

Proper Orientation

- Sri I.V. Chalapathi Rao

Revered Masters of the order,

Respected brothers and sisters

My Humble pranams,

On this most auspicious and solemn occasion of the Birthday celebrations of Lord Krishna , I would like to share some thoughts pertaining to our sadhana. I remember the Jansmastami celebrations being observed in our institute since 1999 very vividly as on every such occasion, we have been repeatedly exhorted to orient ourselves to our beloved Master Pujya Babuji Maharaj lest we may also entertain others in our thoughts and start thinking about them. Even a slightest digression in our thoughts in respect to our orientation to our Master can have deleterious effect on our sadhana. As I understand that in spiritual life the rules of conduct are quite precise and infact they are called by the name etiquette. The subject of orientation to the Master is a very vast subject in one sense but to the one who is oriented it is as simple as being blind to everything else here and hereafter and being alive to Him and Him only i.e our Master. The subject of orientation has been alluded by the Masters at several places and they all have been said in the context of a sadhaka.

I feel that Orientation, per se deals with the relationship of the Master and disciple which is purely a one to one relationship between them. A Master by definition is the Master and for the disciple He is everything. We find several times Pujya Babuji Maharaj referring to Lalaji Maharaj as My LORD. In the correspondence between Revered Dr KCV and Babuji Maharaj, we find Dr KCV addressing His Master as my dear revered and beloved Gurudev. If we contemplate on these accostations we can understand the nature of relationship between them as, one of Love, one of reverence, one of sacredness etc. Our orientation to the Master is determined by the relationship that we have with the Master. Babuji Maharaj addresses all the abhyasis as his associates, a term which denotes that he is asking us participate along with him in fulfilling the task of Human transformation. We can also see another perspective of our relationship with the Master as stated in the second commandment in which the Master defines the relationship as “Service is the only concern of the serf”. By doing the service we can get oriented to his consciousness which is ever striving in the task of human transformation.

From the context of the disciple, orientation is a basic spiritual discipline that one should have. Unless we are oriented we cannot derive the help that the Master is giving us so benevolently and graciously. The word

disciple is derived from the word discipline. Abhyas/practice is the primary discipline of any seeker.

In our context, Discipline can be understood as

1. Following the practices in letter and spirit
2. Taking assistance through pranahuti
3. Adopting natural path as a way of living.
4. Attending the annual celebrations of the Masters.
5. Participating in the mission of the Master of human transformation.

To elaborate further on these aspects of spiritual discipline which I understand as orientation is:

1. Meditational practices: In the message titled Rajyoga, Master emphasizes, “The practices advised under the system are not merely formal and mechanical, related with the closing of eyes for meditation. They have a definite object, a purpose and an end”.

ISRC in its endeavour to train and educate the people in PAM has prepared a sheet about the methods to bring out clearly the object, purpose and the end for each of the meditational practice. This is a tool for each one of us to get more oriented to each of the methods through better understanding leading to effective practice. The very

efficacy of the practice lies in its right understanding and right practice. In order to achieve this objective of training no tool developed is less important. The institute is helping us in a great deal through this yeoman work. While performing any task effectively and also efficiently we need to orient to the task. Like answering the questions of why, what, where and how etc. Similarly our orientation to the methods in this manner is necessary. Infact all the literature of the institute is catering to this singular need of the practice. At this juncture it is necessary for us to remind ourselves that all the methods of the system are unique in themselves and there is no one to one comparison of the methods that are hitherto available in any tradition. Most of the persons who have carried out some practice or other of other systems, prior to this system, with some intensity and seriousness falter to compare the system of PAM with others in respect of the practices. This is due to the residual effects of their earlier practices and perceptions. This infact dilutes our attention to the spirit of the practice rather than the letter. It needs enormous struggle on our individual part to overcome this deficiency if I may be permitted to call so. It is apt to recall the words of our beloved master of the order Revered Dr KCV, as given in the booklet Nuggets “The process of Learning involves a constant process of unlearning also” Nugget no 95.

As we learn more about the methods, we also develop more orientation to their object, purpose and the end. Following with blind faith with unquestioning attitude is good but it is better we are convinced of their efficacy and their uniqueness and with total understanding. It is my personal experience that as we practice we tend to assimilate the methods to such an extent that you feel natural but when I contemplated on the gains that I got spiritually I cannot but start developing gratitude to the Master which sometimes i have felt that these methods are a boon to the humanity. Often the feeling of gratitude wells up in the heart to such an extent that it leads to weeping with love.

To develop proper orientation to the Master we need to thoroughly know the significance of the practice of the methods, we need to clearly understand that without them it is impossible to attain the goal. In the condition of utter helplessness on our part we feel the need to practice to evolve. We need to look to the problem of transformation from the perspective of humanity rather than our individual perspective then we can understand the words of our Master about the significance of the descent of Pujya Lalaji Maharaj as “Great men are not born accidentally. They are born when the world waits for them in eager expectation. Such is the phenomenon of nature. At the time when spirituality was tottering

helplessly and the solid materialism had usurped the position of spiritualism in human life and Yogic transmission had become quite obsolete, the Great Soul of my Master descended down to earth in the form of Samartha Guru Mahatma Ram Chandraji Maharaj of Fatehgarh, U.P. This spiritual genius was born on Basant Panchami day, 2nd February, 1873. His life marks the advent of a new era in spirituality. He was in fact the nature's prodigy and his work in the spiritual field is beyond common conception.”

The very methods have helped us grow out the mode of common conception that the Master is referring above because of which, we are able to appreciate the help that we have been receiving from the Master. This will help one to develop reverence leading to dedicated effort. The amount of reverence and dedication towards the practice of the methods indicate our orientation in this regard. Prayer helps us greatly in this regard in establishing our link with the Master. At this point of time i feel an urge to rededicate myself to the sincere practice of the methods as told without any slightest deviation so as to express the Master.

2. Another important aspect of our practice is the help we receive from the trainer in the form of pranahuti. We need to understand the fundamentals of the process of pranahuti which has been very elaborately dealt in the book titled Pranahuti by our institute. It is necessary to

understand as it helps in deriving maximum benefit. While receiving pranahuti we need to orient ourselves to our trainer. Orienting to the trainer is understood by me as ready to accept the help with an yielding attitude. Submissiveness precedes yielding. In order to develop submissiveness we need to feel the need to take the help, the need to take help arises from the awareness of the fact that the goal that we have set for ourselves is hard to reach through self effort. Contemplating on this sentence of the Master helps us properly in getting prepared to receive the help, “For making one-self deserving one must have his goal and his present position clearly in his view.” SDG- Path of righteousness. Our orientation to the Master in regard to receiving the help through pranahuti is rooted in developing deservancy. We know that practicing the methods alone may not help us develop deservancy though it is a must but the feeling of utter helplessness coupled with an awareness of the dependency on the Master help us in this regard. The lessons in dependency are learnt in a hard manner through various incidents in life. We need to realize the fact that we cannot demand anything from anybody. If somebody is helping us it is the sheer magnanimity of that person for us. Manytimes I felt that getting sitting from a trainer is a right which comes from the understanding that this system is for all humanity. But it has taken a long time to understand that this attitude is

not proper as it does not help in anyway in developing proper orientation to the trainer. Respect, regard, love, submissiveness, obedience, yielding are but few of the many attitudes that constitute proper orientation for receiving the pranahuti. Most importantly we need to understand the sacredness of the very act of pranahuti which helps us a great deal in maintaining proper orientation to the Master. Aspiration to reach the goal coupled with the helpless desperation in not able to do so prepares adequate ground for pranahuti to work effectively. The minimum that is expected from us are

- a) Regularity in taking sittings & attending satsangs
- b) To have proper submissive attitude
- c) To be punctual & also be orderly

3. We need to clearly understand the goal is to be a real man i.e one who is just and balanced. A Real man is one who adheres to the Natural path. It is imperative on us to follow the ten commandments in both letter and spirit as it is the only way to express the Master. We can observe that every thought and action can be seen in respect to the commandments, I understand that there is nothing which does not fall in its purview. Our commitment to adhere to these principles lays the foundation of our orientation to the Master. It has been quite difficult for me to appreciate the importance given by our institute to

evaluate ourselves w.r.t the commandments on a monthly basis on a five point scale. But I now understand that following the commandments is the most vital aspect of sadhana. I feel that the naturalness that we feel in abiding by the commandments should be considered a parameter for while evaluating on the given scale. Even the thoughts and dreams that come to us indicate the degree and extent of our orientation to the Master. If the orientation to the Master has taken deeper roots in us then it becomes our natural behaviour be it waking state or in dreams. Somehow our moulding should occur at the tendency level, and we know that the Pranahuti helps in moulding our deeper tendencies. We should indicate our deficiencies in following the commandments to our trainer to derive the help accordingly. The aspect of adhering to the commandment forms an important input/feedback with regard to the orientation in our daily practices and also for receiving pranahuti.

4. In spiritual life, we know for sure about the importance of the help we receive from the Master. Right discrimination or proper viveka should give us awareness that who is helping us in our sadhana. It is not uncommon to find that we do not appreciate the help that we are getting, for example the experience of blankness after the pranahuti session is seldom remembered but we get worried by attention to the disturbing thoughts and

ideas. A close observation will reveal to us that the blankness that we experience may be for a moment is the gift from the Master where as the disturbing thoughts are our own contribution. If we have learnt to accept and acknowledge this very gift that we get in every meditation then our gratitude and reverence to the source of the gifts i.e our masters will increase by leaps and bounds. Gratitude and reverence to the masters is fundamental to the orientation. What is the orientation to the Masters without these two factors? Our Sir, Revered KCN has very eloquently dealt with the various virodhi concepts in surrender in his talk titled Surrender given during Basant 1998 (Refer BP-1 chapter 14). From this it is clear that we need to surrender to the Master in order to be totally oriented to Him. I have personally felt that our participation in the birthday celebrations of the Masters indicate our acknowledgement of the help that we receive from them notwithstanding the fact that we feel the love and benevolence of the masters in abundance during such occasions.

5. Orientation to the Master can also be understood more clearly as orienting to his will of human transformation. Here we need to consider ourselves not as individuals seeking realization but as a part of the humanity that is the focus of the Master's vision. I put forward my best foot in my sadhana as a part of fulfillment of that great mission. When we think like this we can never feel

satisfied, tired or monotonous. Otherwise our zeal is dampened affecting our orientation to the Master.

6. These are some of my thoughts that I thought will share with you. It is my prayer to the Master to bless us all to grant us the orientation to Him and Him alone under all conditions. We should always remember that orientation means ONE MASTER, ONE METHOD AND ONE GOAL.

Pranams