can we not find Truth in our own existence? The answer is that you need a teacher who can tell you how to find the omnipresent Truth in your own self - and that person can be only that one who has himself found the Truth. This is the case also in every other aspect of life. In every aspect you need a teacher to teach you. You need a teacher even to learn how to ride a bicycle - such a trivial thing these days! Even then sometimes you fall off and get bruised! Definitely you need someone to tell you how to drive a car or to learn how to cook. So when you need someone as a teacher even for learning such trivial skills, you definitely need one when you have decided to achieve the highest aim of life.



As your own evolution develops, you will find a man, and then another man more evolved, because the real Master - the real guide - is no one else but God, who exists in everybody's heart. You should have faith in God and God will lead you to a person who will be able to guide you. But you must remember that all guidance, all Truth and true knowledge, comes only from one source - God - and from nowhere else.



God will send someone to tell you the path starting from the stage which was reached in the last life. In the last birth, if the journey was not finished and if Self-realisation for some reason did not happen, one will definitively receive guidance in the next birth. There is no doubt about it. Guidance becomes available according to the Divine arrangement. No one can stop it and it happens automatically.



When you are a seeker it is necessary to approach a Master in whom you have faith. Just as in worldly matters you usually need the guidance of someone, who is an expert in the field, so also in the spiritual field you need the help of an expert guide. There is a stage in evolution of a seeker when there may not be much requirement of visiting a guide or a Master. But before reaching that stage, it is desirable that one visits somebody who is more spiritually evolved. It is not only desirable but necessary.



If you seek advice from somebody and you think that the person is more capable than you to advise you, then you should try to obey such a person.



In India there is a tradition of getting a glimpse of an Enlightened person - this is known as *darshan*. *Darshan* means seeing, and, in fact, seeing is the most important thing, while listening is the second most important. In listening, the mind and its commentary interferes with the experience. In seeing, there is a glimpse of the person. The imprint is there and it is said to purify, when we see somebody in whom we have faith that they are pure. The seeing purifies us also.



It is said by great saints that knowledge of the formless and attributeless is easy, but understanding the *Avatar* – the Lord with form - is difficult. This is because the *Avatar*, the incarnation, appears just like us, like a human being. The mind gets baffled: “How can He be the All?” And it has been said specifically in the Bhagvad Gita: “...because I am in the human body, therefore fools consider me a human being...” So having the correct feeling about the *Avatar* takes time and it happens only through love - not understanding. Because after love God reveals His secret. Nobody can know it by themselves, but He reveals it. To some extent it applies to the Guru also. The deeper secret of the Guru never gets revealed without love. And when there is love, it starts getting revealed. It is the same even without having much physical contact, it starts happening, because Truth is one.



So many things happen when you enter the real spiritual dimension, and then, by God’s grace, you happen to come into contact with someone whom God has made an instrument of His work. Very unbelievable things sometimes happen. But my suggestion is that it is better to digest them and not to express them openly. You should go by the straight path - the straight path is simple. You should not pay much attention to these things.



By God’s grace a Master knows what is happening inside the seeker. Sometimes the Master may talk personally with a seeker and be full of love, but after some days he may ignore the seeker completely. It is all intended for purification and the greatest element is faith. Whatever the Master does, he is doing the best for the seekers.



People who do not fully know the truth and are not well informed sometimes raise questions even about great spiritual Masters. It is said of Buddha that he had no Master. Yes, on that day when his Enlightenment happened, his Master was not present, but people forget that for six years or more he was with many Masters, going from one place to another and learning much wisdom from many. But in his case it was not the physical presence of a Master that mattered but the spiritual. In the path of spirituality this physical presence has its own value. Value in the sense that as long as one is getting guidance from a living Master (living in the sense of the physical body) there is a possibility of much advancement and easy clarifications. But the guidance does not stop when the Master leaves the mortal body. Often it is very strong after physical death.



Surrendering to the Master is the only way out. People try to find other ways because they do not want to be dependent on the Master, they feel it is a sort of imprisonment to hang around him.



The disciple would always wish the Master to behave in a predictable way. "Why is this man not ready to do just what I want?" Sorry, but it does not happen in this relationship. The disciple can neither wholly savour him nor can he spit him out! I mean that you cannot digest what he says, nor take leave of him - such is the relationship. You would like to accept totally what he says, but you find yourself unable to do it, and sometimes you get frustrated. What a man! What are you to do with him? Sometimes you think you must leave him and then you think you could not find anyone better than him. What does all this mean? It is a relationship that elevates the disciple.



The real Master saves us from being discouraged. Saints say that the work of a real Master is like that of a potter. What does a potter do? When he makes a pot, he has one hand under the clay and one hand over it. With one hand he shapes it and with the other he supports it. Both hands work together. The clay is being supported from below but being shaped from above. This is just like the work of the Master. He will show you that you are nothing and you may want to run away. Then the Master will catch you and tell you to wait and not to worry.



Until Self-realisation, whatever may be the state of a seeker or disciple, there remains an enormous difference between a Self-realised person and one who has not yet realised. This difference remains whatever may be the state of the seeker's evolution. It is not just a difference in progress or degree of understanding between a disciple (at whatever stage he may be) and the Realised person, but it is a complete qualitative difference of being inside. Therefore, the Guru will always remain an enigma and difficult to understand. In fact, no one can understand the Guru, although everybody will definitely try. You are able to understand him to some extent but not beyond that. Sometimes you have the feeling that you know him, but then you realise that you do not. The Guru in many respects is a normal human being just like the disciple. He is seen eating and dressing, taking a bath and going for a walk and sometimes falling ill in the same ordinary manner as the rest of us. What qualitative

difference can there be? After all he eats, dresses and sometimes watches television also, so what is the difference? These thoughts occur to us. But in his inner being there is a world of difference, and a disciple cannot even imagine that inner state.



There should be no attachment with anybody, any object or any activity - no attachment with the Guru also. With the Guru there is love and not attachment. But, if someone is attached, the real Guru will not let this attachment remain. He will break it some day. Automatically it will happen.



If ever you find a person, who claims the credit for bringing light to this planet, leading people to salvation and showing the path, you should question his or her genuineness. When the real grace of God is involved, there remains no place for any personal credit. One becomes an instrument for Divine work and finds happiness in serving others. Humility, meekness and politeness come of their own accord.



You should not worry because, even though human gurus may try to deceive a disciple, the real Guru, the Divine, will always come to your assistance. In fact, He works through mortal gurus - He alone works through every human body.



The Guru replies to the disciple in various, often unexpected ways, so that the disciple can be raised to a higher level. This is the great secret of the disciple/Master relationship. The disciple will act in the way that he is able to but the Master never satisfies the disciple's expectations. The Master is not there to give satisfaction to the disciple but he is there to reveal the Truth to him. The disciple wishes for his requests to be satisfied, but the Master does not care to give satisfaction, because satisfaction is not possible except on the same level at which the disciple is.



The Master/disciple relationship is the greatest relationship - the deepest and the closest on this planet of Earth. There is not the least element of worldliness in this relationship. It is the purest relationship and is based on pure love, nothing but pure love. All relationships are in a way included in this relationship. It is a Divine relationship. As we have an indescribable relationship with God, so is this relationship indescribable.



The guru is always filled with compassion for the disciples. He gives them different suggestions for the path: "Do this, but if you cannot do it, do that. If you cannot do that, do this. Oh, somehow get up and go beyond your limitations!" This love and compassion is always in the guru.



Finally, the real Master is your own soul, the Spirit inside. Beginning with the Guru outside, you have to search out the Guru inside, because the ultimate Guru is the Divine. There is only one Master!

