

## NEW YEAR PROGRAMME 1979

(REVISED FROM 1972)

PRIVATE

In desperation at my own inability to practise what I preach, I recently found a short cut which, so far, works well and is surprisingly simple. It could help anybody who desperately wants to take Step 2 of the Ladder – Resolution – both those who have temporarily given up meditation or those who seem to be meditating happily, but deeply feel the need to take it further.

This programme can help the two half-hours, but does not take their place. It is meant for only a few people; if there is anyone you feel would benefit from its use, let me know.

We are given so many transient ideas that they pass us by; and we need just one idea to carry with us all the time. This 'short-cut' consists in committing to memory certain sentences from the Shankaracharya's recent talks designed to make us remember Param-Atman all the time – and particularly last thing at night and first thing in the morning.

We consist of an outer nervous system (cerebrospinal) through which we carry on our daily life, and a quite separate inner nervous system (autonomic). To achieve unity, we have to bring *both* together under the control of the Causal level in the forebrain (Soul) – and this is a good way to sow a seed there which grow can grow into a flowering shrub.

The method is to learn by heart a couplet (say) every week. This is more easily done by repeating with full attention the first sentence eight times, then the second sentence eight times, and then both together eight times, so that the two are 'running in one's head' to the exclusion of all other thoughts and desires before one goes to sleep; then one will wake up with them still in mind. There is no special order; choose whichever couplet appeals to you, continuing with it for some time until a change is needed.

### DEFINITION

Param-Atman is the Atman of the whole Universe—living and non-living, conceivable and inconceivable.

**SUMMARY:** Vyasa (who wrote the *Bhagavad-Gita*) says:

I have made a critical study of all the Scriptures (available to me) several times. The gist of all that, as I found, is that we should hold the Param-Atman (Universal Self) in memory all the time.

Similarly, this single idea can include for us all other books and Scriptures.

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- (a) These four couplets are designed to calm the outward-looking part of the mind at any available moment.
1. In the Soul (Antahkarana) of each person, there lives the Universal (Param-Atman) along with the individual (Jiva-Atman) for the purpose of guidance.
  2. In order to hear that inner Voice, we should approach the All-knowing Param-Atman at any moment with concentration and humility.

3. This body (physical, subtle and Causal) is the Vehicle and Param-Atman is the Rider; regard the Rider as distinct from the Vehicle.
4. The body keeps changing; it grows old and dies; while the Conscious Being that inhabits the body is ageless and deathless.
5. The states of consciousness which we experience are governed by the influx of the three Gunas (in various combinations) from people, places and events.
6. These all undergo change; but the Observer who sees it all as a passing show, remains always the same.
7. Our Mind (Manas) lives more in dissatisfaction with the past and desire for the opposite in the future, and less with the present which is much more important than either.
8. As it cannot remain empty the remedy is to see, with the eye of True Knowledge, the *same thing* (Param-Atman) in everything, and at any moment *Now*.

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- (b)** The next four couplets are for times when, with the influx of Sattva, the two halves of the mind can function together in sympathy.
1. The outer 'World' wants your body; well then, serve the World efficiently with your body. But Param-Atman wants your love only..
  2. And only when we win over the Param-Atman by love, do we get the help and energy we need for a happy and productive life.
  3. You have asked for help in developing love for the Param-Atman, saying that your own capacity for love seems feeble. You should not worry on that account.
  4. Rather you should keep reminding yourself that the Path of Love is that very path on which Param-Atman is pouring his favours and blessings all the time.
  5. Such love requires *giving up* mentally everything else all the time.
  6. To establish this attitude we practise regarding the body, the mind and the feelings as belonging to Param-Atman; and therefore sacrificing all personal claims on them. That is what 'giving up' means.
  7. The importance of maintaining a spiritual relation with the Guru (in the form of a fully Realized man as head of a great Tradition) cannot be overestimated in the escape from the 'well of ignorance'.
  8. Ordinary teachers in our education system are frequently changed and forgotten; but the relation with the fully Realized man is for always, once faith in him as the embodiment of the Param-Atman is established through experience.

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