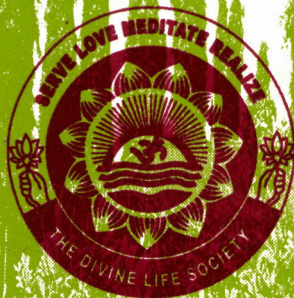


# *SADHANA CHATUSHTAYA*

**SRI SWAMI SIVANANDA**



**DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY PUBLICATION**

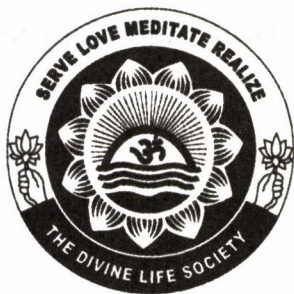


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Sri Swami Sivananda



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## **PUBLISHERS' NOTE**

His Holiness Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj did not write text books as such. The books he wrote were the outpourings of wisdom from his own direct realisation of the Truth.

From his books you will derive not only the benefit of his wisdom and knowledge of both practical and esoteric matters pertaining to Yoga, but also the power of his spiritual force.

Sri Swami Sivanandaji had a unique style—simple, direct and compelling. His books are not dull treatises on Yoga and philosophy, rather his enthusiasm and eagerness to help all is evident in every page, lifting the reader to new heights of understanding.

During recent years there has been a great spiritual revival and people in India and abroad have taken seriously to the study of Yoga and Vedanta. But, in practice, it has been found that there is—in keeping with the rapid tempo of life itself in the modern world—an unpardonable hurry and neglect of essentials, in the field of the

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practice of Yoga, too. Seekers after Truth are impatient to enter into the Transcendental Realm of Self-realisation; practitioners of Yoga expect to enter into Samadhi a week after taking up the practice 'concentration and meditation'.

The all-important preparation is woefully neglected. Our ancient scriptures have given the place of greatest prominence to these preparatory steps—Yama-Niyama or the Sadhana Chatushtaya. His Holiness Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, too, has been forewarning students of Yoga not to neglect this; and as a matter of fact he has declared that the greater the attention paid to these preparatory steps—the cultivation of virtues and the eradication of vices—the more rapid would the march of the seeker towards the Goal be.

To the sincere and earnest seeker after Truth, therefore, this book is a boon. It gives him the key to success in Yoga.

—THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY



# **SADHANA CHATUSHTAYA**

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(The Four Qualifications)

BRAHMA-VIDYA or the Science of the Self is not a subject that can be understood and realised by mere intellectual study, reasoning or ratiocination or even by discussions or arguments. It is the most difficult of all sciences. Mere scholarly erudition and vast study with a high degree of intelligence alone cannot help one in the practical realisation of the Truth inculcated by this Science. It demands perfect discipline, a discipline that is not to be found in our universities and colleges, and solid Sadhana for the achievement of the goal that is indicated by this Para-Vidya or Highest Science. One has to reach a realm where there is neither light nor darkness, neither East nor West, neither gain nor loss—a realm which can never be reached by either the mind or the senses.

Sadhana Chatushtaya or the fourfold means for salvation or the four kinds of spiritual practices, is a pre-requisite to the aspirants in the path of Jnana Yoga (Vedanta), or, for that matter, in any system of evolution towards Godhead. The four means are:

1. **Viveka** – discrimination between Sat (real) and Asat (unreal).

2. **Vairagya** – dispassion or indifference to sensual enjoyments herein and hereafter.

3. **Shad Sampat** (6 virtues):

(a) **Sama** – peace of mind through eradication of Vasanas.

(b) **Dama** – control of sense organs.

(c) **Uparati** – satiety, renunciation of all works (Sannyasa).

(d) **Titiksha** – forbearance.

(e) **Sraddha** – faith in scriptures and the Guru's words.

(f) **Samadhana** – concentration of mind, balance of mind.

4. **Mumukshutva** – Intense longing for liberation.

A student who treads the path of Truth must equip himself with these four means. Only then can he march quite fearlessly on the path. Not an iota of spiritual progress is ever possible unless

one is really endowed with these fourfold qualifications. These four means are as old as the Vedas or even this world itself. Every religion prescribed these four essential requisites for the aspirant. Only ignorant people resort to lingual warfare and raise unnecessary questions. This has become an ignoble habit in them. You should not mind this. It is your duty to try to eat the fruit instead of wasting time in counting the leaves of the tree. Try now to know what these four means are.

## **Viveka**

A firm conviction that Brahman alone is reality, and all else is unreality, is Viveka. It is discrimination between the real and the unreal (Sat and Asat), permanent and impermanent (Nitya and Anitya), Self and not-Self (Atman and Anatman). Viveka dawns in a man on account of the grace of God. The grace can come only when one has done incessant selfless service in countless births with the feeling of offering everything to the Lord. The door of the higher mind is flung open when there is awakening of discrimination.

This discrimination is a strong sword to destroy worldly desires, ambitions and earthly attachments. It is an agent of wisdom, a secondary, intuitive eye of wisdom. It is a spiritual faculty that

annihilates the clinging of the mind to earthly objects.

Discrimination also dawns through virtuous actions done in past births, holy company or study of sacred scriptures and selfless service or work done without the expectation of fruits and without egoism.

The body, mind, senses, intellect and the worldly phenomena are temporary. Their value is impermanent. They are identified with the pairs of opposites, therefore they are unreal and not to be sought after. Truth is timeless, causeless, enduringly blissful, one without a second, the only entity to be sought after, the only thing that can give real happiness.

The five sheaths are floating in the universal consciousness like straw in water. The five changing Kosas or the physical, mental, vital, intellectual and bliss sheaths are mixed up with the eternal Atman or the Self. There is childhood, boyhood, adolescence and old age for this physical body, but there is an unchanging background for this ever-changing body and mind, like the black-board in a class room or screen in a cinema on which are manifested various forms and figures. The witness or the silent spectator of these changes of the body and mind is permanent and unchanging. He is like the all-pervading ether. He

pervades, permeates and interpenetrates all these changing forms like the thread in a garland of flowers. This eternal essence or Atman is present everywhere and in everything—atoms, electrons, ants and mountains. He dwells in the chambers of your own heart. He is the soul of this tree, stone, flower, goat, dog, cat, man and saint. He is the common property of all—a saint or a sinner, a king or a peasant, a beggar or a baron, a scavenger or a cobbler. He is the very source of life and thought.

The aspirant should learn to discriminate between this eternal and unchanging substratum of all objects and the ever-changing names and forms. He should seriously engage himself at all times to separate the eternal unchanging Self from these names and forms. He should try to separate himself from the changing, impermanent five sheaths, from the passions, emotions, feelings, thoughts and sentiments and from the oscillating mind itself. He should distinguish between the mind and the witness who moves and illumines the mind; between ordinary sensation, feelings and sentiments and perfect awareness of pure consciousness which remains unaffected and unattached; between personality and individuality. He must also separate himself from the false superimpositions of the body—position, rank,

avocation, birth, caste, stage and order of life. These are all accidental appendages of the false personality.

When he sees a fascinating flower or any attractive form, he should philosophise within himself: "This beautiful flower will fade within a day, however sweet it may be. It will be turned into dust tomorrow. This beautiful woman also will turn to dust. Even the mighty Himalayas, though they appear to be permanent, are sure to tumble down like a pack of cards one day. The beauty in the flower, the feminine form and the icy Himalayas is only a reflection of that unchanging Self within the infinite undecaying Beauty of beauties."

Mind wants repetition of a pleasure once enjoyed. Memory of pleasure arises in the mind. Memory induces imagination and thinking. In this way, attachment arises. Through repetition a habit is formed. Habit causes strong craving. Mind then exercises its rule over the poor, helpless, weak-willed worldlings.

As soon as discrimination arises, the mind's power becomes weakened. It tries to recede and retrace its steps to its original home, the heart. Its poisonous fangs are extracted by discrimination. It cannot do anything in the presence of discrimination. The will becomes stronger and

stronger when discrimination is awakened, thus enabling us to get out of the miserable worldly life.

When you are fully aware of the magnitude of human suffering in this miserable 'relative' world, you will naturally begin to discriminate between what is real and what is unreal. Then sincerity or faith will develop and aspiration or keen longing to realise God will be felt. You will have to remember the Truth constantly and assert repeatedly '*Aham Brahmasmi*—I am Brahman'. By incessant practice name, form and thoughts will vanish and you will realise Brahman. This is Vedanta Sadhana. Discrimination, sincerity, aspiration and remembrance are the various stages for realisation of Brahman.

The ordinary man of the world identifies himself with the perishable body, impermanent objects, wife, son, cattle and property, and hence gets attached to these external names and forms. He develops delusion, love and hatred, pride of caste, position, etc. He says: "I am a Brahmin, I am a rich man, I am a genius, I am very powerful, my wife comes from a noble family and she is a graduate of the Bombay University, and I myself am a member of the Legislative Assembly." He thus brags of his false beauty, false possessions, intellectual attainments, etc. Thus he is caught up

in the ever-revolving wheel of births and deaths. He is born again and again in this world of sorrow, undergoing various sorts of miseries, troubles, sorrows and pains only on account of non-discrimination.

Discrimination gives inner strength and mental peace. One who has discrimination gets no troubles. He is always on the alert. He never gets entangled in anything. He has far-sightedness and knows the true value of the objects of this universe. He is fully aware of the worthlessness of these shallow toys. Nothing can tempt him. Maya cannot approach him now.

Viveka should be developed to the maximum degree; one should be well-established in it. It should not be an ephemeral or occasional mood in an aspirant, but become part and parcel of his nature. It should not fail him when he is in trouble, when any difficulty stares him in the face. He should exercise it at all times without any effort.

Those who have done countless virtuous deeds in their previous births will have the good fortune through the grace of God to have Satsanga of Mahatmas, Sadhus, Bhaktas, Yogis, Jnanis and Sannyasis. If one is careless in the beginning, Viveka may come and go, so the aspirant should



live in the company of sages for a long time till it burns in him like a big steady flame.

Maya is very powerful. She tries her extreme level best to lead the aspirant astray. She throws many temptations and obstacles on the path of young inexperienced aspirants. Therefore the company of sages and Mahatmas is like an impenetrable fortress for the neophyte. Now no temptations can assail him. He will undoubtedly develop true and lasting discrimination which will be permanent and spontaneous. Then only is he truly and perfectly safe. The dangerous zone is passed. Only a true Viveki can claim to be the richest, happiest and most powerful man in the world. He is a rare spiritual gem, a beaconlight and torchbearer. If Viveka is developed, all other qualifications will come by themselves.

The aspirant should separate himself from the Shad-Urmis or six waves in the 'ocean' of Samsara, viz., birth, death, hunger, thirst, exhilaration and grief. Birth and death belong to the physical body; hunger and thirst belong to the Prana; exhilaration and grief are the attributes of the mind. The Soul is unattached. These six cannot touch the Atman which is subtle like the all-pervading ether.

The aspirant should also separate himself from the senses. He should not take upon himself the functions of the senses. He should stand as a

spectator and witness of the activities of the mind, Prana and the senses. The senses and the mind are like iron pieces in contact with a magnet. They function by borrowing the light and power from the source, the eternal Atman.

Meditation on the following verses of the Bhagavad Gita and on the special formula of Sri Sankara will pave a long way in the development of your Viveka and in separating yourself from the illusory vehicles—the Indriyas, Prana, mind and the five sheaths. The formula of Sri Sankara is “*Brahma satyam jagat-mithya; jivo brahmaiva na aparah*—Brahman (the Eternal) alone is Truth, this world is unreal; the Jiva is identical with Brahman.” The Bhagavad Gita says: “The unreal has no being, the real never ceases to be; the truth about both have been perceived by the seers of the essence of things.” (II-16) Reflection on this verse will infuse discrimination. “‘I do nothing at all’, thus would the harmonised knower of Truth think—seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, moving, sleeping, breathing, speaking, giving, grasping, opening and closing the eyes—convinced that the senses move among the sense-objects.” (V-8, 9). You can separate yourself from the senses by meditating upon the meaning of these two verses.

“All actions are wrought by the qualities of

nature only. The self, deluded by egoism, thinks, 'I am the doer'. But he, O mighty armed, who knows the essence of the divisions of the qualities and functions, holding that 'The qualities move amid the qualities', is not attached." Bhagavad Gita (III-27, 28). By meditating upon this idea you can separate yourself from the three gums. "He who sees that Prakriti verily performs all actions and that the Self is actionless, he alone sees." Bhagavad Gita (XIII-29).

It is a faculty of Sattva (purity) that differentiates the permanent from the impermanent, the Atman from the Anatman. This means the ability to do the right thing at the right time and in the right place. You can develop discrimination through the grace of the Lord, selfless service, enquiry and study of scriptures. Keep this faculty bright and sharp. It may become blunt if you are careless and non-vigilant, if your dispassion and Sadhana slacken, if you mix freely with worldly persons.

Discrimination acts like a sieve. It rejects all undesirable things and accepts or selects the one desirable or real thing (the Atman). If it is not well-grounded, it will evaporate like ether very soon. Always protect and intensify discrimination. Inquiry of 'Who am I?' will proceed automatically. This inquiry is like the emanation of scent from

the burning incense-stick of discrimination. If you have no discrimination and dispassion, energy will leak out freely like water from the holes of a pot. If you are well-established in them, they will act as a restraining agent.

In the beginning there will be the need of deliberate attempts in the practice of discrimination and inquiry. Later on, through constant practise they will become habitual and you will be established in them. You can practise them even while doing work. They are not qualities alone but are regular daily modes of practice as well. You must practise them till they become habitual in you. Meditate constantly on the formulae mentioned earlier. Discrimination may wane if you are careless and not regular in your Sadhana. If you have discrimination, surely you will have lasting dispassion. The edifice of wisdom is built upon the strong foundation of discrimination.

A Vedantin never goes in for any sort of Hatha Yoga practices because they intensify the false identification with the body. He starts boldly with Viveka. Viveka is the corner stone of the edifice of Vedanta. It is the most important, vital qualification. Vairagya comes by itself when one gets established in Viveka.

## Vairagya—Dispassion

Vairagya (dispassion, indifference or non-attachment) is the second of the fourfold qualification of the spiritual seeker. It is giving up of attachment and desire for all mundane enjoyments. Dispassion is indifference and non-attachment to sensual enjoyments herein and hereafter. This is an important requisite for attaining God-realisation. It is born of and sustained by right discrimination. Vairagya is indispensable. Without it no spiritual life is possible.

Vairagya is the rein by which the uncontrollable mind is restrained. Ripe Vairagya is intense attachment to Atmic bliss and strong dispassion for anything other than the Atman. If one considers the position and happiness of Brahma (the creator) as the dung of a cow, then only he has developed a real lasting Vairagya. Temporary fleeting dispassion is not Vairagya. It will not help the aspirant in the attainment of Self-realisation.

Vairagya is a noble and rare quality. It is the sign of true intelligence and inner wisdom. It is more than all the academic learning of the world. Scholarship and erudition become endowed with dignity and meaning only when accompanied by dispassion. Vairagya is the means to peace, bliss

and freedom from all fear; it is true strength and the rein by which the uncontrollable mind is restrained.

Vairagya is of two kinds, viz., temporary fleeting dispassion (Karana Vairagya) on account of some miseries; and ripe dispassion (Viveka-purvaka Vairagya) on account of discrimination between the Real and unreal. The mind of a man who has got the former type of Vairagya is simply waiting for a chance to get back the things that are given up. As soon as the first opportunity occurs, he gets a downfall and goes back to his former state. Enjoyment does havoc in him with a vengeance and with redoubled force from reaction. But the other man who has given up the objects on account of Viveka, because he understands the illusory nature of the object, will have spiritual advancement. He will not have a downfall.

Man is bound to this world through passion or attachment. He is liberated through Vairagya. Look into the defects of sensual life or sensual pleasure and you will develop dispassion. Sensual pleasure is momentary, deceptive, illusory and imaginary. Enjoyment cannot bring about satisfaction of a desire; on the contrary it makes the mind more restless after enjoyment through intense craving. Sensual pleasure is the cause for

birth and death. It is an enemy of devotion, wisdom and peace.

That particular state of mind, which manifests in one who does not hanker for objects seen, or heard, and in which one is conscious of having controlled or mastered those objects, is non-attachment.

It is common to have dispassion for some particular objects because of some cause or other. But by having dispassion for all objects at all times, one will get knowledge of the Self. Only dispassion born of discrimination between the Real and the unreal will be of a lasting nature. Such a Vairagya alone will help you to attain spiritual progress and illumination.

For a man of Vairagya the world has no attraction. It is like a straw. Dispassion produces concentration of mind and generates burning Mumukshutva (strong yearning for liberation or emancipation).

If you have Vairagya, destruction of the mind and knowledge of Brahman will come, and if you get Vairagya that is the sign of purity of mind.

If you develop Vairagya, if you subdue your Indriyas and shun the enjoyments and pleasures of this world as dung and poison (as they are mixed with pain, sin, fear, craving, miseries, disease, old age and death) nothing can tempt you in this

world. You will have eternal peace and infinite bliss. Sex and other earthly objects will have no attraction for you. Lust cannot take hold of you.

Without Vairagya there cannot be any real spiritual progress. In Vedanta it is the only vital, fundamental Sadhana. If you have Vairagya, all other virtues will come by themselves. Patanjali Maharshi says: "The mind is controlled by meditation or Sadhana and Vairagya." They are the two wings which help the aspirant to soar high into the realm of bliss. The same thing Lord Krishna also says: "The mind is controlled by practice and Vairagya." By Vairagya, the mind is detached. He who works in a detached way is not bound by Karma. So it is an aspirant's duty to cultivate this one virtue, Vairagya.

How to develop dispassion? By looking into the defects of sensual life and reading books—lives of saints, Bhartrihari's Vairagya Sataka and Vairagya Prakarana in Yoga Vasishtha. These will increase your desire for liberation and your conviction in spiritual life. Sri Rama gives a beautiful description of the disastrous effects of lust, wealth, the miseries of birth and infancy in the Vairagya Prakarana. Everyone should read it. Everybody should study these books. Advanced students should not think that they have attained Self-realisation and that they need not study



books. These books are important to neophytes, middle students and advanced students.

Meditation on the following Slokas of the Bhagavad Gita will induce true dispassion. "The enjoyments that are born of contacts are only generators of pain, for they have a beginning and an end, O Arjuna. The wise man does not rejoice in them." (V-22) "Indifference to the objects of the senses and also absence of egoism; perception of (or reflecton on) the evil in birth, death, old age, sickness and pain..." (XIII-8). "That happiness which arises from the contact of the sense-organs with the objects, which is at first like nectar, and in the end like poison...." (XVIII-38) "Having come to this impermanent and unhappy world, do thou worship Me." (IX-33)

In the early morning you should repeat these verses, then start your meditation.

Vairagya Dindima is a very great help to aspirants. Patanjali says: "Everything is pain only, for the wise." Even the bliss of Savikalpa Samadhi is a hindrance. One gets false satisfaction and stops his Sadhana, thinking that he has attained Self-realisation. Only in Nirvikalpa Samadhi is there the greatest happiness. All others are productive of pain.

Remembrance of death and the pains of worldly life also will help you to a considerable

extent. It will not be out of place to draw the reader's attention to some Buddhist monks who always keep a human skull with them. This is to cause Vairagya and to remind them of the impermanent and perishable nature of human life. A philosopher once kept in his hands the skull of a lady and began to philosophise thus: "O skull! Sometime back you tempted me with your shiny skin and rosy cheeks. Now where are thy charms? Where are those honeyed lips and lotus-like eyes now?" Thus he developed intense dispassion. If you analyse the different parts of the human body and keep a picture of flesh and bones before your mind's eye, you will have no attachment at all for your body. Why not try this method?

The mind should gradually be weaned of its old habits and cravings. If you cut its pleasure centres off all at once it will get puzzled. That is the reason why young aspirants who take to too much Vairagya even commit the ignoble act of suicide. Once an aspirant said: "I have not realised the Self though I have done meditation for some years. I am going to commit suicide with the feeling 'I am the immortal Atman'. I have got full dispassion. No sin will cling to me, because my motive is pure. I will attain Self-realisation." He actually committed the abominable act. Do you think that he realised his Self by this act? Do you

find such a statement anywhere in the scriptures? Certainly not. This is extreme foolishness. Some aspirants who have no idea of the nature of true dispassion and who have not lived under the guidance of their masters for some time, commit such ignoble acts. They can never get salvation by taking to wrong austerities even though their motive may be pure. They cannot entertain the feeling 'I am the Atman' just at the time of committing the act of suicide. Horrible thoughts will crowd at the critical juncture.

Another foolish aspirant gave up his clothing all at once. He developed rheumatism, malaria and enlarged spleen. During the period of sickness all cravings that were temporarily suppressed asserted themselves in him with re-doubled force. He became a slave of the tongue and craved for many varieties of food. He could not suppress the cravings, ate indiscriminately and died of acute diarrhoea.

You should train the mind in meditation gradually and make it taste the inner bliss. Gradually it will leave off its old habits and old cravings and you can get yourself established in true dispassion.

You should give up those articles of food which you like best, for some time. You should discipline all the sense organs in a perfect manner

and always lead a simple life and eat simple food, but you should not be egoistic about your dispassion.

Doctors have a wide vast field for developing dispassion. Every day they see dead bodies in the mortuary. Thus they have innumerable chances of seeing Maya in her naked state. They can be convinced beyond a shadow of doubt of the impermanence of life here in this world of man. The superintendent of a jail and all the officers there also have wonderful chances for developing dispassion if they are lovers of truth. The sight of a condemned prisoner will open their eyes.

The more discrimination, the more the true dispassion. The flower of dispassion gradually grows in the garden of the mind from the understanding that the world is a mere appearance and full of miseries and that Brahman alone is the only reality full of knowledge and bliss, and through continued practice of meditation and association with realised souls for a protracted period. Eventually all objects of the world appear before the dispassionate soul as trifling or worthless things. He will not give up his new spiritual life even if the wealth of the whole world is offered to him. The Lord infuses dispassion in His devotees in order to get rid of the clinging to sensual objects.

There are four stages in Vairagya:

1. **Yatamana:** This is an attempt to stop the mind from running to sensual objects.
2. **Vyatireka:** Here some objects attract you and you are endeavouring to cut off the attachment and attraction. Slowly Vairagya develops for these objects and then matures. When some objects tempt and attract you, you should ruthlessly avoid them. You will have to develop Vairagya for these tempting objects and it must mature also. In this stage you are conscious of your degree of Vairagya towards different objects.
3. **Ekendriya:** The senses stand still or subdued, but the mind has either like or dislike for objects. Only mind functions independently, now.
4. **Vasikara:** In this highest stage of Vairagya the objects no longer tempt you. They cause no attraction. The senses are perfectly quiet. Mind also is free from likes and dislikes. Then you get supremacy or independence and are conscious of your supremacy.

Vairagya is also of different types or degrees — Mridu (mild), Madhyama (moderate) and Teevra (intense). Only intense Vairagya will help the aspirant to stick to this path. If it is of a dull type, the mind will simply be waiting to get

back the objects that were renounced previously, and the aspirant will get a downfall. He will not be able to climb again to the heights he formerly reached. So aspirants should be careful. Even though the Vairagya is of a mild type, he should try to make it moderate, and then intense Vairagya comes through looking into the defects of sensual life. Sensual pleasure is not real happiness. It is illusory, transient, impermanent and mixed with pain. So again and again, by looking into the defects of sensual life, Vairagya dawns.

Dispassion that is born of discrimination will not fail the aspirant at any time as will the dispassion that comes temporarily when a lady gives birth to a child or when a man attends a funeral in the crematorium.

Vairagya is of two kinds, Para Vairagya and Aparā Vairagya. Para Vairagya comes after one attains Self-realisation. The whole world then looks like a straw. Then Vairagya becomes perfectly habitual.

“Para Vairagya or supreme non-attachment is that state wherein even the attachment to the qualities (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas) drops owing to the knowledge of Purusha” Patanjali’s Yoga Sutras (I-16). In Aparā Vairagya there is preponderance of Sattva. Sattva is mixed with Rajas, but there is absence of Tamas. The Yogi gets Siddhis. The Yogi

with Para Vairagya rejects the Siddhis also and gets direct realisation. In ordinary Vairagya there is a trace of subtle desires and innate tendencies, but in Para Vairagya these are fried in toto. In Para Vairagya there will be no desire at all. In the Bhagavad Gita you will find: "Objects fall away from the abstinent man, leaving the longing behind. But this longing also ceases on seeing the Supreme." (II-59). This is the state of Para Vairagya.

Let me sound a note of warning here. Vairagya also may come and go if you are careless and mix promiscuously with all sorts of worldly-minded persons. You should develop Vairagya to the maximum degree. The mind is so constituted that it is waiting like a vulture to get back the things once renounced. It will be waiting for golden opportunities. Whenever and wherever the mind hisses or raises its hood (for the mind is very much like a serpent) you should take refuge in discrimination and in the impenetrable fortress of wise, dispassionate Mahatmas. Protect your spiritual tendencies with burning dispassion, intense and constant Sadhana and burning Mumukshutva.

The desire for sensual enjoyment is ingrained in the minds of all. The Rajasic mind is so framed that it cannot remain even for a single moment

without thoughts of enjoyment of some kind or another. People invent various sorts of subtle enjoyments, and modern science has made marvellous contributions towards bringing forth refined ways of enjoyment. Modern civilisation is only another name for sensual enjoyment. Hotels, cinemas, aeroplanes and radios intensify sensual enjoyment. Man invents new dishes, new syrups and new drinks to satisfy his palate. Fashion in dress is making vast strides year by year; so is the case with hair styles. Even the man who is treading the path of truth wishes to find out lasting and intense sensual enjoyments by means of his Yoga practices. This is a subtle temptation. The sincere aspirant will resolutely turn his back on all sorts of refined, subtle, intense forms of enjoyments herein and hereafter. He will treat them as offal or as poison.

The two currents of the mind—attraction and repulsion—really constitute the world. The mind gets intensely attached to pleasant objects through attraction, because it derives pleasure from them. Wherever there is sensation of pleasure, the mind gets glued, as it were, to the object that gives pleasure. This is what is called attachment which brings only bondage and pain. When the object is either withdrawn or perishes, the mind gets unspeakable pain. Attraction is the root cause for



human sufferings. The mind runs from those objects which give pain. Hatred arises in the mind. For instance, nobody likes a cobra, a tiger or a scorpion. Attraction and pleasure, repulsion and pain co-exist. A worldly man is a slave of these two mighty currents. He is tossed about hither and thither like a piece of straw. He smiles when he gets pleasure and weeps when he gets pain. He clings to pleasant objects and runs away from objects that cause pain.

It is common to have dispassion for some particular objects by some cause or other. But by having dispassion for all objects at all times, one will get knowledge of the Self.

One cent of pleasure is mixed with ninety nine cents of pain. Pleasure that is mixed with pain, fear and worry is no pleasure at all. If you begin to analyse carefully this one cent of pleasure, it will dwindle into airy nothing. You will find that it is mere play of the mind. Wake up, open your eyes and develop discrimination. You cannot get real happiness from finite objects that are conditioned by time, space and causation. Eternal, infinite bliss that is independent of objects can be had only in the Atman, the Indweller of your heart. Therefore, shun the external things ruthlessly.

Why do men run after sensual pleasures?

What is their idea of happiness? Do Samskaras force them to repeat the same sensual acts? Is man a creature of environment or circumstances? Can he not obliterate his innate tendencies by suitable means?

On account of ignorance man runs hither and thither to seek happiness in objects. A little ginger bread and a sweetmeat, a son and a young wife, some position and power and some money in the bank to boot, will fill the heart with joy and will calm his nerves. That is all he wants. Bliss of the Atman, supersensuous bliss, peace and spiritual ecstasy are unknown to him. He dislikes it also. He hates people who talk on higher sublime matters.

In the presence of sensual pleasures, spiritual bliss cannot exist, just as darkness cannot exist in the presence of light. Therefore, show extreme contempt towards all worldly objects. Destroy desire by turning the mind away from the sensual objects.

Amidst the din and boisterous bustle of worldly activities, there come moments of tranquillity and peace when the mind for the time being, however short it may be, soars above worldly things and reflects on the higher problems of life, viz., "Whence, where, whither and why of the universe," and "Who am I?". The sincere

enquirer becomes serious and extends his reflections. He begins to search and understand the truth. Discrimination dawns on him. He seeks dispassion, concentration, meditation and purification of body and mind and eventually attains the highest knowledge of the Self.

However, if you have no real sustained dispassion you will find no improvement or progress in spirituality. Vows, austerities, energy and meditation will leak out like water from a cracked pot.

The view that everything in the world is unreal causes indifference to the enjoyments of this world and the other heaven-world also. One has to come down to this world from heaven when the fruits of good works are exhausted. The same five kinds of sensual enjoyments (hearing, touching, seeing, tasting and smelling) prevail even in the heaven-world, but they are subtle and intense. This cannot give true and real satisfaction to a man of discrimination. He shuns all enjoyments of the heaven-world also, and shuns them ruthlessly. He kicks them mercilessly. He is fully aware that the pleasure of the three worlds is a mere drop in the ocean of the bliss of the Self.

The body is the source of great miseries. It brings disrespect, censure, etc. and is subject to disease, decay and old age. It passes away without

a moment's notice. Give up attachment to the body. To think that nothing on this earth belongs to me, and that this body even is not mine, is wisdom. To think that she is my wife, that bungalow is mine, and I am rich, etc., is foolishness of a superior order. This physical body which is full of impurities, urine, faecal matter, pus, etc., is perishable. It is the property of fishes, jackals and vultures. It is despised by your enemies and it remains like a log of wood on the ground when Prana leaves the body. How can you call this yours? Why should you cling to it and worship it with scents, powders and flowers? Do not be silly and foolish in adoring it with fine silks and ornaments. Application of oil to the hair, powder to the face, looking at the mirror very often and wearing rings on the fingers will intensify attachment to the body. Therefore, give up all these things ruthlessly. Think of the Atman which is eternal, pure and all-pervading.

The physical body appears only in the present. A thing that has neither past nor future must be considered as non-existent in the present also. But still non-existent things can cause pain. This is illustrated by the following story:

Kamala and Krishna had no children. They were building castles in the air one night when they were lying on a raised bedstead. Kamala

asked the husband: "How will you manage for the sleeping place of our son, if I get a child?" Krishna replied: "I will make room in this very wooden bed itself." He moved some inches away from his wife. She again asked: "What will you do if I beget a second son?" Krishna answered: "I will again make room in this bed." He moved actually a few inches further to the edge of the bed. Kamala again asked: "My dear husband, what will you do if I get a third son?" The husband said: "I will give him room in this very bed." While he was moving to the very edge of the bed he tumbled down and fractured his left leg. Krishna's neighbour came and asked: "What is the matter with your leg?" Krishna said: "I broke my leg on account of my false son." Such is the case with the people of the world also. They suffer on account of false egoism and false relationship.

Vairagya does not mean abandoning social duties and responsibilities of life. It does not mean a life in the solitary caves of the Himalayas, or in the crematorium. It does not mean living on neem-leaves, cow's urine and does not mean wearing of matted hair and having a Kamandalu made of a gourd or coconut shell in the hand. It does not mean shaving of the head and throwing off of clothes. Vairagya is mental detachment from all connections of the world. A man may remain in

the world and discharge all the duties of his order and stage of life with detachment, he may be a householder and live with family and children, but at the same time he may have perfect mental detachment from everything. He can do his spiritual Sadhana. That man who has perfect mental detachment while remaining in the world is a hero indeed. He is much better than the Sadhu living in the cave of the Himalayas, because he has to face innumerable temptations at every moment of his life. Where is the strength of Vairagya when one lives in seclusion, where there is no temptation? Where is the strength of Vairagya when one has not renounced anything, when he has nothing to renounce, when he has not enjoyed the objects of the world, when there is no attraction in the mind for the objects of the world even though he shows externally that he is a great dispassionate man by wearing a gunny bag or keeping only a small wooden bowl in his hand? He cannot be regarded to have renounced the world altogether who has merely withdrawn himself from worldly possessions; but he who living in actual contact with the world and finds out its faults, who is freed from every passion and whose soul depends on nothing may be said to have truly renounced the world. Read the story of Raja Sikhidhvaja and Queen Chudala in Yoga Vasishtha.

Wherever a man may go he carries with him his fickle, restless mind, his subtle desires and innate tendencies. Even if he lives in solitude in the Himalayas he is still the same worldly man if he is engaged in building castles in the air and in thinking of the objects of the world. In that case even the cave becomes a big city for him. If the mind remains and is free from attachments, one can be a perfect Vairagi even while living in a mansion in the busiest part of a city like Calcutta. Such a mansion will be converted into a dense forest by him.

To develop inner mental detachment from pleasure and pain even while remaining in the world, a man should see that he is neither being carried away by the pleasant experiences of the world nor clinging to them. At the same time he should not be afraid of painful experiences. He should simply remain as a silent spectator. If he thus practises for some years, every experience will be a positive step in his ascent in the spiritual ladder. Eventually his efforts will be crowned with sanguine success in mental detachment. He will then have an unruffled and poised mind. A dispassionate person is the happiest and richest person in the world. He is also the most powerful person. How can Maya tempt him now? Suka Deva was tested by Raja Janaka. He remained

without food at the gate of Raja Janaka's palace for some days. He was quite peaceful. Then he was taken to the harem. Beautiful girls served him and gave him delicious food, but he remained unaffected. This is wisdom.

You cannot form a correct opinion of any Sannyasin or a householder as to the state of his mental condition by a casual talk with him for a few hours, or staying with him for a few days. You will have to live with him for a very long time and study his internal mental attitude. Generally people make serious mistakes. They are deluded by external appearances. They take a physically nude Sadhu for a great Mahatma in the beginning. Later on they change their impression after close contact. Physical nudity alone will not constitute real Vairagya. What is wanted is mental nudity, i.e., complete eradication of subtle desires, egoism, etc. Do not be deceived by external appearances.

A dispassionate man is a past-master in the art of separating himself from the impermanent, perishable objects. He constantly dwells in the Eternal. He identifies himself with the witnessing consciousness that is present in pleasure and pain and stands adamant as a peak amid a turbulent storm, as a spectator of this wonderful world-show. He is not at all affected by these pleasant or painful experiences, but he learns valuable lessons



from them. In other words, pleasant objects have no attraction for him and he is not repulsed by painful ones. Nor is he afraid of pain, knowing, as he does, that pain helps quite a lot in his progress and evolution, in his journey towards the goal. He stands convinced that pain is the best teacher in the world.

Some Sannyasins practise Vairagya in order to get fame and respect, but God knows the motives of all as He is the inner Ruler. You cannot deceive Him.

Vairagya-egoism is a deadly cancer. It is difficult to get rid of the Vairagya-egoism as long as there is the body-idea. The feeling, 'I am a great Vairagi or renouncer,' is Vairagya-egoism. Attachment to Vairagya is as much an evil as attachment to sensual objects. This egoism of Sadhus and Sannyasins is more dangerous and inveterate than the egoism of worldly persons.

There was once a Sannyasin at Benares. He could bear heat and cold. In summer he used to stand in the sun for some hours and in winter he used to stand in the Ganga for some hours. He slept on a bed of grass and shunned wooden beds. On one occasion one of his admirers, Sri Ram, took him to Mussoorie. Sri Ram provided him a bed to sleep on. The Sannyasin refused to sleep on the bed and asked Sri Ram to provide a bed of

grass. Sri Ram said: "Swamiji, it is very difficult to get dry grass here. It is raining now in torrents. Kindly use the bed today. This will not bind you in any way. You are an advanced Sannyasin. What is it for you whether the body lies on a bed of grass or on a wooden bed?" The Swami replied: "No, no, no. I must have my usual bed of grass only. You must bring it anyhow." Because of the rain it was extremely difficult for Sri Ram to get dry grass, but somehow he managed to get it with great difficulty.

Some Sannyasins who are working for the public good make resolves: "We will not travel in trains. We will walk only. We will not take milk, fruits, etc. We will not use fountain pens or watch." These are not desirable resolves. This is not the real nature of Vairagya. These Sannyasins are also attached to their Vairagya. This is another kind of defect. They want to do service. If they move in cars or trains, if they keep the body strong and healthy, they can do more service in a short space of time. Those who do much writing work can turn out more work if they use a fountain pen. Foolishness assumes many forms. This is one kind. Foolishness does not leave even educated persons or cultured Sannyasins.

Attachment to Vairagya is as much an evil as attachment itself. Vairagya is a means for attaining

wisdom of the Self, it is not the goal itself. A Jivanmukta or realised sage has neither Raga (likes) nor Vairagya. If you give him a little dry bread alone he is quite satisfied. He will not grumble. If you give him best sweetmeats, milk and fruits he will not refuse, but he will not be elated by good food. He always takes delight in his own Self only, not in external objects. This is the test to find out whether a man has attained realisation or not. A worldly man is much troubled when he cannot get the right kind of food which he likes best. He rejoices when he obtains palatable dishes. A realised soul has equanimity of mind. He is above likes and dislikes.

Obviously the Swami who wanted a bed of grass at Mussoorie had not attained equanimity of mind, and Self-realisation. He was attached to Vairagya even after several years of spiritual practice. He was not completely free from all sorts of attachments and had not attained the natural state wherein the sage is quite indifferent to all kinds of objects, and would sleep on the bed of grass or a beautiful bed with mattress and pillow with the same feeling.

There was a Swami Krishnananda in Gangotri. He was a great Vairagi. For many years he lived without clothing in the icy regions and slept on the ice sometimes. Rai Bahadur Modi

gave a very good description of him sleeping on the ice. He found him to be a wonderful man and made him his Guru.

Ordinary aspirants with delicate health should not take recourse to the practice of such drastic austerities. He who has attained perfection of the body through Yoga can do any kind of Tapas because his body is adamant. If an aspirant with delicate health gives up food and tries to live on neem leaves alone, the obvious result is that he will get various sorts of gastro-intestinal diseases and pass away soon. This is the fruit obtained by persons who practise foolish austerities.

Unnecessary torture of the body in the name of Tapas is also highly depreciable. This is demonised austerity of ignorant persons. This is condemned by Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita. Body is the moving temple of the Lord, an instrument for Self-realisation. You cannot do any Sadhana if the body is not kept strong and healthy.

Each one will have to do Sadhana according to his constitution and strength. What one does may not suit another. If you have mastery over the pairs of opposites, if you can bear intense heat and intense cold, if you can remain without clothing in icy Gangotri, this is highly creditable indeed. But if your frame is delicate and you attempt to stand before the sun in summer for some hours or throw

off your clothing in Gangotri all at once, you will die immediately of sunstroke or pneumonia. You should not attempt to take recourse to these hard practices. By these foolish practices what little you gain by Japa and meditation in this birth will be lost; and you have also lost the one chance given by the Lord in this birth to reach Him.

Lord Buddha tortured the body, did severe austerities, gave up food and yet he was not able to attain the goal. He heard the song:

Fair goes the dancing when the sitar's tuned,  
Tune us the sitar neither low nor high  
And we will dance away the hearts of men.

The string o'erstretched breaks and the music flies,  
The string o'erslack is dumb and music dies,  
Tune us the sitar neither low nor high.

He then ate food, adopted the middle path and succeeded in achieving Nirvana.

Do not spoil your health and body in the name of Tapas. Have a strong, healthy body, but have no attachment for it. Be prepared to give it up at any time for a noble cause. The body is an instrument for attaining Self-realisation. Whatever is needed for the body you should have. You should not expose the body to chill. God has given common sense, so you should practice common sense Sadhana. There is no harm in taking good, healthy food. Every man has got a different

physical constitution. If you are weak and cannot sit for a long time in one posture, you can take a little Chyavanaprash (an Ayurvedic tonic) or some fruit. You should have extreme Vairagya internally and at the same time follow the middle path externally.

The caretaker of the horse feeds it with proper nutrition when it is over-worked or when it is ailing; then only is it ready for further work. This body should be injected with proper nutrition, then only will it turn out good work, then only will it soon regain its lost vitality on account of over-work or ailment. Work will suffer if the body is not well attended to. When the body grows old it must be well protected against cold, and well-looked after. If hard austerity is practised now, it will give way soon. Consequently the other shore of immortality and fearlessness cannot be reached.

God works mysteriously. He takes care of His devotees by working through the minds of various persons. The public will take care of the body of a Sannyasin who has dedicated it to the service of humanity, because it is public property. He has no claim on it because he denies the existence of body and tries to feel always: 'I am Siva (Sivoham).' Society and nature will extract and continue to extract as much work as possible from

those selfless workers who have dedicated their lives to the service of humanity. They are yoked to service till the last breath leaves their bodies. Lord Vishnu instructed Prahlada, "My dear Prahlada! Enough of your austerities. Take care of your body. Rise from your Samadhi. Serve people now. Disseminate Bhakti far and wide." Yoga Vasishtha speaks of one as a great renunciate and great 'enjoyer' who has renounced the idea of 'I am a renunciate' and 'I am a man of dispassion'; who neither accepts nor rejects things that come by themselves by identifying himself with the silent witness, the Immortal Atman; who feels always 'I am non-doer', 'I am non-enjoyer' even while moving amidst objects. The Bhagavad Gita says, "But the disciplined self, moving among sense-objects, with senses free from attraction and repulsion, mastered by the Self, goes to peace." (II-64). The child sometimes eats food at night while he is half asleep. If the mother asks the child in the morning, "My dear, did you take food last night?" he replies, "I have not taken anything last night, you are playing and joking with me." Such is the condition of a Jivanmukta, a great renouncer or 'enjoyer'. He eats and yet he does not eat. He eats without a mouth and smells without a nose. Sometimes a man talks at night when he dreams. If you ask him when he comes to waking consciousness, "O Prem! Do you know that you

talked last night when you were dreaming?" he replies, "I do not remember anything." Such is the state of a Jivanmukta, a great renouncer or 'enjoyer'. He will not refuse to accept some mangoes or a cup of milk when these come unasked for, but he will not crave for them. He will not say, "I have enjoyed today good mangoes or good milk." If an aspirant is seriously ailing and not able to eat solid foodstuffs, if there is a feeling of want in him for milk and he has no money to purchase milk, then if any devotee casually offers some milk of his own accord he should not refuse it. Durvasa ate a sumptuous meal and yet he said, "I do not eat anything. I take grass juice only," because he identified himself with the Atman who is always the witness and the non-enjoyer. Lord Krishna is regarded as an eternal Brahmachari though he was with Radha, Rukmini and Satyabhama. Sage Tiruvalluvar said to his wife: "My beloved! Say unto the river that my husband, an eternal Brahmachari, has commanded you to give path of way. She will at once yield and you can cross it without a boat." She repeated the words of her husband and crossed the river immediately. She was quite amazed at the words of her husband and asked him: "My Lord, you are living with me and yet you say that you are an eternal Brahmachari. I am struck with wonder. I am puzzled. Kindly explain this philosophy."



Tiruvalluvar replied: "I am the immortal Atman. I have realised this through direct cognition. I do not do anything. I am the silent witness, The senses, body, mind and intellect are my instruments. I am entirely distinct from them." Tiruvalluvar's wife understood the nature of the soul and then she became silent.

Some neophytes and raw aspirants pose as great renouncers or great 'enjoyers' and quote scriptures also: "We eat without tongues, we see without eyes." The thief or the hypocrite will be found out soon. They are just like the people who catch fishes from the Ganga to satisfy their palates and quote Bhagavad Gita: "Weapons cleave him not, nor fire burns him, nor waters wet him, nor wind dries him." Sublime philosophy indeed of perverted people with perverted intellects! Gilt ornaments cannot shine for a long time. The crow that struts under borrowed feathers of the peacock will be found out soon. Their cravings and subtle desires will burst out and any lay bystander can detect the hypocrite without any difficulty.

Young aspirants should be very careful and cautious. They should not take advantage of the liberty of a great renouncer or a great 'enjoyer'. This can be practised only by an advanced Yogi who has got equal vision in all things. Beginners should stick to their resolves of truth,

non-violence, celibacy and dispassion to the very letter and spirit.

Some aspirants say, "I have given up umbrella, I take only one meal." Their whole Sadhana is: 'I have given up wearing shirts', 'I have given up wearing sweaters', 'I have given up shoes', 'I live only on bread and dhal'. Their Sadhana consists of 'giving up'—giving up this, giving up that. Real spiritual life does not involve any giving up or taking. What is to be renounced is that which says, "I am superior to that man," "I am the body" and "I am the doer". There is no use in your renouncing your home, wife and children. Mere outward giving up of things is nothing. It is not real renunciation. Real renunciation consists of absolute renunciation of all subtle desires and destruction of ignorance. If you are very hungry in the morning, take one or two iddies and a small cup of milk, but do not give leniency to the mind. It will hurl you down. Always be watchful and eternally vigilant.

You have made your life complex and intricate. You have multiplied your wants and desires, and entangled yourself in this quagmire. Every day you are forging an additional link in your chain of bondage. Simplicity has vanished, luxurious habits are daily developed. There is unemployment everywhere and people are dying

of starvation. There is depression in trade and unrest everywhere. There is wholesale devastation by floods and earthquakes. Divorce courts are increasing. One nation is afraid of another nation, one nation is suspicious about the other nation's preparing for war. Life has become a matter of uncertainty, confusion, chaos and bewilderment. It has become very stormy and boisterous and full of undercurrents, cross-currents, subterranean currents and mixed currents. You can escape from these troubles and difficulties if you lead a life of dispassion, self-restraint, purity and selfless service; if you develop pure cosmic love, if you develop the habit of taking the right point of view, right thinking, right feeling and right acting with right mental attitude and if you practise devotion and meditation.

Why do you laugh in vain, friend, when you have just cause really to weep? You have wasted this life in foolish mirth and carnal pleasures. You have done various sinful acts. You have not done anything to improve your nature. You do not have a clear conscience and your heart is filled with all sorts of impurities. You have no peace of mind. You have spent eight hours in sleep and the rest in idle gossiping, telling lies and deceiving others, in selfish activities and gaining money. How can you expect spiritual good, how can you expect

immortality if you do not spend even half an hour in the service of God, in singing His Name and in divine contemplation?

You can obliterate your Samskaras by right exertion. You are not a creature of circumstances. You are the master of your destiny. Try to understand the riddle of life and the riddle of the universe.

Acquire discrimination, have Satsanga, enquire into the nature of the Atman, study "Yoga Vasishtha" and the Upanishads. Study again and again "Vairagya Maala", "How to Get Vairagya" and "Necessity for Sannyasa". Then you will have a comprehensive understanding of the problems of life. You will develop gradually Vairagya.

Without Vairagya not even an iota of spiritual progress is possible. If there is no Vairagya, energy will leak out from various holes of this body. There will be no ascent in the ladder of Yoga, despite your Sadhana. Vairagya is the foremost of all divine virtues. It is the only Sadhana to take you up to the peak of eternal wisdom or Nirvikalpa Samadhi. Cultivate this to a maximum degree. Be ever vigilant. Do not slacken yourself, falsely thinking that you have attained Jivanmukti. You will have hopeless downfall. You will not be able to rise up again. Beware. Beware. Beware.

## Shad Sampat

Having considered Vairagya, the second of the Sadhana Chatushtaya, you now come to the third qualification which is really a set of six distinct attributes that the aspirant has to acquire. These are: Sama, Dama, Uparati, Titiksha, Sraddha and Samadhana. The six attributes are taken as one because they are all calculated to bring about mental control and discipline. Concentration and meditation can never be possible without mental control and mental discipline. These practices are, in fact, practices in Raja Yoga.

There is a beautiful and a definitely rational significance in the sequence in the fourfold equipment on the spiritual path. It is only when discrimination dawns that the first glimmer of awakening comes into your life. Devoid of discrimination man lives only a brutish life in a refined sort of way. He has not known the true meaning of human life and has therefore not awakened to the real purpose of his existence. Discrimination imparts the first impulse of awakening to the soul. It opens your eyes to the true nature of the things of this transitory world. Then Vairagya dawns. You are prompted to run away from the fleeting perishable objects and conceive a dislike for the sensual pleasure-centres. The mind gropes, seeks and thirsts for something

beyond passing appearances now. With this new state of disgust and dispassion the old self simultaneously exists with all its wonted weaknesses, its senseward urges and its habitual tendencies to succumb to every gust of passion and temptation from the objective world. It marks a period of transition, a period full of slips and retreats and the pain and grievous vexations resulting from them. The discrimination needs to be steadied and the dispassion to be strengthened. They have to be made firm and resistant to withstand the assaults and attacks of powerful subtle desires and innate tendencies. They have to stand four-square against the temptations and trials that will assail the seeker. Inner force is to be generated. The personality is to be 'toughened'.

Shad Sampat generates this force within the seeker. These sixfold attributes help to cast him in the heroic mould. They impart strength to the disposition of the seeking soul, bringing balance and imparting equipoise to the personality. They check the restive senses, develop the power of endurance—both physical and mental—and give the power to arrest the outgoing mode of the mind-function. Then the seeker becomes established and firm-rooted in strong faith and thus grows into a state of absolute single-mindedness and one-pointedness in the

adherence to and the contemplation of his ideal and goal. By all these means the Shad Sampat makes one strong and well-grounded in Viveka and Vairagya which have now been made unassailable by means of these Yogic attributes. In such a seeker the fire of keen aspiration blazes forth with intensity.

**Sama:** Sama is serenity or tranquillity of mind that is brought about by eradication of subtle desires. Serenity is the state or quality of being serene. It is calmness or coolness of mind, or peace. It is evenness of temper and undisturbed state of mind. A serene mind is unclouded or unruffled. In a serene mind alone the divine light descends. Serenity comes when you annihilate all desires and cravings. Desires and cravings produce restlessness. If you are serene, it is the greatest manifestation of power and strength. When one is serene, the mind is kept in the chambers of the heart and is not allowed to join with the senses and to move outside into sensual objects. The mind is fixed in the source. Serenity of mind is the most important qualification for an aspirant. This is difficult of attainment, but the aspirant must have this qualification at any cost. It demands incessant and protracted practice.

The mind is the commander of the five organs of perception and the five organs of action.

If the commander is subjugated first of all, the soldiers (the sense-organs) are already conquered. Control of the sense-organs cannot become perfect unless their head—the mind—is controlled first. If one is established in Sama, Dama (control of the sense-organs) comes by itself.

Do not hurry, do not worry. Do not fret and fume. Regret not. Control irritability, control your temper and be contented. You will have a serene mind. Practise daily prayer, Japa and meditation. Serenity does not come in a day, or week. You will have to struggle hard for a long time in cultivating this fundamental divine virtue. Be serene. Meditate and know that you are the all-pervading immortal Atman.

*Dama:* Dama is control of the Indriyas (sense-organs). This is rational control, not blunting or deadening of the sense by foolish austerities. This body is the moving temple of God. It should be kept healthy and strong. It is a vessel to take you to the other shore of fearlessness and immortality; it is a horse to take you to the goal. Ignorant people adopt foolish methods to control the senses. For instance, some aspirants amputate the organ of reproduction. They think that lust can be eradicated completely by such a procedure. What a great foolish act! Lust is in the mind. If the mind is subdued, what



can this external fleshy organ do? Some swallow tons of nux vomica to kill this organ. They fail in their Brahmacharya. The state of their minds is the same, though the nux vomica makes them impotent.

Remember, it is only the abuse or misuse of the organs that brings misery and untoward results. The senses should be consecrated at the lotus-feet of the Lord for His services. They should be utilised in serving one's Guru and other Mahatmas. The ears should be used for hearing the scriptures and the tongue should repeat the Guru-stotras. This is the right use of the senses. In the peace Mantras of the Upanishads it is said: "May my limbs, Prana, eye, ear and all my senses grow vigorous. O gods, may we with our ears hear what is auspicious. O ye fit to be worshipped, may we with our eyes see what is auspicious. May we enjoy the life allotted to us by the gods, offering our praise with our bodies strong of limb!" There is no mentioning here of weakening the body, killing the senses or tormenting the body and the senses in a variety of ways!

What is wanted is judicious control. The senses should not be allowed to run riot into sensual grooves, nor throw us ruthlessly into the deep pit of worldliness, just as the turbulent horse carries away the rider wherever it likes. If the

senses are disciplined properly and if they are kept under control, they become your useful servants. "He who has no discrimination and whose mind is always uncontrolled, his senses are uncontrollable like the vicious horses of a driver; but he who has understanding and whose mind is always controlled, his senses are under control like the good horses of a driver. He who has no discrimination, whose mind is not under control and who is always impure, does not reach the goal but enters into the round of births and deaths; but he who has understanding, who has his mind always under control and who is pure, reaches that goal whence he is not born again. He who has understanding as the charioteer and who holds the reins of the mind, reaches the end of his journey, and that is the highest place of Vishnu." (Katha Upanishad.) Observance of Mauna for two hours daily, dietetic adjustment and continence or moderation are all of great help.

People ask: "Where is the necessity for the practice of Dama, when one practises Sama?" Dama, control of the senses, is also necessary. Then only will one get supreme control of mind. Though the senses cannot independently do any havoc when the mind is under control, yet their control ensures perfect safety and supreme peace of mind. When one's inclinations and emotions,

desires and appetites, senses and mind are under control, it is called self-control. Control yourself first, then you can control others. Self-control clears the mind, strengthens judgment and elevates your character. It gives you freedom, peace, bliss and joy and strengthens your will. He who conquers himself is greater than the Commander-in-chief who conquers a country. Self-control is the master-key that opens the realm of eternal bliss and immortality. Through self-control you will be purified of all of your sins and gifted with energy and character. You will acquire the highest blessedness.

There is no triumph more glorious than that of the victory obtained over your own self. Till you have done this, you will only be a slave of the senses. He who is subject to his passions is the worst slave on the surface of this earth; he who rules his passions, desires, cravings and senses is the real King of kings.

Every temptation that is resisted, every evil thought that is subdued, every desire or craving that is destroyed, every bitter word that is withheld and every wrong action that is checked, paves the way to the attainment of everlasting peace and bliss.

There is no other duty equal to self-control. It is the highest virtue in the world. Through

self-control you can enjoy the highest happiness both in this world and in the next. Gifted with self-control you will win great virtue.

The self-controlled man sleeps happily and awakes happily and moves in the world happily. He is always cheerful. The man who is without self-control always suffers misery. He brings upon himself many calamities, all begotten by his own faults.

Forgiveness, patience, abstention from injury, impartiality, truth, sincerity, control of the senses, cleverness, mildness, modesty, firmness, liberality, freedom from anger, contentment, sweetness of words, benevolence, freedom from malice, mercy and respect for the preceptor all combined make up self-control.

The man of self-control avoids both adulation and slander. Depravity, infamy, falsehood, lust, covetousness, pride, arrogance, fear, envy and disrespect are all shunned by him. He never incurs obloquy. He is free from envy.

That eternal region in Brahman which originates from Vedic penances and which is concealed in a cave can only be acquired by self-control. The self-controlled man is never fettered by the attachments originating from earthly connections and sentiments. The man of self-control acquires great reward in the next

world. He acquires esteem in this world and attains to a high end hereafter. He acquires the state of Brahman. He attains liberation.

*Uparati:* Uparati or satiety comes next. This state of mind naturally comes when one has practised Viveka, Vairagya, Sama and Dama. Sri Sankara defines Uparati in his Vivekachudamani as follows: "The best Uparati, self-withdrawal, consists in the mind function ceasing to act by means of external objects." According to Atma Anatma Viveka, Uparati is the "Abstaining on principle from engaging in any of the acts and ceremonies not enjoined in the scriptures." Otherwise, it is the state of mind which is always engaged in Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana, without ever diverting from them. Some take Uparati to mean taking up Sannyasa by renouncing all works.

Uparati implies an inner satisfaction gained through constant discrimination and unshaken faith in the spiritual fact that the experience of true bliss and plenitude is to be had only in the Atman. The objects of this external universe are incomplete and defective. The experience of the Atman alone is of the nature of fullness and perfection. Firmly convinced, the wise seeker turns his mind away from passing names and forms of this phenomenal world show and is content to

engage himself in constant reflection on the Self. When one perceives the worthlessness of all lower things and is convinced of the true worth of a higher thing, then one turns away from the former and gets absorbed in the latter. The seeker is unaffected amidst distractions of diverse objects. He is centered within. This state of mind is Uparati.

The mind of the student who is established in Uparati will never be agitated when he sees a beautiful object. There will be no attraction. He will have the same feeling when he sees a woman as when he looks at a tree or a log of wood. When he looks at delicious fruits or palatable dishes he will not be tempted. He will have no craving for any particular object or dish and will never say, "I want such and such food." He will be satisfied with anything that is placed before him. This is due to the strength of mind he has developed by the practice of Viveka, Vairagya, Sama and Dama. Further, the mind experiences a wonderful calmness and transcendental spiritual bliss by the above practices. It does not want these little illusory pleasures. If you have got sugar-candy, your mind will never run after black sugar. You can wean the mind from the object to which it is attached by training it to taste a superior kind of bliss. If you give cotton-seed extract to a bull or a

cow, it will not run towards dry grass or hay. Mind is like the bull.

Those who practise celibacy must be fully conversant with the technique of Sama, Dama and Uparati. Then only they will be established in its practice.

**Titiksha:** Titiksha or endurance comes next. It is the state of enduring or bearing. It is the capacity or power to endure without opposition, and to suffer pain, distress, hardship or any very prolonged stress without succumbing, murmuring, complaining, lamenting or repining. It is patient fortitude. It is the ability to bear and continue in spite of destructive forces.

He who endures conquers. Through endurance, will-power and patience are developed. Through endurance, evils and difficulties are overcome. Your strength often increases in proportion to the obstacles imposed upon you. Endure them bravely. Difficulties and troubles, adversities and calamities have often built the character of men. The palm-tree grows best beneath a ponderous weight, and even so the character of man. The greater the difficulty, the more glory in surmounting it. Through endurance you exhibit your divine grandeur and make alliance with God. Titiksha is a condition of wisdom. It is a means for acquiring knowledge.

Though Titiksha develops your will-power and brings happiness herein and hereafter, it has one defect. People misconstrue those who practise forbearance for impotent, effeminate men.

Power of endurance is a virtue to be possessed by a Yogi, a Jnani and a Bhakta. Many hardships and privations have to be faced by the students in the successful performance of Yoga. The weak man emerges as a strong and sublime man from terrible trials and adversities. Trial is a crucible into which nature throws a man whenever she wishes to mould him into a superman. Therefore do not be afraid of troubles and adversities. They are blessings in disguise. The aspirant should patiently bear the pairs of opposites such as heat and cold, pleasure and pain and the rest. Sri Sankara defines Titiksha in Vivekachudamani as follows: "The bearing of all afflictions without caring to redress them, being free at the same time from anxiety or lament on their score, is called Titiksha, forbearance." According to Atma Anatma Viveka, Titiksha is the showing of forbearance to a person to whom you are capable of awarding punishment for some wrong-doing.

Lord Krishna advises Arjuna to bear heat and cold: "The contacts of the senses with the objects, O son of Kunti, which cause heat and cold,



pleasure and pain, have a beginning and an end; they are impermanent; endure them bravely, O Arjuna. That firm man whom, surely, these afflict not, O chief among men, to whom pleasure and pain are the same, is fit for attaining Immortality.”  
Bhagavad Gita (II-14, 15)

A little practice will serve the purpose. One should be able to walk bare-footed without an umbrella, to sleep on the bare ground without any pillow. Those who wish to take the path of renunciation should practise these while they are in the world. Occasionally walk bare-footed in the compound of your house. Train the body for physical labour. You should not be entirely dependent upon the servants. Wash all your clothes and understand the dignity of labour. Take medicine only when there is absolute necessity. Gradually develop your power of endurance. Increase it by all means, bearing heat, cold, pain, hunger, etc.

Some saints make Titiksha the goal of life. Till the end of life they stand on one leg in cold water in winter and in the hot sun in summer. Some remain naked in winter, some stand on one leg raising their hands above, some stand in water waist-deep and do Japa, some stand in the hot sun, some hang from a tree head downwards with a fire lighted below, while some sleep and sit on a bed

of nails. These are all practices in Titiksha. They develop will-power, but such endurance by itself may not be able to secure the highest human end.

Foolish austerities of a rigorous kind are condemned by Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita. "The man who performs severe austerities unenjoined by the scriptures, wedded to vanity and egoism, impelled by the force of their desires and passions; unintelligent, tormenting the aggregated elements forming the body and Me also, firm in their resolves..."

Some ignorant people think: "If there are no diseases in this world, if there is no burning heat in summer, if it is always winter, if there is no pain in the world, if this world is free from tigers, cobras, scorpions, centipedes, flies, mosquitoes, bugs, etc., it will be a veritable heaven on earth." A wise man never grumbles. He tries to fix himself up in that unchanging, permanent, witnessing consciousness which is hidden in his heart and which is beyond all the pairs of opposites, and then watches the movements and the phenomena of this universe with an unruffled mind. Everything appears as the Lila of Brahman. He sees intelligence in every inch of creation. He has a very comprehensive understanding of the eternal laws of nature and the pairs of opposites. He now understands the reason for the existence of pain,

snakes, scorpions, tigers, etc. This is true of Titiksha based on knowledge. The practitioner can endure any kind of difficulty or catastrophe and is not shaken even by shocking news of heavy sorrow. He is superior to those who have trained themselves by physical torture, because the latter will show signs of failure when confronted by serious disasters.

Study the psychology of men. Analyse human nature. When you move with others, adjust yourself well. Have perfect adaptability, develop tolerance. Then only will you be happy. Be calm, serene and poised always. Practise this: Never get impatient, excited or nervous, be composed and unruffled. When you are calm and tranquil, you can get help and strength from within and you can hear the still inner voice. The divine energy will flow into you.

Wherever you go you carry your own mind, subtle desires and innate tendencies with you. Attraction and repulsion are everywhere, even in the caves of the Himalayas. Create your own world and environments from within, then alone can you be happy anywhere and under any circumstances.

The best of all virtues is even-mindedness. Therefore, develop this virtue with patience and perseverance. Other virtues will cling to you by themselves. Bear difficulties patiently. Adjust the

mind to all circumstances and places; then only can you be really strong. That Yoga student who tries to evolve amidst trying conditions, temptations and unfavourable circumstances will become very powerful. Mother Nature knows fully well how to train and mould her children. Therefore, don't murmur, don't grumble. Keep your mind cool at all times, under all conditions.

If you are impartial; if you are master of your senses; if your mind is unruffled in the midst of unending troubles, difficulties, sickness and festivities and if you neither desire nor renounce any object, you are in possession of tranquillity. Truth will dawn by itself in the tranquil mind only. Therefore, cultivate this virtue by all means.

Failure is only the stepping stone to success. Do not be discouraged by failure. Gird up the loins, stand up, be bold. Face difficulties and overcome them one by one. Do not become despondent on any account. Walk like a spiritual lion. Be not afraid of public criticism. People are still abusing Lord Mahadeva, Sri Sankara, Lord Krishna and Lord Rama. They will continue to do so from eternity to eternity. The world abounds with Tamasic people. Sattvic people are very rare. Discipline your mind. Stand adamant under all conditions and at all times. Keep a cool balanced mind. This is the highest wisdom.

To an aspirant who wrote of difficulties in his work I replied: "Are you the Atman or mind or body? Even though you have read my writings hundreds of times, you identify yourself with mind and body and lose the balance of mind when a trifling criticism is made, so strong is your egoism. People can criticise your body and mind. You yourself dislike your body and mind. Those who criticise your body and mind become your friends. Then why do you get agitated, my dear friend? You are still weak. You have not grown spiritually. Ignore criticism. Why do you brood over past events? This is a very bad habit. You can't have peace of mind. Rise above criticisms and petty remarks and stand firm like the rock. Do good to those men who attempt to poison or hurt you. Put this in practice.

"You should try to love all, even your worst enemy who wants to destroy you, who is planning to poison you, who is drawing the sword to chop off your head. This is of course difficult, but you will have to practise this if you really want spiritual growth and salvation. This is real Sannyasa. A real Sannyasi is one who feels that he has no body. You should live, work and meditate amidst people who are aiming at your destruction and amidst the worst of unfavourable surroundings. Then only can you grow spiritually. Then only you can have the

unruffled mind of a sage. This method is doubtless difficult, but it will make one really adamant.

“It is a great loss for you to leave the public service because some jealous persons attempted to vilify and injure you, and when you will have to face various sorts of bitter experiences. Your spiritual growth will be terribly retarded. You must have moral strength and moral courage to face public criticism, harsh remarks and persecution. Your suffering is nothing when compared with the persecutions undergone by Sri Rama and the five Pandavas. Show your manliness, moral courage and spiritual strength now. The inner strength that you obtained by meditation during these six years is tested now. Had you really done sincere meditation you ought to have abundant strength now to face these difficulties with a smile. If you have no strength, it shows that there has been some error in meditation. Real meditation gives immense inner strength.

“Do not be afraid of insult, disrespect, dishonour, abuse, or harsh words. Wear them as ornaments on your body.

“Many worry themselves a lot if they hear a little scandal about themselves. Don't be afraid, these are vain sounds, vibrations in the air. These are nothing. What is mocking? What is scandal? Analyse these. They will dwindle into airy nothing.

Allow scandals to enter through one ear and pass out immediately through the other ear. You are the immortal Atman where there is no sound. Nothing can affect you. You are invulnerable.”

**Sraddha:** Next comes Sraddha. This is intense faith in the words of the Guru and in the sayings of the Vedanta scriptures and above all in one’s own self.

Faith is belief in the truth of revealed religion. It is confidence and trust in God and in one’s own self. It is belief in the statements, utterances and teachings of one’s Guru, preceptor or saints. It is belief in religious scriptures. It is not blind faith but faith based on accurate reasoning, evidence and experience. Then only can it be a lasting unshakable faith. Faith is a firm conviction of the truth of what is declared by another by way either of testimony or authority without any other evidence.

Any clear conception of subtle ultimate truths is almost impossible without proper faith. When there is faith, the mind can be easily concentrated on the subject to be understood and then the understanding quickly follows. Faith is that personal attitude by which divine revelation is subjectively appropriated. Faith transcends reason. It does not originate from logical processes, but

from an immediate inner experience. No spiritual progress is possible without faith.

We give credence to a report and assent to a proposition or to a proposal. Belief is stronger than credence. Conviction is a belief established by argument or evidence. Assurance is belief beyond the reach of argument. Faith is a union of belief and trust. Faith is chiefly personal, whereas belief may be quite impersonal. We speak of belief in a proposition and faith in a promise, because the promise emanates from a person. Confidence is a firm dependence upon a statement as true, or upon a person as worthy. We have reliance upon the uniformity of nature. We have trust or faith in God. Faith should not be forced. Trying to compel religious belief leads to unbelief.

Faith in God elevates the soul, purifies the heart and emotions and leads to God-realisation. Faith is the soul of religion. It creates new hopes and awakens immortality. It is the eye that sees the Lord, and the hand that clings to Him. Faith is power, strength and abundant energy. Men with no assets but tremendous faith in themselves have accomplished wonders. He who has faith is strong, he who doubts is weak. Strong faith precedes great actions, while doubt cramps energy.

Much divine knowledge is lost to you through lack of faith. Faith illumines the spiritual path,



builds a bridge across the gulf of death and takes the aspirant to the other shore of fearlessness and immortality.

Faith in God is the first rung in the ladder of spirituality. It inspires hope in the seeker of Truth to attain divine grace. You need neither art nor science for attaining God-realisation, but faith, purity and devotion. Have a definite purpose. Be determined. Be sincere. Be serious. Understand clearly and definitely what you are really aspiring for.

Only with faith will the strong yearning for attaining the Divinity dawn in your heart. Understand clearly the nature and glory of the Lord, nature of the divine life and God-realisation. Seek the company of the wise. Lead a life of selfless service, renunciation, dispassion, prayer and meditation. Only then will you be able to do self-surrender. Without faith, an intense desire for Darshan of the Lord and self-surrender you cannot attain God-realisation. Therefore strive to possess these things. Strengthen your faith through Satsanga or association with the wise and the study of sacred scriptures.

The Lord is everywhere. Feel His presence everywhere. His eyes behold everything, His hands protect all. Have perfect faith in Him. Surrender your entire being unto Him. He will take care of

you. Trust in Him. Take refuge in His sweet Name. You need not despair nor be afraid of anything. You will ever remain at ease.

Faith is power. Faith is strength. Faith is abundant energy. Faith is the soul of religion. It creates new hopes and awakens immortality.

Brahman is to be learnt through the Srutis, and independent thinking and reasoning have nothing to do with it. Srutis are revelations. They are the direct superintuitive experiences of Rishis. Sages and Srutis give an accurate knowledge of Brahman. Brahman is beyond the reach of the senses, is beyond the reach of the mind and speech. Some learned fools, big wise fools who pose to possess reason, whereas, they really mistake their fancies and preferences for reason, declare that they will accept that portion of the Srutis which appeals to reason. They will never get out of this Samsara Chakra.

Though any subject has been established by means of arguments and valid authorities, still people's minds being entirely taken up with gross external objects, any clear conception of subtle ultimate truths is almost impossible without proper faith. When there is faith, the mind can be easily concentrated on the subject to be understood and then the understanding quickly follows.

Faith is belief in the Unknown. Faith and devotion speak together. Faith heals, faith creates, faith works wonders, faith moves mountains. Unshakable faith in God gives mysterious power to overcome any difficulty. Faith makes the weak, strong, and the timid, brave. Faith makes the impossible, possible. Faith argues not, thinks not, reasons not, cogitates not. Reason is an unreliable, frail and finite instrument. Faith is the search-light for God-finding. Life is a dreary waste when it loses its faith. Life loses its effulgence when it loses its faith. Know that everything is lost when faith is lost. The water of life is faith. Have perfect faith in the Lord.

**Samadhana:** The last of the sixfold virtues is Samadhana. It is mental balance, equipoise and calm. There is perfect concentration now. It is fixing the mind on the Atman without allowing it to run towards objects and have its own way. Sri Sankara defines in *Atma Anatma Viveka*: "Whenever a mind engaged in Sravana and the rest wanders to any worldly object or desire, and finding it worthless returns to the performance of the three exercises—such returning is called Samadhana." The mind is free from anxiety amid pains, there is indifference amid pleasures. There is stability of mind or mental poise. The aspirant or practitioner is on every side without

attachment. He neither likes nor dislikes. He has great deal of strength of mind and internal peace. He has unruffled, supreme peace of mind.

Some aspirants have peace of mind when they live in seclusion, when there are no distracting elements or factors. They complain of great tossing of mind when they come to a city, when they mix with people. They are completely upset. They cannot do any meditation in a crowded place. This is a weakness. It is not achievement of Samadhana. There is no balance of mind or equanimity in these persons. Only when a student can keep his balance of mind in a battlefield when there is shower of bullets all round—as he does in a solitary cave in the Himalayas—can he be really said to be fully established in Samadhana. Napoleon had Samadhana to some extent, although this is not of the aspirant type. He could keep perfect balance of mind even amidst the din and tumult of a raging warfare.

Lord Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita: “Perform all actions, O Dhananjaya, dwelling in union with the divine, renouncing attachments, and balanced evenly in success and failure.” This is Samadhana. Again you will find in the Bhagavad Gita: “The disciplined self, moving among the sense objects with senses free from attraction and repulsion, mastered by the Self, goes to peace.”

This is also Samadhana. A seeker possessing this invaluable quality of Samadhana is unperturbed amidst the pairs of opposites like pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, gain and loss, praise and blame, honour and insult, success and failure, fulfilment or disappointment. It is a settled state of cool serenity in which the mind does not set up any reaction to the impacts of external contacts and the variegated experiences of earthly life. This serenity of disposition deriving from inner composure based upon discrimination and dispassion is verily the essential factor of Yoga. It is a distinctive feature of the man of spiritual attunement. To the seeker it is indispensable. In its ultimate reaches it is itself Yoga. It is one of the sure tests of inner progress and development.

## **Mumukshutva**

Lastly, we come to the fourth of the main qualifications, Mumukshutva. Mumukshutva is aspiration or burning desire to attain God-realisation or Self-realisation. God is the one true aim of all human aspirations. Aspiration is earnest longing or an earnest wish for that which is above one's present reach or attainment, especially for what is noble, pure and spiritual. To aspire is to rise or reach upward. To aspire is to have an earnest desire, wish or longing for something high and good not yet attained, and is usually

accompanied by endeavour to attain it. Mumukshutva is intense desire for liberation or deliverance from the wheel of birth and death with its concomitant evils of old age, disease, delusion and sorrow. If one is equipped with the previous three qualifications—Viveka, Vairagya and Shad Sampat—Mumukshutva will come by itself. The mind moves towards the source of its own accord, because it has lost its hold on external objects. It has no resting place in this objective universe. Purification of the mind and mental discipline is the rock-bottom foundation of Yoga. When this is effected, the longing for liberation dawns by itself.

Mumukshutva must be of a burning type. If burning Mumukshutva is coupled with burning Vairagya, Self-realisation will come within the twinkling of an eye. Generally the vast majority of people have got a dull type of Vairagya and Mumukshutva, so they do not succeed in their attempts. If one finds that he has not got burning Mumukshutva he must practise the other three Sadhanas vigorously till he acquires intense longing for attaining salvation or immortality. To cite an analogy: suppose some dust falls in one's eyes, he will hurry up to wash his eyes and get rid of the dust. He will feel great unrest till the dust is removed, forgetting everything of this world. His sole concern will be the removal of the dust from

his eyes. Similarly should one's aspiration be to attain God-realisation. He should forget everything else. He should feel extremely restless and should pine for God-realisation. Another analogy for Mumukshutva is that of the man under water. Suppose you keep the head of a person immersed in water. He will be struggling for breath. He will intensely desire to get out of the water, so that he can breathe. Such intense desire for God-realisation is called Mumukshutva.

The aspirant should practise all the four means to a maximum degree. Proficiency in one Sadhana alone will not make you perfect. That aspirant who is endowed with these four qualifications should hear the scriptures from a Guru who is a knower of Brahman and then reflect and meditate on the inner Self. He will soon get Self-realisation.

There is a definite significance in the sequence of the four means. If you have Viveka, Vairagya will come by itself. If you possess Viveka and Vairagya, Sama will dawn by itself. If you are endowed with Viveka, Vairagya and Sama, Dama will come by itself. If you have Sama and Dama, Uparati will come by itself. If you have all these qualifications, Titiksha, Sraddha and Samadhana will come by themselves. If you possess Viveka, Vairagya, Sama, Dama, Uparati, Sraddha, Titiksha

and Samadhana, Mumukshutva or burning desire for liberation will manifest by itself.

Some students ask: "Shall we practise Viveka, Vairagya, etc., in order, one by one, after mastering each limb, or shall we practise all the limbs simultaneously? If we practise one by one, perhaps we will not be able to get mastery over even one or two limbs in this life. We may require several births for perfect mastery over all limbs. Life is very short. What shall we do?" It depends upon the temperament, taste and capacity of the students. Some like to get perfect mastery over each stage and then proceed to the next step. Some like to practise all the limbs at the same time. For six months concentrate your mind in cultivating Viveka, Vairagya and Sama. For the next six months try to acquire Sraddha, Samadhana and Mumukshutva. Devote more time in developing that virtue which you are seriously lacking. If you are earnest and sincere in your attempt, you can develop the four means and attain Self-realisation in this very birth.

Another Vedanta student says: "Swamiji, there is no necessity for acquiring these four means of salvation—Viveka, Vairagya, etc. It is a long, tedious process. I will not be able to acquire them even in several births. The shortest way is to think of Brahman always. I will acquire all the

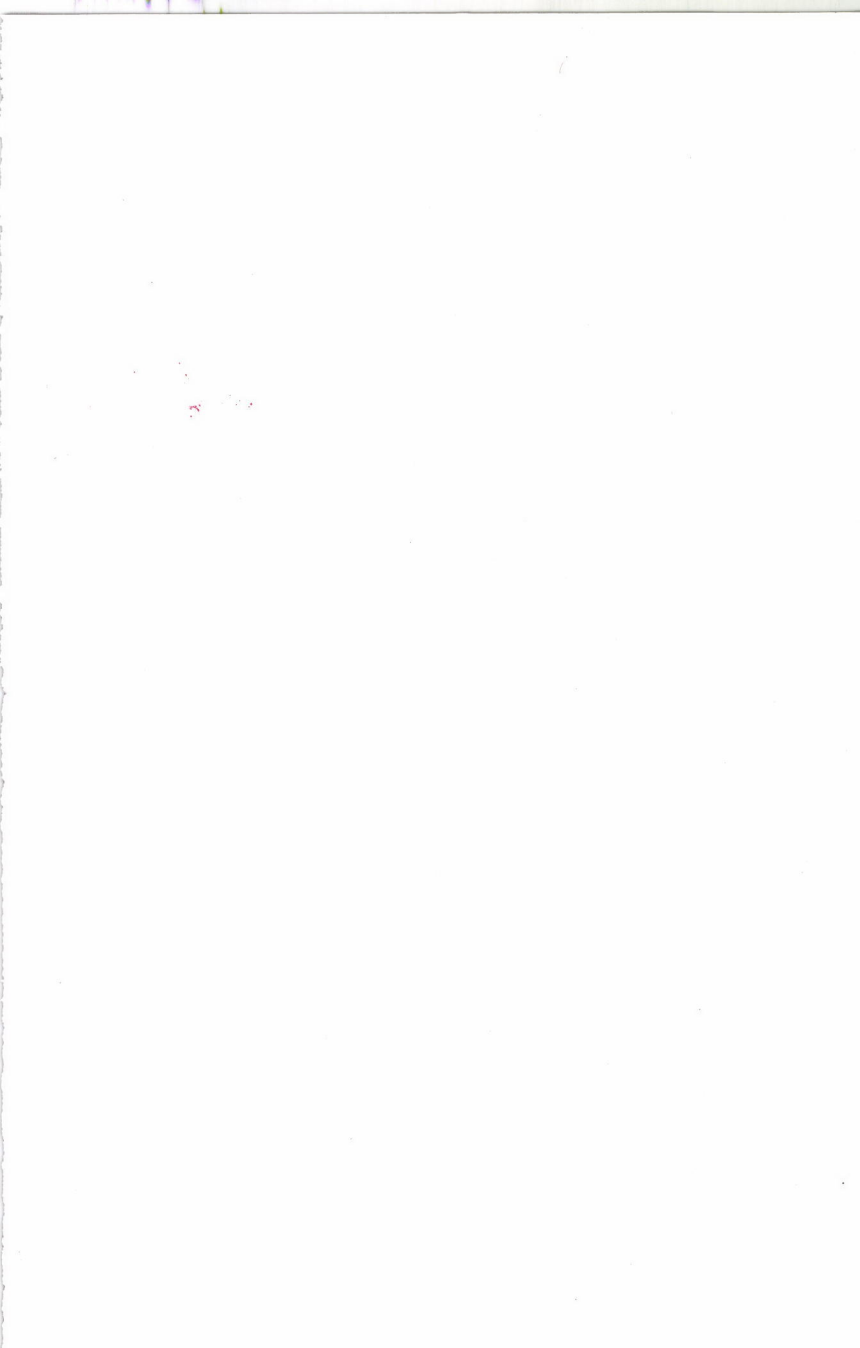


virtues automatically. Then I will be able to practise deep meditation." He is right. A first-class student can adopt this method, because he had cultivated the four means in his previous births. A mediocre student will not be able to think of Brahman at the very outset. How can one think of Brahman when the mind is filled with impurities, when it is turbulent and the senses are jumping and revolting? Absolutely impossible. He may sit for thinking on the Self, but he will be building castles in the air and thinking of other objects. He will foolishly imagine that he entered into Nirvikalpa Samadhi. He will mistake deep sleep for Samadhi. Many are deluded in this manner. They do not have any spiritual progress. They can have no idea of Brahman. It is only the mind that is rendered pure by the practice of Viveka, Vairagya, Sama, Dama, etc., that can have definite conception of Brahman. Ideas of Brahman cannot be lodged in a restless, impure mind.

May you all live in an illumined state through the practice of these four qualifications!







## SRI SWAMI SIVANANDA

Born on the 8th September, 1887, in the illustrious family of Sage Appayya Dikshitar and several other renowned saints and savants, Sri Swami Sivananda had a natural flair for a life devoted to the study and practice of Vedanta. Added to this was an inborn eagerness to serve all and an innate feeling of unity with all mankind.

His passion for service drew him to the medical career; and soon he gravitated to where he thought that his service was most needed. Malaya claimed him. He had earlier been editing a Health Journal and wrote extensively on health problems. He discovered that people needed right knowledge most of all; dissemination of that knowledge he espoused as his own mission.

It was divine dispensation and the blessing of God upon mankind that the doctor of body and mind renounced his career and took to a life of renunciation to qualify himself for ministering to the soul of man. He settled down at Rishikesh in 1924, practised intense austerities and shone as a great Yogi, saint, sage and Jivanmukta. In 1932 he started the Sivanandashram. In 1936 was born The Divine Life Society. In 1948 the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy was organised. Dissemination of spiritual knowledge and training of people in Yoga and Vedanta were their aim and object. In 1950 he undertook a lightning tour of India and Ceylon. In 1953 he convened a 'World Parliament of Religions'. He is the author of over 300 volumes and has disciples all over the world, belonging to all nationalities, religions and creeds. To read his works is to drink at the Fountain of Wisdom Supreme. On 14th July, 1963 he entered Mahasamadhi.