

Practice of Brahmacharya

Sri Swami Sivananda

Edited by

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(Abbot George Burke)

*Dedicated to the Youth of the World*

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# Chapter One:

## The Present-Day Degradation

There is a great illusion in front of man. It troubles him in the form of woman. There is a great illusion in front of woman. It troubles her in the form of man.

Go wherever you like—Amsterdam, London or New York. Analyze this world of phenomenal experience. You will find only two things—sex and ego.

The sex instinct is the greatest urge in human life. Sex energy or lust is the most deep-rooted instinct in man. Sex energy entirely fills the mind, intellect, prana, senses and the whole body. It is the oldest of the factors that have gone into the constitution of the human being.

A man has a thousand and one desires. But the central strong desire is the sexual desire. The fundamental desire is the urge for a mate. All hang on this central basic desire. The desire for money, the desire for a son, the desire for property, the desire for houses, the desire for cattle and other desires come later on.

Because the whole creation of this universe is to be kept up, God has made the sexual desire very, very powerful. Otherwise, many jivanmuktas would have cropped up quite easily, just as graduates from universities. It is easy to get university qualifications. It demands a little money, memory, intelligence and a little strain. But it is an uphill climb to obliterate the sexual impulse. He who has completely eradicated lust and is established in mental brahmacharya is Brahman or God Himself.

This world is nothing but sex and ego. Ego is the chief thing. It is the basis. Sex hangs on the ego. If the ego is destroyed by vichara or enquiry of “Who am I?” the sex idea takes to its heels by itself. Man, master of his destiny, has lost his divine glory and has become a slave, a tool, in the hands of sex and ego on account of ignorance. Sex and ego are the products of avidya or nescience. The dawn of knowledge of the Self annihilates these two enemies of atman, the two dacoits who are plundering the helpless, ignorant, little, false jiva, the illusory “I.”

Man has degraded himself to a great degree by becoming the puppet of passion. Alas! He has become an imitative machine. He has lost his power of discrimination. He has sunk into the most abject form of slavery. What a sad state! What a lamentable plight indeed! If he wishes to regain his lost divine state and Brahmic glory, his whole being must be transformed, his sex desire must be completely transmuted by sublime divine thoughts and regular meditation. Transmutation of the sex desire is a very potent, efficacious and satisfactory way to realize eternal bliss.

### **The world is immersed in sex**

Passion reigns supreme in all parts of the world. The minds of people are filled

with sexual thoughts. The world is immersed in sex. The whole world is under a tremendous sexual intoxication. All are deluded and move in the world with perverted intellects. No thought of God. No talk of God. It is all fashion, restaurants, hotels, dinners, dances, races and cinema. Their life ends in eating, drinking and procreating. That is all.

Men are swayed by lust. They lose their sense of righteousness, and of time and place. They never discriminate between right and wrong. They lose all sense of shame.

Read the history of the crimes—robbery, rapes, kidnapping, assaults, murders—that come up for trial before the courts. Lust is at the root of all this. It may be lust for money or lust for carnal pleasure. Lust ruins life, luster, strength, vitality, memory, wealth, fame, holiness, peace, wisdom and devotion.

Man, with his boasted intellect, has to learn lessons from birds and animals. Even animals have more self-control than men. It is only the so-called man who has degraded himself so much by indulgence. At the heat of sexual excitement, he repeats the same ignoble act again and again. He has not a bit of self-control. He is an absolute slave to passion. He is a puppet in the hands of passion. Like rabbits he procreates and brings forth countless children to swell up the numbers of beggars in the world. Lions, elephants, bulls and other powerful animals have better self-control than men. Lions cohabit only once in a year. After conception, the female animals will never allow the male animals to approach them till the young ones are weaned and they themselves become healthy and strong. Man only violates the laws of nature and consequently suffers from innumerable diseases. He has degenerated to a level far lower than that of animals in this respect.

As a king is no king without a treasury, subjects and an army, as a flower is no flower without fragrance, as a river is no river without water, so also, a man is no man without brahmacharya. Ahara, nidra, bhaya and maithuna—food, sleep, fear and copulation—are common to both animals and men. That which differentiates a man from an animal is dharma, viveka and vichara shakti. Jnana and vichara can be secured only by the preservation of virya. If a man has not got these qualifications, he should really be reckoned as a veritable animal only.

If lust, which is the source of all enjoyments in this world, ceases, then all worldly bondage, which has its substratum in the mind, will cease. Even the most virulent poison is no poison when compared to lust. The former defiles one body only, whereas the latter adulterates many bodies in successive births. You are a slave of passions and desires, emotions and attractions. When are you going to rise up from this miserable state? Those persons, who, in spite of the knowledge of the non-existence of happiness, both in the past and in the present, in the baneful objects of the world, do yet entangle themselves in them with their thoughts clinging to them, deserve the appellation of an ass, if not a worse one. If you do not possess viveka, if you do not try your best for salvation, if you spend your lifetime in eating, drinking and sleeping, you are a horizontal being only, having to learn some lessons from those animals, which possess far more self-restraint.

The sexual degradation that has overtaken mankind today is due directly to the fact that people have assumed that there is a natural “sexual instinct” in human beings. It is not so. The natural instinct is the procreative one. If men and women restrict sexual indulgence to mere procreation, then that itself is observance of brahmacharya. As this is found to be impossible in the vast majority of cases, total abstinence is enjoined on those who seek the higher values of life. As far as the sadhaka of burning mumukshutva is concerned, celibacy is a *sine qua non*, as he cannot afford to waste his vital energy at all.

The gratification of every worldly desire is sinful; the flesh should be the abject slave of the spirit intent upon divine things. Man was created for a life of spiritual communion with God, but he yielded to the seduction of evil demons who availed themselves of the sensuous side of his nature to draw him away from the contemplation of the divine and lead him to the earthly life. Moral goodness, therefore, consists in renouncing all sensuous pleasures, in separating from the world through discrimination and dispassion, in living solely after the spirit, in imitating the perfection and purity of God. Sensuality is inconsistent with wisdom and holiness. The great business of life is to avoid impurity.

### **Spiritual Sadhana is the answer to sex attraction**

Real culture is the establishment of perfect physical and mental brahmacharya. Real culture is the realization of the identity of the individual soul with the Supreme Soul through direct experience. For a passionate worldly-minded man, the terms Self-realization, God, Self, vairagya, renunciation, death and burial ground are very revolting and terrifying, because he is attached to objects. The terms singing, dancing, talks about women and so on are very pleasing.

The attraction for objects will gradually vanish if one begins to think seriously of the unreal nature of the world. People are burnt by the fire of lust. All measures that are calculated to eradicate this dire disease should be initiated and put through. All people should be made fully conversant with the different methods that will help them to root out the dire enemy, lust. If they fail in one method, they should take recourse to another. Lust is a brutal instinct in unregenerated men. One should be ashamed to repeat again and again the sensual acts when one is fully aware that the goal of life is Self-realization through the attainment of purity and the practice of constant meditation. An objector may say that these topics should not be dealt with openly, but should rather be talked about secretly. This is wrong. What is the use of hiding things? Hiding a thing is a sin.

In these days of modern culture and new civilization, in this era of scientific advancement, these lines may not be relished by some people. They may remark that some of the terms are jarring, revolting, offending and indecent and will not suit the people of refined tastes. They are entirely mistaken. These lines will produce a very deep impression in the minds of thirsting aspirants who are longing for liberation. Their minds will be entirely changed. There is no real spiritual culture amongst the people of modern society. Etiquette is mere show. Everywhere

you can see much show, hypocrisy, pretended politeness, meaningless formalities and conventions. Nothing emanates from the core of the heart. People lack sincerity and integrity. The utterances of the Mahavakyas of the sages and the valuable teachings of the scriptures will not produce any impression in the minds of passionate, worldly-minded persons. They will be like seeds thrown in rocky soil. They will be like pearls thrown before swine.

If one clearly understands the serious damage that comes through an impure life and determines to attain the goal of life by leading a pure life, he must keep his mind busily engaged in divine thoughts, concentration, meditation, study and service of humanity.

Lack of spiritual sadhana is the main cause for all sexual attractions. Mere theoretical abstention from sensuality will not bring you good results. You must mercilessly cut off all formalities in social life and lead a pious life freed from the business of bodily existence. Leniency to internal lower tendencies will land you in the region of suffering. Excuse will be of no use in this respect. You must be sincere in your quest for the sublime life of spirituality. Half-heartedness will leave you in your old state of misery.

Wake up, friends, from this mire of illusory samsara now. Passion has wrought great havoc in you as you are drowned in avidya. How many millions of fathers, mothers, wives and sons you have had in previous births! This body is full of impurities. What a shame it is to embrace this filthy body! It is mere foolishness only. Give up moha for this body. Also, give up identification with this body by meditating upon the glory of the shuddha atman. Give up worship of the body. Worshipers of the body are asuras and rakshasas.

### **Brahmacharya—the need of the hour**

My dear brothers and sisters! Remember that you are not this perishable body of flesh and bones. You are the immortal, all pervading, Satchitananda atman. You are the atman. You are living truth. You are Brahman. You are absolute consciousness. You can attain this supreme state only by leading a life of true brahmacharya. The spirit of brahmacharya must pervade your entire life and all your actions.

People talk of brahmacharya, but practical men are rare indeed. A life of continence is really beset with difficulties. But the path becomes smooth for a man of iron determination, patience and perseverance. We want real, practical men in the field, men who are practical brahmacharis, men who can impress people by their ideal lives, noble character and spiritual strength. Mere idle talk is of no use whatsoever. We have had enough of idle talkers in the field and on the platforms. Let some practical men come forward and lead the youngsters by their exemplary, lives and spiritual aura. Let me remind you once more! Example is better than precept.

The future well-being of the country rests entirely on the youth. It is the duty of the sannyasins, saints, teachers, professors and parents to reintroduce the life of celibacy in youngsters. I pray that the educational authorities and the elders will pay

their special attention to this vital subject of brahmacharya for the uplift of the future generation. Training of the youth means nation-building.

The future well-being of India rests entirely on brahmacharya and brahmacharya alone. It is the duty of sannyasins and yogis to train students in brahmacharya and disseminate the knowledge of the atman far and wide. They can do a lot in improving the situation as they are whole-time men. They should come out of their caves and kutirs for lokasangraha.

If our motherland wants to rise high in the scale of nations, her children, both male and female, should study the important subject of brahmacharya in all its bearings, understand its supreme importance and observe the great vrata strictly.

In conclusion, I fervently pray, with folded hands, that you all should sincerely struggle hard to control passion—the enemy of peace and prosperity—by sadhana. A true brahmachari is the real mighty emperor of this world. My silent adorations to all brahmacharins! Glory unto them!

May you be seated firm as Mount Meru in your satchidananda swarupa without any impure, lustful thought! May God bless the aspirants with strength and energy for maintaining brahmacharya! May you, with a pure, stainless mind, unintermittently be in the cognition of your atmic reality! May you, without worldly desires and ambition, rest in That which ever is in the midst of the enjoyer and the enjoyed!

May the divine splendor shine in your face! May the divine flame grow brighter in you all! May the divine power and peace abide in you for ever! Om Shanti! Shanti! Shanti!



# Chapter Two:

## The Working of the Sex Impulse

Man wishes to have children to maintain the race or line. This is the reproductive instinct. The desire to copulate proceeds from this sexual instinct. The strength of the sexual desire depends upon the sexual impulse.

According to the Gita, impulse is *vegām* or force. Lord Krishna says, “He who is able to endure here on earth, before he is liberated from the body, the force born of desire and passion, he is harmonized, he is a happy man.”

Impulse is a mighty force. It exerts influence on the mind. It is a force suddenly communicated to the mind.

Just as petrol or steam moves the engine, the instincts and impulses move this body. The instincts are the prime movers of all human activities. They give a push to the body and move the indriyas to action. The instincts create habits. The instinctive impulses supply the driving power by which all mental activities are kept up. These impulses are mental forces. They operate through the mind and the intellect. They mould the life of a man. The mystery of life lies in them.

The attraction towards women in men is born of *rajas*. That unknown attraction and happiness in their company is the seed of the sex impulse. This attraction, which is like a bubble in the beginning, later on assumes the form of a formidable, uncontrollable wave of strong passion or sexual appetite. Beware. Generate the spiritual wave of devotion through *japa*, *satsanga*, meditation and *vichara* and kill this attraction in the bud.

You must understand the psychological working of the sex impulse. When there are itches on the body, mere scratching of them is a pleasure. The sex impulse is only a nervous itching. The satisfaction of this impulse begets a delusive pleasure, but it has a disastrous effect on the spiritual well-being of the person.

### **The flowery bow of Cupid**

Lust is powerful. It carries a flowery bow equipped with five arrows, namely, *Mohana*, *Stambhana*, *Unmadana*, *Soshana* and *Tapana*—fascination, stupefaction, intoxication, emaciation and burning. One arrow causes fascination in young men when they see a beautiful form. Another arrests their attention. The third intoxicates them. The fourth arrow causes intense attraction towards the form. The fifth arrow inflames and burns their heart. It pierces their cardiac chambers deeply. No one on this earth, nay, in all the three worlds, has the power to resist the potential influence of these arrows. These arrows pierced even the heart of Lord Shiva and many rishis of yore. Cupid directly shoots an arrow through the bewitching eyebrows and piercing glances of a young lady. Moonlit night, scents and perfumes, flowers and garlands, sandal-paste, meat and liquor, theaters and

novels are his mighty weapons to delude the passionate young men. Reason and discrimination take to their heels the moment their hearts are filled with burning passion. They all become absolutely blind. Cupid makes intellectual persons, great orators, ministers and research scholars, doctors and barristers, as pleasure deer or pet dogs in the laps of young ladies. Cupid knows his strength. Cupid reigns supreme everywhere. He penetrates the hearts of all. He knows how to tickle their nerves. Within the twinkling of an eye he destroys reason, discrimination and understanding by simply inflaming the passion of young men.

### **The Samskaras in the subconscious mind**

A sexual act produces a samskara or impression in the subconscious mind or chitta. This samskara raises a vritti or thought-wave in the mind and the vritti again causes a samskara. Enjoyment thickens the vasanas. Through memory and imagination, a revival of the sexual desire comes in.

Remembrance of the image of a woman unsettles the mind. When a tiger has once tasted human blood, it always runs to kill human beings. It becomes a man-eater. Even so, when the mind has once tasted sexual pleasures, it always runs after women.

From the bed of samskaras and vasanas in the mind emanates kalpana or imagination through smriti or memory. Then comes attachment. Along with imagination, emotion and impulse manifest. Emotion and impulse exist side by side. Then comes sexual irritation—craving and burning in the mind and throughout the body. The irritation and burning in the mind percolate into the physical body, just as the water inside a pot percolates into the surface of the pot. If you are very vigilant, you can drive off the bad imagination in the very beginning itself and avert the impending danger. Even if you allow the thief imagination to enter the first gate, keep a careful watch at the second gate when the sexual irritation manifests. You can stop the burning now. You can stop also, easily, the strong sexual impulse from being transmitted to the indriya itself. Draw the sex energy up towards the brain. Divert the mind. Chant 'Om' or any other mantra with concentration. Pray, meditate. If you still find it difficult to control the mind, immediately seek satsanga and do not remain alone. When the strong impulse manifests suddenly and is transmitted to the organ, you forget everything and become blind. You become a prey to lust. Later on you repent.

Even in a blind man who is a celibate who has not seen the face of a woman, the sexual impulse is very strong. Why? This is due to the force of samskaras or impressions of previous births that are embedded in the subconscious mind. Whatever you do, whatever you think, are all lodged or printed or indelibly impressed in the layers of the chitta or subconscious mind. These impressions can be burnt or obliterated only by the dawn of knowledge of the atman or the Supreme Self. When the sexual vasana fills the whole mind and body, the samskaras assume the form of big vrittis or waves and torment the poor blind man.

It is easy to control the conscious mind. But it is very difficult to control the

subconscious mind. You may be a sannyasi. You may be a moral man. Mark how the mind behaves or conducts itself in dreams. You begin to steal in dreams. You commit adultery in dreams. The sex impulses, ambitions and low desires are all ingrained in you and deep-rooted in the subconscious mind. Destroy the subconscious mind and its samskaras through vichara, Brahmabhavana and meditation on 'Om' and its meaning. A man who is established in mental brahmacharya can never have even a single thought of evil in dreams. He can never have a bad dream. There is a lack of vichara or viveka in dream. That is the reason why you get bad dreams, even though you are pure in the jagrat state through the power of viveka and vichara.

An aspirant complains: "As I continue meditation, layer after layer of impurities keep rising from the subconscious mind. Sometimes they are so strong and formidable that I am bewildered as to how to check them. I am not perfectly established in truth and in brahmacharya. The old habits of lust and of speaking lies are still lurking in me. Lust is troubling me vigorously. The very idea of women agitates my mind. My mind is so sensitive that I am not able to hear or think of them. As soon as the thought comes in the mind, my sadhana gets disturbed, and also, the peace of the whole day is spoiled. I advise my mind, coax it, frighten it, but it is of no avail. My mind revolts. I do not know how to control this passion. Irritability, egoism, anger, greed, hatred and attachment are still lurking in me. Lust is my chief enemy and it is a very strong one too. I request you to be kind enough to advise me as to how to destroy it."

When the impurities emerge from the subconscious mind and come to the surface of the conscious mind with formidable force, do not try to resist them. Instead repeat a mantra vigorously, thinking of nothing else. Do not think of your defects or evil qualities much. It is enough if you introspect and find out your defects. Do not try to attack the evil qualities. Then they will show their long faces. Develop positive virtues. Do not worry yourself by often thinking: "I have got so many defects and weaknesses." Cultivate sattwic virtues. Through meditation, and by the development of positive qualities, through the pratipaksha bhavana method, all the negative qualities will die by themselves. This is the right method.

You may become old, your hair may turn gray, but your mind is ever young. The capacity may vanish, but the craving remains even when you have reached advanced senility. Cravings are the real seeds of birth. These craving-seeds give rise to sankalpa and action. The wheel of samsara is kept revolving by these cravings. Nip them in the bud. Then only will you be safe. You will get moksha. Brahmabhavana, Brahmachintana, meditation on 'Om' and devotion will root out these craving-seeds which are laid deep. You will have to dig them out properly in various corners and burn them beyond resurrection. Then only will your efforts bear the fruit of nirvikalpa samadhi.

One student writes to me: "The impure flesh and skin appear to me as very pure and good. I am very lustful. I try to develop mentally the bhava of seeing the Mother in all women. I prostrate before a lady mentally, thinking that she is an image of

Goddess Kali, and yet my mind is extremely lustful. What shall I do now? I desire again and again to have a glimpse of a beautiful lady.” Obviously, vairagya and discrimination have not dawned in his mind even a bit. The old vicious samskaras and vasanas are very powerful.

Even a pure brahmachari will be troubled in the beginning by curiosity. He will be curious to know and feel what sort of happiness sexual enjoyment will give. He thinks sometimes: “Let me have the carnal knowledge of a woman once. Then I will be able to root out this sexual impulse and desire completely. This sexual curiosity is troubling me very much.” Mind wants to delude this brahmachari. Maya havoc through curiosity. Curiosity is transmuted into a strong desire. Enjoyment cannot bring satisfaction of a desire. The wise way is to kill the strong wave of curiosity by vichara or enquiry about the pure sexless atman, by totally eradicating the sexual desire through constant meditation, and by thinking over the glory of brahmacharya and the defects of an impure life.

### **How to gauge your own mental purity**

The sight of a young beautiful girl produces in a passionate young man attraction and agitation in the mind, piercing of the heart and serious intoxication. If these symptoms are absent in a man, then it is a sign to denote that he is established in brahmacharya. The sight of the pairing or mating of birds and animals, or the sight of the bare body of a lady, should not produce the least agitation in the mind.

If a feeling arises in the mind of a brahmachari for the company of a woman during times of ailment, if there is a strong desire to be in her company, if there is a desire to talk, play and joke with her, if there is a desire to look at young beautiful girls, if the look is unholy and unchaste, and if there is a desire in the mind when there is pain in the body for touch by the hands of females, remember that lust is still lurking in his mind. There is deep sexual craving. This should be destroyed. The old thief is still hiding. Such a brahmachari must be very careful. He is still within the danger zone. He has not attained the state of purity. Even in dreams there should not arise in the mind any craving for the touch of a female and the company of a woman. One’s purity can be gauged by one’s experiences in dream. If one is entirely free from any sexual thought in dreams, he has reached the climax of purity. Self-analysis and introspection are indispensable requisites to determine the state of one’s mind.

A jnani will have no wet dreams. He who is established in brahmacharya will not get even a single bad dream. Dream serves as a criterion to judge our mental state or the degree of our mental purity. If you do not get impure dreams, you are growing in purity.

The very idea of sex should vanish from the mind. Sukhadeva had this experience. Sukha did not marry. He left his home and roamed about the world at large, stark naked. The separation was very painful for his father, Vyasa. Vyasa went out in search of his son. While he passed by a pond, the apsaras, who were freely

indulging in play, felt ashamed and put on their clothes hastily. Vyasa said, "Very strange indeed! I am old. I am putting on clothes. But when my son passed this way naked, you kept quiet, you remained unmoved." The Apsaras replied, "O venerable sage, your son knows not man and woman, but you know."

### **Eradication of lust is no easy task**

You will have to search out carefully this dire enemy, lust that lies hidden in the various corners of your heart. Just as the fox hides itself within the bush, so also, this lust hides itself in the substratum and corners of the mind. You can detect its presence only if you are vigilant. Intense self-examination is very necessary. Just as powerful enemies can be conquered only if you attack them from all sides, so also, you can keep the powerful senses under control only if you attack them from all sides, from within and from without, from above and from beneath. The senses are very turbulent, so they must be controlled by various methods such as fasting, restriction in diet, japa, meditation, vichara, self-restraint, thought-control and destruction of vasanas.

Safeguard yourself against the error of foolishly imagining that you have succeeded in getting rid of lust by the mere fact of having lived a single life for a number of years or experiencing a little feeling of serenity or purity. You must not labor under the delusion that you have eradicated lust completely by adjusting the diet a bit, by doing a little japa and meditation, and that you have nothing more to do. Temptation or Mara may overcome you at any moment. Eternal vigilance and rigorous sadhana are very essential. You cannot attain perfect brahmacharya by limited effort. Just as a machine gun is necessary to kill a powerful enemy, so also, constant, vigorous, powerful sadhana is necessary to annihilate this powerful enemy, lust. You must not be puffed up with pride for your little achievement in celibacy. If you are put to the test, you will hopelessly fail. You must be ever conscious of your shortcomings and you must constantly strive to get rid of them. The highest effort is necessary. Then only will you have sanguine success in this direction.

It is easy to tame a wild tiger or a lion or an elephant. It is easy to play with a cobra. It is easy to walk over fire. It is easy to devour fire and drink the waters of the ocean. It is easy to uproot the Himalayas. It is easy to get victory in the battlefield. But it is difficult to eradicate lust. Right from the earlier stages of evolution through the ages, the instinctive urge for reproduction and multiplication has been kept up only by the power of lust. Therefore, despite all efforts at controlling and subduing it, the power tries to manifest itself forcibly and overwhelm the sadhaka or aspirant.

All the same, you need not despair even a bit. Have faith in God, in His Name and His grace. Lust cannot be completely rooted out of the mind except by the grace of the Lord. You are bound to succeed if you have faith in Him. You can destroy lust in the twinkling of an eye. The Lord makes a dumb man speak and a lame man ascend a steep hill. Mere human effort alone will not suffice. The divine grace is needed. God helps those who help themselves. If you do total self-surrender,

Mother Herself does the sadhana.

Regular meditation and japa of a mantra, sattwic diet, satsanga, study of religious books, vichara and seclusion for as much as practical will entirely annihilate lust, however powerful the old samskaras and vasanas may be. The positive always overcomes the negative. You need not be discouraged at any rate. Plunge yourself seriously into meditation, kill this Mara and come out victorious in the struggle. Shine as a brilliant yogi. You are the ever-pure atman. Feel this!

Sexual impulses can, with difficulty, be controlled. A rebellion of the sexual impulses takes place when you attempt to control them. Constant japa and meditation for a long period are necessary to direct the sex energy into the spiritual channel. Complete sublimation of the sexual energy into ojas shakti is necessary. Then only are you perfectly safe. Then only will you be established in samadhi. Extreme patience, constant vigilance, perseverance and rigorous sadhana are necessary to eradicate the sexual impulses and attain perfect purity in thought, word and deed.

Brahmacharya or purity can be attained only through constant striving. It cannot be achieved in a day or a week. Lust is doubtless very powerful. It is your deadly enemy. But your most powerful friend is the Name of the Lord. It will destroy lust from its very root. So, always recite and sing His Name.

Yogic practices, meditation and so on will attenuate or thin out the sexual desire to a very great extent. But, Self-realization alone can completely destroy or burn the sexual desire and the samskaras *in toto*. As the Bhagavad Gita rightly points out, "The objects of the senses turn away from the abstinent man leaving the longing behind, but this longing also turns away after he attains Self-realization."

The sex urge is a creative force. Unless you are inspired by spiritual ideals, it is difficult to keep the sexual instinct in check. Direct the sex energy to the higher spiritual channels. It will be sublimated. It will be transformed into divine energy. Complete eradication of lust, however, needs both personal effort and God's grace.

# Chapter Three: Intensity of the Cravings in Different Persons

Passion is a very strong desire. A mild desire becomes a strong passion by frequent repetition or frequent enjoyment.

In a broad sense, passion means any strong desire. There is passion for service to the country in patriots. There is passion for God-realization in first class aspirants. In some people, there is a strong passion for novel-reading. There is passion for reading religious books. But generally, in common parlance, passion means lust or a strong sexual appetite. This is a physical craving for sexual or carnal gratification. When any sexual act is repeated very often, the desire becomes very keen and strong. The sexual instinct or the reproductive instinct in man involuntarily prompts him to engage in sexual acts for the preservation of his species.

Passion is the instinctive urge for externalization through self-preservation and self-multiplication. It is the diversifying power, which is directly opposed to the force that moves towards the integration of being.

Passion is an effect or product of avidya. It is a negative vikara in the mind. The Atman is ever-pure. The Atman is vimala or nirmala or nirvikara. It is nitya-suddha. Avidya shakti has taken the form of passion for keeping up the lila of the Lord. You will find in the *Chandipath* or *Durga Saptasati*:

*Ya Devi Sarvabhuteshu Kamarupena Samsthita  
Namastasyai Namastasyai Namastasyai Namah*

It means: "I bow to that Devi who has taken the form of passion/desire in all these beings."

Even Brahma, the Creator, does not know the exact seat wherein passion lies. In the Bhagavad Gita, you will find it mentioned that the senses, the mind and the buddhi are the seats of passion. The pranamaya kosha or the vital sheath is another seat. Desire is all-pervading in the body. Every cell, every atom, every molecule, every electron is surcharged with passion. There are undercurrents, cross-currents, inter-currents and submarine currents in the mighty ocean of passion. You must completely annihilate each one of them. You must completely destroy passion in all places.

Passion is a vritti or modification that arises from the mind-lake when the rajoguna predominates. Rajasic food such as meat, fish and eggs, rajasic dress and the rajasic way of living, scents, novel-reading, cinema, talk on sensual things, bad company, liquor, intoxicants of all description, tobacco—all these excite passion.

### **Passion in children, the youth and the aged**

Passion is in a seed state in young boys and girls. It does not give them any trouble. Just as the tree is latent in the seed, so also, passion is in a seed state in the minds of children. When young men and women reach adolescence this passion becomes troublesome. Men and women become slaves to passion. They become helpless.

There is not much difference in sex between a male and a female, a boy and a girl, when they are very young. When they attain puberty, there is a drastic change. Feelings, gestures, body, gait, talk, look, movements, voice, qualities and demeanor change altogether.

The whole mango tree—with all its branches, leaves and fruits—is contained in a subtle form in the seed. It takes time for manifestation. Even so, the vasana of lust lurks in the mind when you are a boy, manifests at eighteen, fills the whole body at twenty-five, works havoc from twenty-five to forty-five and then gradually declines. Various forms of wrong-doing and mischief are committed by human beings between twenty-five and forty-five. This is the most critical period of life.

### **Sexual thought in sages, spiritual aspirants and householders**

In a jnani, the sexual craving is entirely eradicated. In a sadhaka, it remains well controlled. In a householder, when not controlled, it does havoc. It exists in him in its fully expanded state. He cannot resist it. He yields to it helplessly on account of his weak will and lack of firm resolution.

In a jnani or a sage, no sensual thoughts will crop up in the mind. There will not be any difference in feeling when he sees a beautiful young girl, a child or an old lady. He will see the one underlying, eternal, immortal Self in a female and a male. He will not have any difference of feeling when he touches a book, a log of wood, a piece of stone and the body of a female. There is no idea of sex in a jnani. Such must be the condition of mind of a man who is established in brahmacharya.

In an aspirant there may be occasional sexual thoughts, but they must be kept under check. In this way they cannot do any havoc in him.

A passionate householder, however, becomes a prey to sexual thoughts. A passionate man of the world wants the constant company of his wife. The idea of sex is ingrained in him. It is very powerful. He wants everything to be done for him by his wife. Then only he is pleased. This is simply due to passion. After the death of his wife, he never relishes his food, even when it is prepared by expert cooks. Such persons are thoroughly unfit for the spiritual life. When a man feels disgust for the company of a woman and cannot tolerate her company, it is a sign to show the awakening of vairagya in him.

If you keep lemon juice or tamarind juice in a golden cup, it is not spoiled or tainted. If you keep it in a brass or a copper vessel, it gets spoiled and becomes poisonous. Even so, if there are some vishaya vrittis or sensual thoughts in the pure mind of a person who practices constant meditation, they will not pollute the man and induce vikara or passionate excitement. But if there are sensual thoughts in



persons with impure minds, they cause immediate excitement in them when they come across sensual objects.

In the vast majority of persons, the sexual craving is very intense. They have got extreme sexual hankering. In some, the sexual desire occasionally comes, but passes off quickly. There is mere agitation only, of a simple nature in the mind. By the proper method of spiritual sadhana, this also can be completely eradicated.

### **Lust in men and in women**

Though a lady appears to be gentle and soft, yet she becomes rude, rough and distinctly masculine when she becomes angry. The feminine grace vanishes when she comes under the influence of wrath, indignation, fury and resentment. Have you ever seen women fighting in the streets? Women are more jealous than men. They have more moha and passion also. They are eight times more passionate than men. Women have more power of endurance. They are more emotional. Males are more rational.

Though females are more passionate, yet they have more power of restraint than males. After enticing men, they keep quiet. The real culprit is the man alone. He is aggressive. It is he who tastes the “forbidden fruit” first. He is active. He goes out of control and loses his intellect, power of understanding and judgement when he is under the grip of passion and becomes the sporting lap-dog of woman. When once man falls into the trap or net spread out by woman, there is no escape for him.

Woman is passive. She only tempts and deludes man. She inflames and excites the heart of man. She smiles and glances and then keeps quiet. She waits. But man is the aggressor. He is the real culprit.

Man is the worst culprit. He is the real seducer. He is the aggressor. He is the violator. All women would have become spiritual goddesses had it not been for this vilest nature of man. He must be corrected and moulded first. He has not got so much self-restraint as women have. Women are eight times more passionate than men, but possess eight times more strength of control over the sexual impulses or the sexual urge. This is the weakness of man, though he may be physically and intellectually more powerful than a woman.

Women flatter, coax and cajole you. They are experts in the art of blandishment. They have made you a slave by their winning expressions, actions, youthful charm, coquettish glances, gestures and smile. A considerable portion of your life has been wasted pursuing the phantoms of flesh. Women appear charming only for a short time, but turn destructive of health and happiness soon after. Beware of these temptresses who entangle you by their blandishments. Pass your remaining days japa and meditation.

The scorpion has the venom in its tail, the cobra in its fangs, the mosquito in its saliva and the scandal-monger in his tongue. Woman has poisoned arrows in her eyes. She sends the message of passion to the lustful youth and pierces their heart through the poisoned arrows that dart from her piercing glances. But, she cannot do any harm to a viveki who is always on the alert and who sees the Doshas of a

woman and who knows the Sat-Chit-Ananda, pure nature of Atman.

There are tongues and telegraphic instruments in the eyes of young passionate ladies. They send their love shafts and love messages through their smiling glances to passionate young men and thereby allure and bewitch them. Those young men who have no discrimination are excited by these love messages and become a prey to lust. They become pleasure-deer or sporting lap-dogs of ladies, though they possess academic education and hold high position and title. What a shame! Reason, will, intellect vanish altogether. O aspirants! Do not be very familiar with any woman. You should not sacrifice a noble ideal of life for the sake of pleasing a bewitching woman. Think of the composition of the body. Keep the mental image of the dead body of a woman or a skeleton whenever passion troubles you. You will slowly gain strength to subdue the passion. Vairagya will slowly dawn. The cause for attraction towards women is the presence of vasanas or subtle desires in the mind. Wipe them out. There will be no attraction. Those who have renounced women and money have really renounced the world.

# Chapter Four: Sex is in the Imagination

Sex is the distinction between male and female. It is a mental creation. It is a kalpana or imagination. There is no sex in the five elements of which the body is composed. The human body is nothing but a combination of the five elements. How, then, has the sex idea come? The sex idea is illusory. It is a trick of the mind. It is jugglery of Maya. It is a notion. The sex-idea is deep-rooted. Man can never think that he is a female. A female can never think that she is a male.

For a liberated sage, this world is full of Brahman only. For a passionate man, this world is full of woman. He falls in love with a wooden post if it is wrapped in a silken gown or a beautiful cloth with attractive borders and a petticoat. Passion is a terrible curse. When a man is under the influence of passion, excitement and the sex impulse or force destroy his understanding and reason, overwhelm his mind and make him utterly helpless.

A householder who has rightly understood the magnitude of the sufferings of samsara tries to get rid of the samsaric life. Whereas, a bachelor full of passion imagines that he is very miserable on account of the absence of a wife and children and tries to get married. This is Maya. This is a mental trick. Beware.

A passionate bachelor is ever thinking: “When can I live with a young wife?” A dispassionate householder in whom viveka has dawned is ever thinking: “When can I disentangle myself from the clutches of the household and retire to an ashram for contemplation on the Atman?” You must think over the difference.

Thousands of young graduates and young doctors come to me with earthen pots in their hands, attired in orange-colored robes, in quest of a place for deep meditation and practice of spiritual cultivation. And some young research students in science and some Rajakumars [crown princes] go to Punjab and Kashmir in silk suits with stiff collars and ties in search of girls for marriage. Is there pleasure or pain in this world? If there is pleasure, why do the young educated men retire into forests? If there is pain, why do young men run after wealth, women and position? Mysterious is Maya! Mysterious is moha! Try to understand the riddle of life and the riddle of the universe.

## **Beauty is a mental concept**

Maya havoCs through the imagination of the mind. Woman is not beautiful, but the imagination is beautiful. Sugar is not sweet, but the imagination is sweet. Food is not palatable, but the imagination is palatable. Man is not weak, but the imagination is weak. Understand the nature of Maya and mind and become wise. Curb this imagination of the mind by vichara or right thinking and rest in Brahman wherein there is neither imagination nor thought.

Beauty and ugliness are false imaginations of the mind. Mind itself is a false illusory product. Conceptions of the mind also must therefore be false. They are all

like a mirage in the desert. What is beautiful for you is ugly for another. Beauty and ugliness are relative terms. Beauty is only a mental concept. It is only a mental projection. It is only a civilized man who talks much of the symmetry of form, good features, graceful gait, elegance of manners and graceful form. The uncivilized have no idea of all these things. Real beauty is in the Self only. Beauty resides in the mind and not in the objects. Mango is not sweet; the idea of mango is sweet. It is all vritti. It is all mental deception, mental conception, mental creation, mental srishti. Destroy the vritti; beauty vanishes. The husband stretches his own idea of beauty over his ugly wife and finds her very beautiful through passion. Shakespeare has rightly expressed this in his "Mid-summer-Night's Dream": "Cupid is painted blind. It finds Helen's beauty in the brow of Egypt."

The indriyas and the mind delude you at every moment. They are your real enemies. Beauty is a product of mental creation. Beauty is a product of the imagination. An ugly woman appears very beautiful only in the eyes of her husband. Where is the beauty, my dear friends, in the wrinkled skin of an old woman? Where is the beauty when your wife is bedridden? Where is the beauty when your wife gets angry? Where is the beauty in the dead body of a woman? The beauty in the face is a mere reflection. The real undecaying beauty of beauties—the fountain of beauties—can be found in the Atman only. You have ignored the substance and caught hold of a broken piece of glass. What a serious blunder have you committed by your impure thoughts, impure mind, impure buddhi and impure way of living! Have you realized your mistake? Will you open your eyes at least now?

A beautiful wife is very charming. She is very sweet when she is young, when she smiles, when she puts on beautiful dress, when she sings and plays on the piano or the violin, when she dances in the ballroom. But she is horrible to look at when she loses her temper, when she quarrels with her husband for not getting silk saris and gold necklaces, when she suffers from acute abdominal colic or some such disease and when she becomes old.

For a few years nature bestows on woman her gift of special beauty, charm and elegance in order that she may capture the hearts of men. Beauty is skin-deep only. It will soon fade, the hair will become gray and the skin will soon be filled with wrinkles. The tailor, the weaver, the embroiderer, the toilet maker and the goldsmith make us beautiful for a few seconds. Man, in his excitement, infatuation and delusion, forgets this point. This is Maya. Never trust this Maya. Beware. O man: wake up! Find out the beauty of beauties, which is within you, which is your innermost Self. O woman! Sing like Mira and merge in Mira's Girdhar Nagar.

Have you ever paused and considered what constitutes the ladies who excite lust in you? A bundle of bones, flesh, blood, urine, fecal matter, pus, perspiration, phlegm and other dirt! Will you allow such a bundle to become the master of your thoughts? Will you exchange your birthright of eternal peace and happiness for such a fleeting, filthy mess of pottage? Shame on you! Were your will, your reason and your discrimination given to you only for such an inglorious end? Have you not heard and seen that physical beauty is only skin-deep and at the mercy of every

passing accident, illness and year?

### **Misleading descriptions of a woman's beauty**

Poets have exaggerated the beauty of ladies. They are misguided persons who put young men on the wrong path. Descriptions like “damsels with bewitching eyes,” “face like the moon,” “rosy cheeks and honeyed lips” are false and imaginary. Where is the beauty in the dead body, in old women, in sick ladies? Where is the beauty when a lady is infuriated? You are aware of this and yet you cling to their bodies! Are you not confirmed fools! This is due to the force of Maya. How mysterious is the power of Maya and moha! The beauty of a woman is false, artificial and decaying. Real beauty is undecaying and eternal. The Atman is the source of all beauties. His beauty is everlasting and undecaying. It is ornaments, silken clothing with fanciful borders, dressing of the hair with golden hairpins, flowers, application of powder to their faces, lipstick to the lips and unguent to their eyes that lend a temporary decoration and artificial glittering to the women. Deprive them of their face powders, their ornaments and gaudy dress, and ask them to wear a simple white cloth without any border. Where is the beauty now? The beauty of the skin is only a delusion.

Poets describe in their fanciful, passionate moods that honey flows from the lips of a young, beautiful lady. Is this really true? What do you actually see? The stinking pus from the sockets of the teeth that are affected with dreadful pyorrhoea, the nasty and abdominal sputum from the throat, and foul saliva dribbling on the lips at night—do you call all this as honey and nectar? And yet, the passionate, lustful and sex-intoxicated man swallows these filthy excretions when he is under the sway of excitement! Is there anything more revolting than this? Are not these poets culpable, when they have given such a false description, when they have caused great havoc and damage to passionate young men?

Behind the shining skin there is the raw flesh. Behind the smiles of a young lady are hidden frown and anger. Behind the rosy lips lie germs of diseases. Behind the gentleness and kind words are hidden harsh words and abuses. Life is fleeting and uncertain, O passionate man! Realize the beauty of the Atman in the heart. The body is the abode for diseases. The net of affection in this world is strengthened by long indulgence. It has entwined its thick knotted twine around your neck.

Minus skin, minus dress, minus ornaments, woman is nothing. Just imagine for a moment that her skin is removed. You will have to stand by her side with a long stick to drive away crows and vultures. Physical beauty is superficial, illusory and fading. It is skin-deep. Do not be deluded by external appearances. It is the jugglery of Maya. Go to the source, the Atman, the beauty of beauties, the everlasting beauty.

### **Passion blinds the intellect**

Sexual pleasure is an illusion. It is bhranti sukha. It is no real happiness at all. It is mere nerve tickling. All worldly pleasures appear as nectar in the beginning. They

become poison in the end. Reflect well, O Saumya, my beloved son! Do not be led away by impulses and passion. Nobody has been benefited in this world by this Maya. People weep in the end. Ask any grown-up householder whether he finds even an iota of happiness in this world.

The moth flies towards the fire or lamp thinking that it is a flower and gets burnt up. Even so, the passionate man runs towards a false beautiful form thinking that he can get there real happiness, and gets himself burnt up in the fire of lust.

Just as the silkworm entangles itself in its self-woven cocoon, so also, you have entangled yourself in the meshes of your own desires. Tear the meshes by the knife of dispassion and soar high in the realm of eternal peace on the wings of devotion and knowledge.

A passionate man is a truly blind man. Though he may be an intellectual man, he becomes blind when he is under the sway of sexual excitement. His intellect proves to be of no use when he suffers from this kind of blindness. Pitiably is his lot! Satsanga, prayer, japa, enquiry and meditation will eradicate this dire disease and bestow on him the eye of wisdom.

There is no sex in the elements. There is mind in the body which is made up of these elements. There is kalpana in the mind. And that kalpana or desire for lust is sex desire. If you kill this mind, which is a bundle of desires, you kill lust and everything. Kill that kalpana. You will have no lust then. You have killed lust.

The sex idea is a mental creation. The whole Maya or avidya is nothing but the body-idea or the sex idea. The whole spiritual sadhana is calculated to destroy this one idea. The extinction of this one idea alone is moksha!

# Chapter Five: The Disastrous Effects of Sexual Indulgence

The most devitalizing and demoralizing of pleasures is the sex pleasure. Sensual enjoyment is attended with various defects. It is attended with various sorts of sins, pains, weaknesses, attachments, slave mentality, weak will, severe exertion and struggle, craving and mental restlessness. Worldly persons never come to their proper senses although they get severe knocks, kicks and blows from different corners. The strolling street dog never stops from visiting the houses even though it is pelted with stones every time.

Eminent doctors of the West say that various kinds of diseases arise from the loss of semen, particularly in young age. There appear boils on the body, acne or eruptions on the face, blue lines around the eyes, absence of beard, sunken eyes, pale face with anaemia, loss of memory, loss of eye-sight, shortsightedness, discharge of semen along with urine, enlargement of the testes, pain in the testes, debility, drowsiness, laziness, gloominess, palpitation of the heart, dyspnoea or difficulty in breathing, phthisis, pain in the back, loins, head and joints, weak kidneys, passing urine in sleep, fickle-mindedness, lack of thinking power, bad dreams, wet dreams and restlessness of mind.

Mark carefully the evil after-effects that follow the loss of seminal energy! Persons are physically, mentally and morally debilitated by wasting the seminal power on so many occasions for nothing. The body and the mind refuse to work energetically. There is physical and mental lethargy. You experience much exhaustion and weakness. You will have to take recourse to drinking milk, to eating fruits and aphrodisiac confections, to make good the loss of energy. Remember that these things can never, never repair the loss completely. Once lost is lost for ever. You will have to drag on a dreary, cheerless existence. Bodily and mental strength gets diminished day by day.

Those who have lost much of their virya become very irritable. Little things upset their minds. Those who have not observed the vow of celibacy become the slaves of anger, jealousy, laziness and fear. If you have not got your senses under control, you venture to do foolish acts which even children will not dare to do.

He who has wasted the vital energy becomes easily irritable, loses his balance of mind and gets into a state of explosive fury for trifling things. When a man becomes furious, he behaves improperly. He does not know what he is exactly doing as he loses his power of reasoning and discrimination. He will do anything he likes. He will insult even his parents, teacher and respectable persons. It behoves, therefore, that the aspirant who is trying to develop good behavior must preserve the vital energy. Preservation of this divine energy leads to the attainment of strong will-power, good behavior, spiritual exaltation, and shreyas or moksha eventually.

Excessive sexual intercourse drains the energy enormously. Young men do not realize the value of the vital fluid. They waste this dynamic energy by immoderate copulation. Their nerves are tickled much. They become intoxicated. What a serious blunder they commit! It is a crime that demands capital punishment. They are slayers of the Atman. When this energy is once wasted, it can never be recouped by any other means. It is the most powerful energy in the world. One sexual act shatters completely the brain and the nervous system. People foolishly imagine that they can recover the lost energy by taking milk, almonds and Makaradhvaja [an Ayurvedic compound]. This is a mistake. You must try your level best to preserve every drop although you are a married man. Self-realization is the goal.

The energy that is wasted during one sexual intercourse is tantamount to the energy that is spent in physical labor for ten days or the energy that is utilized in mental work for three days. Mark how precious is the vital fluid, semen! Do not waste this energy. Preserve it with great care. You will have wonderful vitality. When virya is not used, it is all transmuted into ojas shakti or spiritual energy and stored up in the brain. Western doctors know little of this salient point. Most of your ailments are due to excessive seminal wastage.

### **Wet dream and voluntary copulation—A vital difference**

A sexual act shatters the nervous system. The whole nervous system is shaken or agitated during the act. There is excessive loss of energy. More energy is wasted during coition. But it is not so when emission occurs during the dreaming state. In a wet dream, it may be the outflow of the prostatic juice only. Even if there is loss of the vital fluid, there is not much draining. The actual essence does not come out during wet dreams. It is only the watery prostatic juice with a little semen that is discharged during nocturnal pollutions. When nocturnal emission takes place, the mind which was working in the inner astral body suddenly enters the physical body vehemently in an agitated condition. That is the reason why emission takes place suddenly.

The night discharge may not stimulate the sexual desire. But a voluntary copulation, in the case of a sincere aspirant is highly detrimental to his spiritual progress. The samskara created by the act will be very deep; and it will intensify or strengthen the force of the previous samskaras that are already imbedded in the subconscious mind and will stimulate the sexual desire. It will be like pouring ghee in the fire that is slowly getting extinguished. The task of obliterating this new samskara will be an uphill work. You should completely give up copulation. This mind will try to delude you in a variety of ways by giving wrong counsel. Be on the alert. Do not hear its voice, but try to hear the voice of the conscience or the voice of the soul or the voice of discrimination.

### **Youth with bloodless faces**

A good lot of energy is wasted during copulation. Bad memory, premature old age, impotence, various sorts of eye diseases and various nervous diseases are



attributable to the heavy loss of this vital fluid. It is greatly shocking indeed to see many of our youth walking with tottering steps, with pale, bloodless faces owing to loss of this vital fluid, instead of jumping hither and thither with agile, nimble steps with vigor and vitality like the squirrel. Some people are so passionate and weak that even the thought or sight or touch of a woman causes discharge of semen. Pitiably is their lot!

What do we see in these days? Boys and girls, men and women, are drowned in the ocean of impure thoughts, lustful desires and little sensual pleasures. It is highly deplorable indeed. It is really shocking to hear the stories of some of these boys. Many college boys have personally come to me and narrated their pitiable lives of gloom and depression brought about by heavy loss of semen resulting from unnatural means. Their power of discrimination has been lost owing to sexual excitement and lustful intoxication. Why do you lose the energy that is gained in many weeks and months for the sake of the little, momentary sensual pleasure?

# Chapter Six: The Value of Semen

My dear brothers! The vital energy, the virya that supports your life, which is the prana of pranas, which shines in your sparkling eyes, which beams in your shining cheeks, is a great treasure for you. Remember this point well. Virya is the quintessence of blood. One drop of semen is manufactured out of forty drops of blood. Mark here how valuable this fluid is!

A tree draws the essence or rasa from the earth. This essence is circulated throughout the tree, its twigs, branches, leaves, flowers and fruits. The shining colors and life in the leaves, flowers and fruits are due to this rasa. Similarly, the virya that is manufactured by the cells of the testes out of blood gives color and vitality to the human body and its different organs.

According to Ayurveda, semen is the last dhatu that is formed out of food. Out of food is manufactured chyle. Out of chyle comes blood. Out of blood comes flesh. Out of flesh comes fat. Out of fat comes bone. Out of bone comes marrow. Out of marrow comes semen. These are the sapta dhatus or the seven dhatus that support this life and body. Mark here how precious is semen! It is the last essence. It is the Essence of essences. The virya comes out of the very marrow that lies concealed inside the bones.

There are three divisions in each dhatu. Semen nourishes the physical body, the heart and the intellect. Only that man who uses the physical body, the heart and the intellect can have perfect brahmacharya. A wrestler who uses his physical body only, but keeps the intellect and the heart undeveloped, cannot expect to have full brahmacharya. He can have brahmacharya of the body only, but not of the mind and the heart. The semen that belongs to the heart and the mind will certainly flow out. If an aspirant does only japa and meditation, if he does not develop the heart, and if he does not practice physical exercise, he will have only mental brahmacharya. The portion of the semen, which goes to nourish the heart and the body, will flow out. But an advanced yogi who dives deep in meditation will have full brahmacharya even if he does not take physical exercise.

Semen is the quintessence of food or blood. One drop of semen is manufactured out of forty drops of blood according to modern medical science. According to Ayurveda, it is elaborated out of eighty drops of blood. The two testes or seeds that are located in the scrotal bag are called secretory glands. The cells of these testes have been endowed with the peculiar property of secreting semen from the blood. Just as bees collect honey in the honeycomb drop by drop, so also, the cells of the testes collect semen drop by drop from the blood. Then this fluid is taken by the two ducts or tubes to the *vesiculae seminales*. Under excitement, it is thrown out by special ducts, called ejaculatory ducts, into the urethra where it is mixed with the prostatic juice.

Semen is found in a subtle state in all the cells of the body. Just as sugar is all-

pervading in the sugar-cane, butter in milk, so also, semen is pervading the whole body. Just as the butter milk is thin after the butter is removed, so also, semen is thinned by its wastage. The more the wastage of semen the more is the weakness. In the yoga shastras it is said:

*Maranam Bindu Patanat,  
Jivanam Bindu Rakshanat.*

Falling of semen brings death; preservation of semen gives life. Semen is the real vitality in men. It is the hidden treasure in man. It imparts Brahmatejas to the face and strength to the intellect.

### **Modern medical opinion**

Eminent European medical men also support the statement of the yogins of India. Dr. Nicole says: "It is a medical and physiological fact that the best blood in the body goes to form the elements of reproduction in both the sexes. In a pure and orderly life, this matter is reabsorbed. It goes back into circulation ready to form the finest brain, nerve and muscular tissues. This vital fluid of man carried back and diffused through his system makes him manly, strong, brave and heroic. If wasted, it leaves him effeminate, weak and physically debilitated and prone to sexual irritation and disordered function, a wretched nervous system, epilepsy, and various other diseases and death. The suspension of the use of the generative organs is attended with a notable increase of bodily and mental and spiritual vigor."

If the spermatic secretion in men is continuous, it must either be expelled or be reabsorbed. As a result of the most patient and persevering scientific investigations, it has been found that whenever the seminal secretions are conserved and thereby reabsorbed into the system, it goes towards enriching the blood and strengthening the brain. Dr. Dio Louis thinks that the conservation of this element is essential to strength of body, vigor of mind and keenness of intellect. Another writer, Dr. E. P. Miller, says: "All waste of spermatic secretions, whether voluntary or involuntary, is a direct waste of the life force. It is almost universally conceded that the choicest element of the blood enters into the composition of the spermatic secretion. If these conclusions are correct, then it follows that a chaste life is essential to man's well-being."

### **Mind, Prana and Virya**

Mind, prana and virya are the three links of one chain. They are the three pillars of the edifice of the jivatman. Destroy one pillar—mind, prana or virya—and the whole building will fall to pieces.

Mind, prana and virya are one. By controlling the mind, you can control prana and semen. By controlling prana you can control the mind and semen. By controlling semen, you can control the mind and prana.

Mind, prana and virya are under the one sambandha or connection or circuit. If

the mind is controlled, prana and virya are controlled automatically. He who suspends or restrains prana restrains also the working of the mind and the movement of the virya. Again, if the virya is controlled, and if it is made to flow upwards into the brain by pure thoughts, the mind and the prana are automatically controlled.

The mind is set in motion or rendered active by two things—the vibration of prana and the vasanās or subtle desires. Where the mind is absorbed, there the prana is restrained; and where the prana is fixed, there the mind also is absorbed. Mind and prana are intimate companions, like a man and his shadow. If the mind and the prana are not restrained, all the organs of sensation and action keep actively engaged in their respective functions.

When a man is excited by passion, the prana is set in motion. Then the whole body obeys the dictate of the mind just as a soldier obeys the command of his commander. The vital air or prana moves the internal sap or semen. The semen is put into motion. It falls downwards, just as the clouds burst into rain water, just as the fruits, flowers and leaves of the trees drop down by the force of the blowing winds.

If the virya is lost, prana gets unsteady. Prana is agitated. The man becomes nervous. Then the mind also cannot work properly. The man becomes fickle-minded. There is mental weakness.

If the prana is rendered steady, the mind also becomes steady. If the virya is steady, the mind also is steady. If the drishti or vision is steady, the mind also becomes steady. Therefore, control the prana, the virya and the drishti.

God is Rasa. Rasa is virya, the vital fluid or semen. You can get eternal bliss by the attainment of rasa or virya alone.

Grasp fully the importance and value of this vital essence of life. Virya is all power. Virya is all money. Virya is God. Virya is God in motion. Virya is dynamic will. Virya is Atmabala. Virya is God's Vibhuti. The Lord says in the Gita: *Paurusham Nrishu*. "I am the seed or virility in men." Virya is the essence of life, thought, intelligence and consciousness. Therefore, preserve this vital fluid very, very carefully, my dear readers!

# Chapter Seven:

## The Meaning of Brahmacharya

Brahmacharya literally means *achara* or conduct that leads to the realization of Brahman or one's own Self. It means the control of semen, the study of the Vedas and contemplation on God. The technical meaning of brahmacharya is self-restraint, particularly mastery of perfect control over the sexual organ or freedom from lust in thought, word and deed. Strict abstinence is not merely from sexual intercourse, but also from auto-erotic manifestations, from homosexual acts and from all perverse sexual practices. It must further involve a permanent abstention from indulgence in erotic imagination and voluptuous reverie. All sorts of sex anomalies and evil habits of various sorts like masturbation and sodomy must be completely eradicated. They bring about a total breakdown of the nervous system and immense misery.

Brahmacharya is purity in thought, word and deed. It is celibacy and continence. Brahmacharya is the vow of celibacy. The term 'celibacy' is from the Latin *caelebs*, meaning unmarried or single, and signifies the state of living unmarried. But brahmacharya is not mere bachelorhood. It includes the control, not only of the sex or reproductive *indriya*, but also of all other *indriyas* in thought, word and deed. This is the definition of brahmacharya in a broad sense of the term. The door to Nirvana or perfection is complete brahmacharya. Complete celibacy is the master-key to open the realms of Elysian bliss. The avenue to the abode of supreme peace begins from brahmacharya or purity.

Brahmacharya is absolute freedom from sexual desires and thoughts. A real Brahmachari will not feel any difference in touching a woman, a piece of paper or a block of wood. Brahmacharya is meant for both men and women. Bhishma, Hanuman, Lakshman, Mira Bai, Sulabha and Gargi were all established in brahmacharya.

Mere control of the animal passion will not constitute brahmacharya. This is incomplete brahmacharya. You must control all the organs—the ears that want to hear lustful stories, the lustful eye that wants to see objects that excite passion, the tongue that wants to taste exciting things and the skin that wants to touch exciting objects.

To look lustfully is adultery of the eyes; to hear anything that excites passion is adultery of the ears; to speak anything that excites passion is adultery of the tongue.

### **The eight breaks in brahmacharya**

You should carefully avoid the eight kinds of enjoyment, namely, *sarshan* or looking at women with passionate resolve, *sparshan* or touching them, *keli* or play,

kirtan or praising the qualities of the other sex, guhya-bhashan or talking in private, sankalpa or determination, adhyavasaya or nearing the other sex with the desire for gratification and kriyanivritti or the actual sexual act. These eight kinds of enjoyment are eight kinds of breaks, so to say, in the current of akhanda brahmacharya practice. You must avoid these eight interruptions with great care, sincere exertion and vigilant circumspection. Only he who is free from all these breaks can be called a true brahmachari. A real brahmachari should ruthlessly avoid all these eight breaks.

A brahmachari should avoid looking at a woman with lustful eyes. He should not have the desire to touch her or go near her with evil intention. He should not play, cut jokes or converse with her. He should not praise a woman's qualities within himself or before his friends. He should not speak to a woman in secrecy. He should not think of women at all. He should not have a carnal desire to have sexual enjoyment. A brahmachari should, without fail, avoid sexual intercourse. If he breaks any of the above rules, he violates the vow of brahmacharya.

Though the first seven kinds of maithuna do not cause the actual loss of semen, yet the semen is separated from the blood and it tries to escape when opportunity arises, either in dreams or in other ways. In the first seven kinds, man enjoys mentally.

Aspirants should not indulge in talk about sex. They should not think about ladies. Bring the image of your ishta devata into your mind if the thought of a woman crops up. Repeat the mantra vigorously.

Lustful look, lustful thinking, wet dreams are all failures or breaks in brahmacharya. Be chaste in your look. Give up drishti dosha or lustful look. A lustful look itself is a break in brahmacharya. There is internal discharge. Virya is separated from the system.

See Mother Kali in all women. Cultivate sublime, divine thoughts. Do japa and meditation regularly. You will be established in brahmacharya.

### **Physical Brahmacharya and mental Brahmacharya**

It is very necessary that you should be pure in mind if you wish to be a brahmachari. Mental brahmacharya is more important. You may succeed in physical brahmacharya, but you must succeed in mental brahmacharya also. That state of mind wherein no single sexual thought enters the mind is termed mental brahmacharya. If thoughts are impure, the sex impulse will be very strong. Brahmacharya depends upon regulating the whole course of life.

When you cannot control the lustful thoughts, at least control the physical body. Physical brahmacharya must be strictly practiced at first. Control the body when the sex impulse troubles you. Mental purity or mental brahmacharya will gradually manifest.

Surely it is better to control the karma indriyas at least than to indulge actually in sensual pleasures. Gradually the thoughts will be purified if you persist in your japa and meditation. Eventually there will be direct control of the mind also.

A sexual act, a sexual contact, revives all bad ideas and gives them a new lease of life. Therefore, the body should be controlled first. Physical brahmacharya must be maintained first. Then only you can achieve mental purity and mental brahmacharya.

You may be able to stop copulation for months and years, but there should not be any sexual craving or attraction for women. Evil thoughts also should not arise when you look at a woman, when you are in the company of women. If you succeed in this direction, then you are established in perfect brahmacharya. You have crossed the danger zone.

Thought is the real action. An evil desire is tantamount to adultery. The desire is more than the act. But, there is a great deal of difference between the actual shooting of a man and thinking to shoot a man, between actual copulation and thinking to have intercourse with a woman. Philosophically speaking, thinking to shoot a man or thinking to have copulation is the real act.

Even if there is a single impure sexual thought in the mind, you can hardly expect to have strict mental brahmacharya. You cannot then be termed as urdhvaretas or one in whom the seminal energy flows upwards towards the brain for being stored up as ojas shakti. There is a tendency for the semen to flow downwards even if there is a single impure thought.

The state of mental brahmacharya must be kept up even amidst temptations and sickness. Then only you are safe. The senses begin to revolt during times of ailment and also when you come in contact with sense objects.

If thoughts of a lustful nature manifest in your mind, it is due to hidden passion. The cunning diplomatic mind seeks silent gratification by looking at a lady and talking to her. Mental maithunam takes place secretly or unconsciously. The force that drags you is hidden passion.

The sex energy has not been sublimated thoroughly. The vital being or pranamaya kosha has not been regenerated and purified perfectly. This is the reason why impure thoughts enter your mind. Do more japa and meditation. Do selfless service in some form for the society. You will soon attain purity.

Learn to cleanse your mind with the water of purity or celibacy, with the soap of divine love. How can you expect to become pure internally by merely washing the body with soap and water? Internal purity is more important than external purity.

Continue the life of brahmacharya. Herein lies your spiritual progress and realization. Do not give a new lease of life to this dire enemy lust by repetition of the sinful act.

Keep the mind fully occupied. Intense musing on the objects of sense does more harm to the inner spiritual life than actual sense-gratification. If the mind is not rendered pure by sadhana, mere mortification of the external senses will not produce the desired effect. Although the external senses are mortified, their internal counterparts, which are still energetic and vigorous, revenge upon the mind and produce intense mental disturbance and wild imagination.

It is the mind that really does all actions. A desire arises in your mind and then

you think. Then you proceed to act. The determination of the mind is put into action. First there is sankalpa or thought and then comes action. Therefore, do not allow the sexual thoughts to enter the mind.

No space is empty at any time. This is the law of nature. If one thing is removed from a place, immediately another comes in to take its place. The same law holds good in the case of the inner mental world also. Therefore, it is necessary to entertain sublime divine thoughts to replace evil thoughts. As you think, so you become. This is the immutable psychological law. The vicious mind is gradually divinized by entertaining divine thoughts.

### **A common complaint**

There is always a complaint amongst men that they do not get good success in brahmacharya despite their earnest efforts and sincere practices. They get unnecessarily alarmed and discouraged. It is a mistake. There is a thermometric registration in the spiritual realm also. It is very subtle. The spiritual thermometer registers or indicates the advancement in mental purity even to the minutest degree. You want a vishuddha buddhi or pure intellect to comprehend the degree of purity. Intense sadhana, burning vairagya and burning mumukshutwa or desire for liberation bring on the highest degree of mental purity quickly.

Even if anyone repeats a mantra for just half an hour, the spiritual thermometer registers at once a minute degree of brahmacharya or purity. You are unable to note it on account of your malina buddhi or impure intellect. Do sadhana regularly for one or two years and then compare your state of mind with that of the previous year. You will surely find a vast change. You will experience or feel more calmness, more purity, more inner moral force or strength. There is no doubt of this. Because the old vicious samskaras are very powerful, it takes some time for mental purification. You need not be discouraged. *Nil desperandum*. Never despair. You have to fight against the samskaras of anadi kala or beginningless time. Therefore, a great deal of exertion is needed.



# Chapter Eight:

## The Glory of Brahmacharya

There cannot be any language without vowels. You cannot draw a picture without a canvas or a wall. You cannot write anything without paper. Even so, you cannot have health and spiritual life without brahmacharya. It is the basis for morality. It is the basis for eternal life. It is a spring flower that exhales immortality from its petals. It is the substratum for a life of peace in the Atman. It is the firm support for Brahmanishtha, which is eagerly longed for by sages, aspirants and yogic students. It is the shield for waging war against the internal asuras—lust, anger and greed. It serves as a gateway to the bliss beyond. It opens the door of moksha. It contributes to perennial joy, to the uninterrupted and undecaying bliss. Brahmacharya is the only key to open the sushumna and awaken Kundalini. It brings glory, fame, virtue and strength of mind. The Lord of Death flees from him. Who can describe the magnanimity, majesty and glory of a true brahmachari!

*Brahmacharyena Tapasa Deva Mrityumupagnata.* The Vedas declare that by brahmacharya and tapasya the devas have conquered death. There is nothing in the three worlds that cannot be attained by a brahmachari. The Rishis of yore knew fully well the value of brahmacharya and that is the reason why they sang in beautiful verses about the glory of brahmacharya.

Just as the oil comes up in a wick and burns with glowing light, so also, the virya or semen flows up by the practice of yoga sadhana and is converted into tejas or ojas. The brahmachari shines with a Brahmic aura in his face. Brahmacharya is the bright light that shines in the house of the human body. It is the blossomed flower of life around which the bees of strength, patience, knowledge, purity and dhriti wander about humming hither and thither. In other words, he who observes brahmacharya will be endowed with the above qualities. The scriptures declare emphatically:

*Ayustejo Balam Veeryam Prajna Sreescha Yashastatha  
Punyamcha Sat-Priyatvamcha Vardhate Brahmacharyaya*

By the practice of brahmacharya, longevity, glory, strength, vigor, knowledge, wealth, undying fame, virtues and devotion to the truth increase.

### **Secret of health and longevity**

There are indeed many ways to gain health and strength, but brahmacharya is the most important of all. Without brahmacharya, all your exercises are nothing. It is the master-key for opening the realms of health and happiness. It is the cornerstone of the edifice of bliss and unalloyed felicity. It is the only specific that keeps

up true manliness.

The preservation of semen is the secret of health and longevity, and of all success in the physical, mental, intellectual and spiritual planes. He who has even a little bit of brahmacharya will tide over a crisis of any disease very easily. If it takes a month for an ordinary man for recovery, this man will be completely all right in a week.

The shrutis declare a full life or age of one hundred years for a man. This you can attain only by the establishment of brahmacharya. There are instances of men who have attained longevity and intellectual powers despite their loose, immoral ways. But they would have been still more powerful and brilliant had they possessed a good character and continence as well.

After Dhanvantari had taught all the details about Ayurveda to his disciples, they enquired about the keynote of this medical science. The Master replied, "I tell you that brahmacharya is truly a precious jewel. It is the one most effective medicine—amrita indeed—which destroys diseases, decay and death. For attaining peace, brightness, memory, knowledge, health and Self-realization, one should observe brahmacharya, which is the highest dharma. Brahmacharya is the highest knowledge; brahmacharya is the greatest strength. Of the nature of brahmacharya is verily this Atman and in brahmacharya it resides. Saluting brahmacharya first, the cases beyond cure, I cure. Aye, brahmacharya can undo all the inauspicious signs."

Practice of brahmacharya gives good health, inner strength, peace of mind and long life. It invigorates the mind and the nerves. It helps to conserve physical and mental energy. It augments memory, will force and brain power. It bestows tremendous strength, vigor and vitality. Strength and fortitude are obtained.

The eye is the window of the mind. If the mind is pure and calm, the eye also is calm and steady. He who is established in brahmacharya will have lustrous eyes, a sweet voice and a beautiful complexion.

### **Celibacy promotes concentration**

By the establishment of continence, vigor is obtained. The yogi gets siddhi or perfection by attaining perfect mental and physical brahmacharya. Brahmacharya helps him in gaining divine knowledge and other siddhis. When there is purity, the rays of the mind are not dissipated. Focussing of the mind becomes easy. Concentration and purity go together. Although a sage speaks a few words only, a deep impression is produced in the minds of the hearers. This is due to his ojas shakti, which is conserved by the preservation of semen and its transmutation.

A true brahmachari in thought, word and deed has wonderful thought-power. He can move the world. If you develop strict celibacy, vichara shakti and dharana shakti will develop. Vichara shakti is the power of enquiry. Dharana shakti is the power of grasping and holding the truth. If a man persistently refuses to yield to his lower nature and remains a strict celibate, the seminal energy is deflected upwards to the brain and is stored up as ojas shakti. Thereby the power of the intellect is intensified to a remarkable degree. The intellect becomes sharp and clear by

continence. Continence increases infinitely the power of retentive memory. The strict celibate has keen and acute memory even in old age.

A man who has the power of brahmacharya can turn out immense mental, physical and intellectual work. He has a magnetic aura around his face. He can influence people by speaking just a few words or even by his very presence. He can control anger and move the whole world. Look at Mahatma Gandhi! He had acquired this power by constant and careful practice of ahimsa, satyam and brahmacharya—non-violence, truth and celibacy. He influenced the world through this power alone. Through brahmacharya and brahmacharya alone can you get physical, mental and spiritual advancement in life.

It is worth repeating that a true brahmachari possesses tremendous energy, a clear brain, gigantic will-power, bold understanding, retentive memory and good vichara shakti. Swami Dayananda stopped the carriage of a Maharaja. He broke a sword with his hands. This was due to his power of brahmacharya. Jesus, Shankara, Jnana Deva and Samarth Ramdas were all brahmacharins.

Have you realized, my dear friends, the importance of brahmacharya? Have you recognized, my dear brothers, the true significance and glory of brahmacharya? How can you expect to be strong and healthy if the energy that is acquired through various means with great difficulty and at great price is wasted daily? It is impossible to be strong and healthy unless males and females, boys and girls, try their level best to keep up brahmacharya or the vow of celibacy.

Even among electrons, there are bachelor electrons and married electrons. Married electrons manifest in pairs. Bachelor electrons exist singly. It is these bachelor electrons only that create magnetic force. The power of brahmacharya is seen in electrons also. Friend, will you learn some lessons from these electrons? Will you practice brahmacharya and develop power and spiritual force? Nature is your best teacher and spiritual guide.

Through brahmacharya get over the miseries of mundane life and attain health, strength, peace of mind, endurance, bravery, material progress, psychic advancement and immortality. One who has a perfect control over the sexual energy attains powers unobtainable by any other means. Therefore, dissipate not your energy in sensual pleasures. Conserve your energy. Do noble deeds and practice meditation. You will soon become a superman. You will commune with God and attain Divinity.

# Chapter Nine:

## Importance of Celibacy in Spiritual Life

Brahmacharya is a divine word. It is the sum and substance of yoga. Through avidya, this is forgotten. The importance of brahmacharya was emphasized by our great Rishis. It is the supreme yoga, which Lord Krishna emphasizes repeatedly in the Bhagavad Gita. In Chapter Six, sloka fourteen, it is very clearly stated that the vow of brahmacharya is necessary for meditation: *Brahmacharivrate Sthitah*. In Chapter Seventeen, sloka fourteen, He says that brahmacharya is one of the requisites for the austerity of the body. Now, we have another statement made in Chapter Eight, sloka eleven, that yogis practice brahmacharya in order to attain the goal spoken of by the knowers of the Vedas. A similar statement is also found in the Kathopanishad.

In the Raja Yoga of Patanjali Maharshi also, yama is the first step. Yama is the practice of ahimsa, satya, asteya, brahmacharya and aparigraha—non-killing, truthfulness, non-stealing, celibacy and non-receiving of gifts. Among these brahmacharya is the most important.

In Jnana Yoga too, dama or self-control is the foundation for the student.

In the Mahabharata you will find in the Shanti Parva: “Many are the branches of dharma, but dama is the basis of them all’.

Brahmacharya is the vital subject for those who want success in material or spiritual life. Without it, a man is absolutely unfit for worldly activities as well as for spiritual practices.

### **Celibacy in the different religious orders**

Down through the ages, the highest stress has been laid on brahmacharya or sexual abstinence in every religion. Throughout folklore runs the idea that second-sight and the vision of the supernatural are especially, if not solely, the privilege of the celibates. Westermack favors the explanation that sexual pollution destroys holiness. A tribe on the Rio Negro enjoined celibacy upon their shamans, because they believed that medicine would prove ineffectual if administered by a married man.

Iambichus states that the gods do not hear him who invokes them if he is impure from sexual connections. In Islam, strict continence is required on the pilgrimage to Mecca. It was required for the Hebrew congregation during the theophany at Sinai and before entering the temple. Ancient India, Egypt and Greece enforced the rule that the worshipper must abstain from intercourse during and before worship. In Christianity, continence was required as a preparation for both baptism and the eucharist.

The highest type of Christian was a celibate. Christian teachers praised celibacy,

and marriage came to be, in their eyes, only a secondary good for those who were unable to serve continence. The bishops of the Greek Church are always celibates, being chosen from the monks.

The monk who lowers himself to touch a woman's person with corrupt thoughts while he clasps her hand or clasps her hair or touches one part or another of her body, brings shame and degradation on the order. The present ordination vow is to abstain from all sexual intercourse as long as life shall last.

The Jains force on their munis the rule to abstain from all sexual relations; not to discuss topics relating to women, not to contemplate the forms of women. Lust is thus condemned: "Of the myriad vices, lust is the worst."

There are other rules subsidiary to this, forbidding all actions of an unchaste kind, especially any act or word which might either lead to a breach of the principal rule or give rise to an impression that it was not being strictly observed.

A bhikshu is not to sleep in any place where a woman is present, or to preach the sacred doctrine in more than five or six words to a woman unless a grown-up man be present, or to exhort the sisters unless specially deputed to do so, or to journey along the same route with a woman. On his round for alms, he is to be properly clad and he is to walk with downcast eyes. He is not to accept a robe from any woman not related to him, except under specified conditions. He is not to sit in a secluded place with a woman, much less to touch or speak to her with impure intent.

The Buddhist Order of Mendicants was governed by the 227 rules of the Patimokha. Of these, the first four were of specific gravity. A breach of any one of the four rules involved expulsion from the order; and they were, therefore, called the Parajika or the rules as to acts involving defeat.

The first rule says: "Whatsoever bhikshu—who has taken upon himself the system of self-training and rule of life, and has not thereafter withdrawn from the training or declared his inability to keep the rule—who shall have carnal knowledge of any living thing, down even to an animal, has fallen into defeat, he is no longer in communion." "Withdrawn from the training" was the technical expression for throwing off the robes, retiring from the order, and returning to the world, a step which any member of the order was at liberty to take at any time.

Numa was said to have instituted the "Order of Vestal Virgins." They remained unmarried for thirty years. Burial alive was the penalty for breaking the vow of chastity. The Virgins were distinguished by extraordinary influence and personal dignity. They were treated with marks of respect usually accorded to royalty; thus on the streets they were preceded by a lictor and the highest magistrates made way for them. They enjoyed sometimes the exceptional privilege of riding in a carriage; at public games, a place of honor was assigned to them. And after death they, like the emperors, were allowed to be buried within the city, because they were above the laws. They enjoyed the royal privilege of mercy, for if they met a criminal on his way to execution, his life was spared.

In the large colony of Tibetans at Darjeeling, several hundreds of the men doing

coolies' work are ex-lamas who fled from Tibet, with their paramours or singly, in order to escape the severe penalties attaching to their breach of celibacy. The delinquent is denounced, and if caught, is subject to corporal chastisement in public, as well as to a heavy fine and expulsion from the order in disgrace.

The Peruvian "Virgins of the Sun"—a type of priestess—were punished with living burial if detected in misconduct.

### **Brahmacharya—the foundation of spiritual life**

Brahmacharya is a *sine qua non* of spiritual life. It is a great desideratum. It is of vital importance. Without perfect brahmacharya, you cannot have substantial spiritual progress.

Abstinence or continence is the corner-stone on which the pedestal of moksha stands. If the corner-stone is not very strong, the superstructure will fall down when there is heavy rain. Even so, if you are not established in brahmacharya, if your mind is agitated by evil thoughts, you will fall down. You cannot reach the summit of the ladder of yoga or the highest nirvikalpa samadhi.

There is no hope for you to have Self-realization or Knowledge of the Self if you are not well established in brahmacharya. Brahmacharya is the master-key to open the realms of eternal bliss. Brahmacharya is the very foundation of yoga. Just as a house that is built on a rotten foundation will surely fall down, so also, you will fall down from your meditation if you have laid no proper foundation, namely, the attainment of perfect brahmacharya. You may meditate for a period of twelve years and yet you will have no success in samadhi if you have not destroyed the subtle lust or the craving-seed that lingers in the innermost recesses of your heart.

Brahmacharya is the basis for the attainment of kaya siddhi—physical perfection. Complete celibacy must be observed. This is of paramount importance. By the practice of yoga the semen becomes transmuted into ojas shakti. The yogi will have a perfect body. There will be charm and grace in his movements. He can live as long as he likes. This is also known as Iccha Mrityu or death at will.

The practice of brahmacharya is the most important qualification for the spiritual aspirant, no matter what his chosen path may be—Karma Yoga, Upasana, Raja Yoga, Hatha Yoga or Vedanta. The discipline of complete abstinence is demanded from all aspirants. Only a true brahmachari can cultivate bhakti. Only a true brahmachari can practice yoga. Only a true brahmachari can acquire jnana. Without brahmacharya, no spiritual progress is possible.

Lust deals a deadly blow to the spiritual calibre of man. It is not possible for you to enter the spiritual path that leads to union with God unless and until you control lust and become established in brahmacharya. As long as lust smells sweet in your nostrils, you cannot entertain sublime, divine thoughts in your mind. That man in whom the sex idea is deep-rooted can never dream of understanding Vedanta and realizing Brahman even within one billion births. Truth cannot dwell where passion lives.

Sexual indulgence is a great obstacle in the spiritual path. It bars spiritual

practices definitely. The sexual urge must be controlled by entertaining sublime thoughts and regular meditation. There must be complete sublimation of the sexual energy. Then only is the aspirant absolutely safe. The total annihilation of the sexual desire is the ultimate spiritual ideal.

Sex attraction, sexual thoughts and sexual urge are the three great obstacles in the path of God-realization. Even if the sexual urge vanishes, the sex attraction remains for a long time and troubles the aspirants. Sex attraction is very, very powerful. Sex attraction binds one to this world. Each cell in the body of a male or a female is surcharged with the sex element. The mind and the senses are filled with sex juice. Man cannot remain without looking at a woman, without talking to her. He derives pleasure in the company of a woman. Woman also cannot remain without looking at a man, without talking to him. She derives pleasure in the company of a man. That is the reason why he or she finds it extremely difficult to annihilate the sex attraction. Sex attraction cannot be destroyed without the grace of the Lord. No human effort can eradicate *in toto* this mighty force of sex attraction.

The organ of sight does great mischief. Destroy the lustful look, the adultery of the eye. Try to see God in all faces. Again and again generate the currents of dispassion, discrimination and enquiry. Eventually you will be established in Brahman or the Eternal. Again and again generate sublime divine thoughts and increase your japa and meditation. The sexual thought will be annihilated.

Of what avail is knowledge of the arts and sciences, of what avail is reputation or titles, of what avail is repetition of the Lord's Name or meditation or enquiry of "Who am I?" if you become a slave of lust? Control this strong urge first by the rigorous tapasya of sense-control. Before you take to advanced meditation, first become at least a strict physical celibate. Then endeavor to have perfection in mental chastity.

Amongst you all, there may be a hidden Shakespeare or a Kalidasa, a hidden Wordsworth or a Valmiki, a potential saint, a St. Xavier, an akhanda brahmachari like Bhishma Pitamaha, a Hanuman or a Lakshman, a Viswamitra or a Vashishtha, a great scientist like Dr. J.C. Bose or Raman, a yogi like Jnana Deva or Gorakhnath, a philosopher like Shankara or Ramanuja, a Bhakta like Tulsidas, Ramdas or Eknath.

Awaken, then, your hidden faculties, potential energies of all description, through brahmacharya and attain God-consciousness quickly and get over the miseries of this mundane life with its concomitant evils of birth, death and sorrow.

Blessed is the brahmachari who has taken the vow of celibacy till the end of life. Twice blessed is that brahmachari who is sincerely struggling to destroy lust and attain perfect purity. Thrice blessed is that brahmachari who has completely rooted out lust and has attained Self-realization. Glory be to such exalted brahmacharins! They are veritable gods on earth. May their blessings be upon you all.

# Chapter Ten: Women and Brahmacharya

An aspirant writes: “I would like to know whether the same theory regarding the formation of virya and loss of the same holds good in the case of women also. Are they actually affected to the same extent as men?” The question is an important and pertinent one. Yes, indulgence in the sexual act is exhausting to the female system and a drain upon the vitality as in man. The nervous strain it imposes on the system is very great indeed.

The female gonads, the ovaries corresponding to the testes in the males, produce, develop and mature precious, vital force like semen. This is the ovum. Though the woman does not actually lose this out of her body, as in the case of semen in man, yet, due to the sexual act, it leaves the ovaries and is taken up in the process of conception to form the embryo. And one knows only too well what a strain and drain on strength child-bearing is to a woman. Repeated depletion of this force and the strain of childbirth makes wrecks of healthy ladies, and works havoc with their strength, beauty and grace as well as their youth and mental power. Eyes lose the luster and sparkle that are indicative of the inner forces.

The intense sensuous excitement of the act shatters the nervous system and causes debility too. Their system being more delicate and high-strung, females are often more affected than men.

Women should preserve their precious vital force. The ovum and the hormones secreted by the ovaries are very essential for the maximum physical and mental well-being of women.

Women also should observe the vow of celibacy. They also can remain as naishtihika brahmacharinis like Mirabai and devote themselves to the service and devotion of God. Or they can do Brahma-vichara like Gargi and Sulabha. They will be styled as Brahma-Vicharinis, enquirers of Brahman, if they adopt this path.

## **Brahmcharinis—ancient and modern**

In olden days, there were brahmacharinis in India. They were Brahmavadinis; they discoursed on Brahman. They did not wish to lead the life of grihasthadharminis devoted to a householder’s duties. They served the Rishis and sages in their hermitages and did Brahma-vichara or enquiry of Brahman. King Janasruti placed his daughter at the service of Rishi Raikva. You will find this in the Chhandogya Upanishad.

Sulabha was a very learned lady. She was born in a royal family. She was a brahmacharini. She was instructed in the religion of emancipation. She observed the practice of asceticism. She was firm in the practices that belonged to the mode of life she led. She was steady in her vows. She never uttered a word without reflecting on its propriety. She was a yogini. She led the life of a sannyasini. She appeared before Janaka in his court and had a great discussion with him on Brahma-



vidya or the Science of the Self.

Gargi was also a brahmacharini. She also was a highly cultured lady. She also had a lengthy discussion with Yajnavalkya on Brahma-vidya. The dialogue between them is found in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.

In Europe also there were many women who were celibate and who dedicated their lives entirely to severe austerity, prayer and meditation. They had their own hermitages. In India, even at the present moment, there are educated women who lead the life of brahmacharinis. They do not wish to marry. This is due to the force of good samskaras of previous births. They give education to the girls in schools. They give free tuition privately to poor girls and train them in sewing and other household works. They study religious books and practice meditation in the morning and in the evening. They conduct satsanga classes and Kirtan among women. They train girls in the practice of Asanas and pranayama. They give discourses on the Gita and the Upanishads. They deliver lectures on religious subjects in English, Sanskrit and Hindi. During holidays and on important occasions, they hold religious conferences for ladies on a grand scale for mass spiritual awakening.

Sometimes they visit nearby villages and distribute medicines freely to the poor. They are equipped with the knowledge of first-aid, homeopathy, allopathy and the bio-chemical system of medicine. They are trained in nursing the sick. There is a highly educated brahmacharini, who is well-versed in Sanskrit, English and Hindi, who is the head of an institution for girls. She maintains a free private school also for poor girls at her own expense. This is a very noble service indeed.

Such girls and women are really a blessing to India. They lead a life of purity and self-sacrifice. They enjoy bliss, prosperity and renown here and will also attain the immortal abode of supreme peace hereafter. India is in need of more brahmacharinis of this description who can dedicate their lives to service, meditation and prayer.

# Chapter Eleven:

## Suppression and Sublimation

In the practice of brahmacharya, what is wanted is elimination of lust, but not suppression. Suppression of the sex urge is not eradication. You can never be free of that which is suppressed. The suppressed sex desire will attack you again and again and will produce wet dreams, irritability and restlessness of mind.

Repression or suppression of the sexual desire will not help you much. If lust is suppressed, it will again manifest with redoubled force when a suitable opportunity arises, when the will becomes weak, when vairagya wanes, when there is slackening in meditation or yogic sadhana, when you become weak owing to an attack of disease.

Do not try to run away from women. Then Maya will chase you terribly. Try to see the Self in all forms. Remember that the Atman is sexless.

Ignorant people adopt foolish methods to kill the indriyas. They fail eventually. Many foolish aspirants amputate the organ of reproduction. They think that lust can be eradicated 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 attempts to be centered in brahmacharya. The state of their mind remains the same, though they become impotent by taking *nux vomica*.

What is wanted is a judicious control of the indriyas. The indriyas should not be allowed to run riot in sensual grooves. They should not be allowed to throw us ruthlessly into the deep pit of worldliness, like the turbulent horse carrying away the rider wherever it likes.

Brahmacharya means control, but not suppression, of the sex desire or sex force. The mind should be rendered pure by meditation, japa and prayer. If the mind is filled with sublime divine thoughts by meditation, japa, prayer and study of holy scriptures, the sex desire will be devitalized or de-energized by the withdrawal of the mind. The mind also will be made subtle.

### **From sex energy to spiritual energy**

The sexual energy must be transmuted into spiritual energy or ojas shakti by the practice of japa, prayer, meditation and study of religious books. You must develop devotion and a burning desire for liberation. You must constantly meditate on the pure, immortal, sexless, bodiless, desireless Atman. Then only will the sexual desire be annihilated.

If the sexual energy is transmuted into ojas or spiritual energy by pure thoughts, it is called sex sublimation in western psychology. Sublimation is not a matter of suppression or repression, but a positive, dynamic, conversion process. It is the

process of controlling the sex energy, conserving it, then diverting it into higher channels, and finally, converting it into spiritual energy or ojas shakti. The material energy is changed into spiritual energy, just as heat is changed into light and electricity. Just as a chemical substance is sublimated or purified by raising the substance through heat into vapor which again is condensed into solid form, so also, the sexual energy is purified and changed into divine energy by spiritual sadhana.

Ojas is spiritual energy that is stored up in the brain. By entertaining sublime, soul-elevating thoughts of the Self or Atman, by meditation, japa and worship, the sexual energy can be transmuted into ojas shakti and stored up in the brain. This stored up energy can then be utilized for divine contemplation and spiritual pursuits.

Anger and muscular energy can also be transmuted into ojas. A man who has a great deal of ojas in his brain can turn out immense mental work. He is very intelligent. He has lustrous eyes and a magnetic aura in his face. He can influence people by speaking a few words. A short speech of his produces a tremendous impression on the minds of the hearers. His speech is thrilling. He has an awe-inspiring personality. Sri Shankara, an akhanda brahmachari, worked wonders through his power of ojas. He travelled throughout India and held controversies and heated debates in different places with learned scholars through his power of ojas. A yogi always directs his attention to the accumulation of this divine energy by unbroken chastity.

In yoga, it is called urdhvaretas. An urdhvareta yogi is one in whom the seminal energy has flown upwards into the brain as ojas shakti. There is then no possibility of the semen going downwards by sexual excitement.

### **The secret of sex sublimation**

According to yogic science, semen exists in a subtle form throughout the whole body. It is found in a subtle state in all the cells of the body. It is withdrawn and elaborated into a gross form in the sexual organ under the influence of the sexual will and sexual excitement. An urdhvareta yogi not only converts the semen into ojas, but checks through his yogic power, through purity in thought, word and deed, the very formation of semen by the secretory cells of the testes or seeds. This is a great secret. Allopaths believe that even in an urdhvareta yogi, the formation of semen goes on incessantly and that the fluid is reabsorbed into the blood. This is a mistake. They do not understand the inner yogic secrets and mysteries. They are in the dark. Their drishti or vision is concerned with the gross things of the universe. The yogi penetrates into the subtle hidden nature of things through yogic chakshu or the inner vision of wisdom. The yogi gets control over the astral nature of semen and thereby prevents the formation of the very fluid itself.

The body of a man who is truly an urdhvaretas has the scent of a lotus. A man who is not a brahmachari, in whom gross semen is formed, may, on the other hand, smell like a buck goat. The semen-energy ascends up to the brain. It is stored up as

ojas shakti or spiritual energy and comes back as amrita or nectar.

The process of sex sublimation is extremely difficult. It demands constant and protracted sadhana and perfect discipline. That yogi who has achieved perfect sublimation has perfect control over lust. Complete sublimation is achieved through ceaseless meditation on the Atman and Self-realization. That yogi or jnani who has attained the highest nirvikalpa samadhi, in whom the seeds of samskaras are fried *in toto*, can claim to be a perfect urdhvaretas or one who has complete sex sublimation. There is no fear of his downfall. He is perfectly safe. He will be absolutely free from impurity. This stage is a very high stage. A microscopic minority only have attained this sublime exalted state. Shankara, Dattatreya, Jnana Deva of Alandi and others reached this stage.

That yogi who has disciplined himself through ceaseless protracted sadhana, continuous meditation, atmic vichara, the practice of sama, dama, yama and niyama, is also safe, although he has not attained the stage of perfect sex sublimation. Women will hold no attraction for him. He has purified and refined his mind. The mind is starved to death. It cannot raise its hood. It cannot hiss.

### **Total sublimation is difficult, yet not impossible**

The process of sex sublimation is very difficult, and yet, it is most necessary for the aspirant in the spiritual path. It is the most important qualification for the sadhaka, be he in the path of Karma Yoga, Upasana, Raja Yoga or Vedanta. It is a fundamental prerequisite for an aspirant. If one has this qualification or merit, all other merits will come and cling to him. All good qualities will come by themselves. You must achieve this at any cost. You will surely attempt this in future births. But why not now?

The total annihilation of the sexual desire is the ultimate spiritual ideal. Complete sublimation alone will make you free. But, perfect sublimation can hardly be achieved within a day or two. It demands continuous struggle with patience and perseverance for some time. If the state of perfect sublimation is attained, there will be purity in thought, word and deed. No sexual thought will enter the mind at any time.

It is through constant vichara and Brahmabhavana that the mind has to be weaned from lustful thoughts and tendencies. You must remove not only the sexual craving and the sexual impulses, but also the sex attraction. Think of the miseries that people get from a married life with its various entanglements and bondage. Make the mind understand by repeated autosuggestion and hammering that sexual pleasure is false, worthless, illusory and full of pain. Place before the mind the advantages, bliss, power and knowledge of a spiritual life. Make it understand that the exalted, eternal life is in the immortal Atman. When it hears constantly these suggestions, it will slowly leave off its old habits. The attraction for sex will slowly die. Then only real sex sublimation will take place. Then only you will become an urdhvareta yogi.

There are two kinds of force in the mind, namely, hostile or antagonistic force

and friendly or favorable force. Passion is a hostile force that drags you down. Pure reason is a favorable force that elevates you and transmutes you into Divinity. Develop, therefore, my child, pure reason to get unalloyed bliss and supreme Brahmic knowledge. Passion will die by itself.

Sex sublimation is within your reach if you wish to attain it. The path is quite clear, straight and easy if you understand it and if you apply yourself with patience, perseverance, determination and strong will, if you practice discipline of the indriyas, right conduct, right thinking, right acting, regular meditation, assertion, auto-suggestion and enquiry of “Who am I?” The Atman is sexless. The Atman is nirvikara. Feel this. Can there be any trace of lust or impurity in the eternal, pure Atman?

Glory to those yogis who have attained urdhvaretas, full sex sublimation, and who are resting in their own swarupa! May we all practice perfect celibacy through the practice of sama, dama, viveka, vichara, vairagya, japa and dhyana and reach the goal of life! May the Indweller of our hearts grant us spiritual strength to control the indriyas and the mind! May we all become full urdhvareta yogis like Shankara and Jnana Dev of yore! May their blessings be upon us all!

# Chapter Twelve:

## To Marry or Not to Marry

### Is celibacy possible?

It is quite possible for a man to practice celibacy while remaining in the world, albeit there are various sorts of temptations and distractions. Many have achieved this in times of yore. There are many even at the present moment also. A well disciplined life, a sattwic and moderate diet, study of religious scriptures, satsanga, japa, dhyana, pranayama, daily introspection and enquiry, self-analysis and self-correction, sadachara, practice of yama and niyama, physical, verbal and mental tapas in accordance with the teachings of the seventeenth chapter of the Gita—all will carry you a long way in the attainment of this end. People have an irregular, unrighteous, immoderate, irreligious, undisciplined life. Hence they suffer, and fail in the achievement of the goal of life. Just as the elephant throws sand on its own head, so also, they themselves bring difficulties and troubles on their own heads on account of their foolishness.

Those who practice brahmacharya generally complain that they get mental fatigue owing to continence. This is only a deception of the mind. You get sometimes a pseudo-hunger, whereas when you actually sit for dinner you have no real good appetite and you do not take any food. So also, there is a false mental fatigue. If you observe brahmacharya, you will have immense mental strength. You will not be able to feel it always. You will manifest it when the occasion arises, in the same way as a wrestler manifests his physical strength in the arena, though he feels as a normal man in ordinary times.

Continence is not harmful. It conserves energy. It gives immense strength and peace. Sexual indulgence leads to moral and spiritual bankruptcy, premature death, and loss of faculties, talents and capacities.

The practice of celibacy is not attended with any danger or any dire disease or undesirable result such as the various sorts of complex which are wrongly attributed to it by the Western psychologists. They have no practical knowledge of the subject on hand. They have got a wrong, ill-founded imagination that the ungratified sex energy assumes in disguise the various forms of complexes such as the touch phobia. The complex is due to some other causes. It is a morbid state of mind due to excessive jealousy, hatred, anger, worry and depression brought about by various causes.

On the contrary, even a little self-restraint or a little practice of continence is an ideal pick-me-up. It gives inner strength and peace of mind. It invigorates the mind and nerves. It helps to conserve physical and mental energy. It augments memory, will-force and brain-power. It bestows tremendous strength, vigor and vitality. It renovates the system or constitution, rebuilds the cells and tissues, energizes

digestion and gives power to face the difficulties in the daily battle of life. The special virtues of endurance and bravery are intimately connected with the cultivation of chastity. A perfect celibate can move the world, can stop the ocean-waves like the Lord Jesus, can blow up mountains, can command nature and the five elements like Jnana Dev. There is nothing in the three worlds that cannot be achieved by him. All siddhis and riddhis roll under his feet.

### **A foolish argument of the Epicureans**

Some ignorant people say: "It is not right to check passion. We must not go against nature. Why has God created young beautiful women? There must be some sense in His creation. We should enjoy them and procreate as much as possible. We should keep up the progeny of the line. If all people become sannyasins and go to forests, what will become of this world? It will come to an end. If we check passion, we will get disease. We must get plenty of children. There is happiness in the house when we have abundant children. The happiness of married life cannot be described in words. It is the be-all and end-all of life. I do not like vairagya, tyaga, sannyasa and nivritti." This is their crude philosophy. They are the direct descendants of Charvaka and Virochana. They are life-members of the Epicurean school of thought. Gluttonism is their goal of life. They have a very large following. They are friends of Satan. Admirable is their philosophy!

When they lose their property, wife and children, when they suffer from an incurable disease, they will say, "O God, free me from this horrible disease. Forgive me my sins. I am a great sinner."

Passion should be checked at all costs. Not a single disease comes by checking passion. On the contrary, you will get immense power, joy and peace. There are also effective methods to control passion. One should reach the Atman, which is beyond nature, by going against nature. Just as a fish swims upstream against the current in a river, so also, you will have to move against the worldly currents of evil forces. Then alone can you have Self-realization. Passion is an evil force; and it should be checked if you want to enjoy undecaying atmic bliss. Sexual pleasure is no pleasure at all. It is a mental delusion. It is attended with dangers, pain, fear, exertion and disgust. If you know yoga or the science of the Atman, you can very easily control the dire malady, which is passion. God wants you to enjoy the bliss of the Atman, which can be had by renouncing all these pleasures of this world. These beautiful women and wealth are the instruments of Maya to delude you and entrap you into her nets. If you wish to remain always as a worldly man with low thoughts, debasing desires, you can by all means do so. You are at perfect liberty. You can marry three hundred and fifty wives and procreate as many children. Nobody can check you. But you will soon find that this world cannot give you the satisfaction you want, because all objects are conditioned in time, space and causation. There are death, disease, old age, cares, worries and anxieties, fear, loss, disappointment failure, abuse, heat, cold, snake-bites, scorpion-stings, earthquakes and accidents. You cannot at all find rest of mind even for a single second. As your mind is filled

with passion and impurity, your understanding is clouded and your intellect is perverted now. You are not able to understand the illusory nature of the universe and the ever-lasting bliss of Atman.

Passion can be effectively checked. There are potent methods. After checking passion, you will enjoy real bliss from within—from the Atman. All men cannot become sannyasins. They have various ties and attachments. They are passionate and cannot, therefore, leave the world. They are pinned to their wives, children and property. Your proposition is wholly wrong. It is *asambhava*. It is impossible. Have you ever heard in the annals of the world's history that this world became vacant as all men became sannyasins? Then, why do you bring in this absurd proposition? This is an ingenious trick of your mind to support your foolish arguments and satanic philosophy, which has passion and sexual gratification as its important tenets. Do not talk like this in the future. This exposes your foolishness and passionate nature. Do not bother yourself about this world. Mind your own business. God is all-powerful. Even if this world is completely evacuated when all people retire to the forests, God will immediately create crores [tens of millions] of people by mere willing, within the twinkling of an eye. This is not your look-out. Find out methods to eradicate your passion.

Marriage cannot be taken as an indispensable factor in everyone's life. Rather, a true aspirant should definitely keep himself far, far away from the fetters of a married life. For him, marriage constitutes a curse.

Every one born in this world need not necessarily marry. Where there is no passion in the heart, where the desire for God is strong, where there is a longing for spiritual pursuits, marriage is not compulsory. Such a man can lead a *naishthika brahmachari's* life.

Parents should not force marriage on their sons. They should not stamp out the spiritual *samskaras* of their children. Many young men in whom there is a spiritual awakening write to me in pitiable words: "Dear Swamiji, my heart throbs for higher spiritual things. I have no interest in worldly matters. The surroundings are not favorable. I am entangled in the meshes of marriage. My parents forced me, much against my will, to marry. I had to please my old parents. They threatened me in various ways. I now weep. What shall I do now?" Young boys, who have no idea of this world and this life, are married when they are just eighteen years of age—and sometimes younger. We see children begetting children. There are child-mothers. A boy of about eighteen has three children. What a horrible state of affairs! Early marriages have wrought early loss of semen. There is physical and mental degeneration. There is no longevity. All are short-lived. Frequent child-bearing destroys the health of women and brings in a host of other ailments. He who has understood the magnitude of human suffering in this world will never dare to bring forth a single child from the womb of a woman.

### **To be a celibate? Or to be a householder?**

It is only for passionate people that the *grihastha ashram* or householder's life is



prescribed, because they cannot control their lust. If one is born with sufficient spiritual samskaras, inborn viveka and vairagya, like Shankara or Sadasiva Brahmendra, he will not enter the grihashtha ashram. He will at once take to naishtika brahmacharya and then embrace sannyasa. The shrutis also endorse this. Says the Jabala Upanishad: "Renounce the world on the very day you get vairagya."

A life of celibacy is a hundred times better than the life of a grihasthi. I believe in celibacy, for it is the thing that unfolds the hidden power in man. Brahmacharya is the straight road to God-realization; marriage is a serpentine route. The former is more preferable than the latter, but man takes to the latter route on account of his lower passions.

If you want to observe strict celibacy, do not marry. Do not allow yourself to be duped by saying, "I will observe strict celibacy after marriage." Afterwards it will offer you its own arguments for giving up this vow of celibacy. Your dharma is to realize God.

You had enough of sense and sex gratification in all your previous bodies of various animals. Animal life is meant for satisfaction of the lower appetites of sex and tongue, but human life is meant for a higher purpose. Why do you, oh man, burn the sandalwood tree for serving the purpose of charcoal? This human life is very precious, envied even by the gods. One life lost means one golden opportunity to become God is lost.

Sensual pleasure is tantalizing. As long as a person does not possess the object of desire, so long there is enchantment. After obtaining possession of the object, he finds that he is entangled in it. The bachelor thinks of his marriage day in and day out, but enjoyment does not, and cannot, bring satisfaction to him. Far from it, it only aggravates and intensifies the desire and makes the mind more restless through passion and craving. He realizes that he is in imprisonment. This is Mayic jugglery. This world is full of temptations.

You cannot get bliss in the objects of the world. It is only materialistic poison. Further, marriage is a lifelong imprisonment. It is the greatest bondage of the earth. The bachelor who was once free is in the yoke and his hands and feet are chained. This is the experience of all married people, invariably as it were. Therefore, do not marry if you can help it. Escape will be difficult after marriage. Realize the glory of a life in the spiritual path and the great difficulties, anxieties, worries and troubles of a married life. Develop intense vairagya. Assert your birthright of God-consciousness. Are you not Brahman Itself in truth?

A wife is a sharp knife to cut the life of the husband. If the gold necklace and Benares silk sarees are not supplied, the wife frowns at the husband. The husband cannot get his food at the proper time. The wife lies down in bed under the false pretext of acute abdominal colic. You can see this spectacle in your own house and daily experience. Indeed I need not tell you much. Therefore, be wedded to peace and have vairagya, the worthy son, and viveka, the magnanimous daughter and eat the delicious divine fruit of atma-jnana, which can make you immortal.

A wife is only a luxury. It is not an absolute necessity. Every householder is

weeping after marriage. He says: “My son is ailing from typhoid. My second daughter is to be married. I have debts to clear. My wife is worrying me to purchase a gold necklace. My eldest son-in-law died recently.”

Do not marry. Do not marry. Do not marry. Escape will be difficult after marriage. Marriage is the greatest bondage. Woman is a source of constant vexation and trouble. And so is Man to a woman! What did Buddha, Pattinattu Swami, Bhartrihari and Gopichand do? Did they not live in peace and comfort without a woman?

Lust is the greatest enemy on earth. It devours a man. A great deal of depression follows the sexual act. You have to exert a lot in earning money to please your wife and satisfy her wants and luxuries. You commit various sorts of sins in acquiring money. You mentally share her pains and sorrows and the pains and miseries of your children as well. You have to worry in a thousand and one ways in running the family. As two minds cannot agree, there will always be quarrels in the house. You have to unnecessarily multiply your wants and responsibilities. Your intellect gets spoiled. On account of heavy loss of the seminal fluid, you will suffer from diseases, depression, weakness and loss of vitality. Consequently, you will have an early death. Therefore, become an akhanda brahmachari or a lifelong celibate. Free yourself from all miseries, worries and troubles.

In the presence of light, you cannot have darkness. In the presence of sensual pleasures, atmic bliss cannot exist. Worldlings want sensual pleasures and atmic bliss at the same time, in one and the same cup. This is an absolute impossibility. They cannot renounce worldly, sensual pleasures. They cannot have real vairagya in their heart of hearts. They will talk a lot. Worldly men imagine that they are happy because they get a few ginger biscuits, some money and a woman. What more is wanted for them, poor creatures? More beggars are brought forth into the world through lust. All worldly pleasures appear as nectar in the beginning, but become virulent poison in the end. When one gets entangled in married life, he can hardly break the different ties of moha. Therefore, give up clinging to this illusory life. Be fearless. Control the indriyas and the mind. You will develop vairagya. You will be perfectly established in brahmacharya.

### **The akhanda Brahmachari**

If you can remain as an akhanda brahmachari, an unbroken celibate, throughout the years, you will certainly realize God. You will have achieved the goal of life. Mark the word “akhanda.”

Seminal energy is a potent shakti. Semen is Brahman Itself. A brahmachari who has practiced unbroken celibacy for many years will have an extremely pure mind, strong and one-pointed.

An akhanda brahmachari, who through the years has not allowed even a drop of semen to come out, will enter into samadhi without any effort. Prana and mind are under his perfect control. Bala brahmacharya is a synonymous term for akhanda brahmacharya. An akhanda brahmachari has strong dharana shakti, smriti shakti

and vichara shakti—power of grasping, retentive memory and power of enquiry. His intellect is pure, and his understanding is extremely clear. Akhanda brahmacharins are very, very rare; but there are some. You also can become an akhanda brahmachari if you attempt in right earnest.

You will have to be very careful of reaction. The indriyas that are put under restraint for some months, or one or two years, become rebellious if you are not always vigilant and careful. They revolt and drag you out when opportunities arise. Some people who observe brahmacharya for one or two years become more passionate and waste the energy considerably in the end. Some become incorrigible moral wrecks also. That brahmachari who has controlled the physical body and the physical indriyas, but who constantly dwells on sexual thoughts, is a confirmed hypocrite. He should never be trusted. He may become a menace at any time.

# Chapter Thirteen:

## The Dangers of Promiscuous Mixing

Do not be too familiar with anybody. Familiarity breeds contempt. Do not multiply friends. Do not court friendship with women. Do not also be very familiar with them. Familiarity with women will eventually end in your destruction. Never, never forget this point. Friends may become your real foes.

Do not mix with members of the opposite sex. Maya works through undercurrents so stealthily that you may not be aware of your actual downfall. The sexual vasana will assume an aggravated form suddenly without a moment's notice. You will commit adultery and then repent. Then your character and fame will vanish. Dishonor is more than death. There is no crime more heinous than this. There is no *rayaschitta* for this. So beware. Be cautious.

Bhagavan Dattatreya has compared woman to a burning pit of fire and man to a pot of ghee. When the latter comes in contact with the former, it perishes. Therefore, abandon her.

If you happen to stay in a dharmashala or public inn, if there is a single woman in your neighboring room, leave the place at once. You do not know what will happen. It is always advisable to leave the danger zone immediately, however strong you may be through the practice of *tapas* and meditation. Do not expose yourself to temptation.

Do not test your spiritual strength and purity when you are a beginner on the spiritual path. Do not rush into evil associations when you are a spiritual neophyte to show that you have the courage to face sin and impurity. It will be a serious mistake. You will be running into a grave danger. You will have a quick downfall. A small fire will be very easily extinguished by a heap of dust.

Even advanced aspirants who have made great progress in yoga should be very careful. They should not freely mix with women. They should not foolishly imagine that they have become great adepts in yoga. A great saint of repute had a downfall. He freely mixed with women and made women-disciples, whom he allowed to massage his legs. As the sex energy was not completely sublimated and turned into *ojas*, as lust was lurking in a subtle form in his mind, he became a victim to passion. He lost his reputation. The sexual desire was only suppressed in him, and when a suitable opportunity came, it again assumed a grave form. He had no strength or will power to resist the temptation.

Another great soul, who was regarded by his disciples as an Avatar, became a *yogabhrashta*. He also freely mixed with ladies and committed a serious lapse. He became a prey to lust. What a sad misfortune! Aspirants climb with great difficulty by the ladder of yoga and they fall down on account of their carelessness and spiritual pride.

### **Havoc played by mental images**

The presence of, or recollection of, a woman usually excites unholy ideas in the minds of recluses who have abandoned this world and devoted themselves to spiritual exercises and thus deprives them of the fruit of their austerity. It is very difficult to understand the presence of subtle lust in the minds of others, particularly in spiritual recluses, though the look, tone, gestures, gait and behavior may give a clue.

Note carefully how Raja Bhartrihari had cried during his sadhana stage: “O my Lord! I left my wife and my kingdom. I live on leaves, fruits and roots. The earth is my sofa. The blue sky is my canopy. The quarters are my clothes. Yet, my passion has not left me.” Such is the power of passion.

Jerome writes to the virgin Eustochium about his struggle for abstinence and the power of lust: “Oh, how many times when in the desert, in that vast solitude which, burnt by the heat of the sun, offers but a horrible dwelling to monks, I imagined I was among the delights of Rome! I was alone. My limbs were covered by a wretched sack and my skin was as black as an Ethiopian’s. Every day I wept and groaned, and if I was unwillingly overcome by sleep, my lean body lay on the bare earth. I say nothing of my food and drink, for in the desert, even invalids have no drink but cold water. Well, I who out of fear of hell had condemned myself to this prison, companion of scorpions and wild beasts, often seemed in imagination among a band of girls. My face was pale with fasting and my mind within my frigid body was burning with desire; the fire of lust would still flame up in a body that already seemed to be dead.” Such is the power of lust.

The mind is the seed of the world. It is the mind that creates this world. There is no world quite apart from the mind. The images of all objects are contained in the mind. The mind plays with these images when it cannot get the objects and does great havoc. If you constantly think of the image of the Lord, the images of objects will die by themselves.

### **The forbidden fruit–God’s test for the spiritual aspirant**

God places some temptations before the aspirant to test his spiritual strength. He gives him also strength to conquer the temptations. The strongest temptation in this world is lust. All the saints passed through temptations. Temptations are profitable. People are instructed and strengthened.

Even Buddha was tested for his mental purity. He had to face temptations of every sort. He had to face Mara. It was only then, and not till then, that he had illumination under the bodhi tree in Gaya. Satan tempted Jesus in a variety of ways. Passion is very powerful. Many aspirants fail in the tests. One has to be very careful. The aspirant will have to develop a very high standard of mental purity. Then alone will he be able to stand the test. God will place the aspirants in very unfavorable surroundings to test them. They will be tempted by young girls. Name and fame bring the householders in close contact with the aspirants. Women begin to

worship them. They become their disciples. Gradually the aspirants get a nasty downfall. Instances are many. Aspirants should hide themselves and pass for quite ordinary people. They should not show their chamatkaras.

Although Rishi Vishwamitra was practicing severe austerities, he was carried away by his turbulent senses when he came across the celestial nymph sent by Indra to disturb his tapas. If Vishwamitra and Parasara who were living on leaves, air and water were victims of lust, what should be the fate of worldly people who are living on rich food? If they can control their passion, the Vindhya mountains will float on the ocean and fire will burn downwards.

The sex instinct is most powerful. The sex urge is formidable. It may conceal itself in underground compartments in the mind and assail you when you are not vigilant. It will attack you with redoubled force. Vishwamitra fell a victim of Menaka. Another great Rishi became a prey to Rambha. Jaimini got excited by a false woman, Masa. A powerful Rishi was excited by the sight of the mating of a fish. A householder aspirant carried away even his guru's wife. Many aspirants are not aware of this secret urge, a treacherous enemy. They think that they are quite safe and pure. When they are put to test, they become hopeless victims. Always remain alone, meditate and slay this urge.

Money and woman shine more brightly than God for an ignorant, passionate man. Maya is powerful. Adam fell on account of one loose moment. Eve was tempted on account of one desire. The forbidden fruit will ripen before the human eyes in no time. A post will look like the illustrious deva and make you bow in utter submission before it. Beware of Maya and its meshes. The chains of gold can be cut asunder, but not the silken meshes of Maya. A single unguarded moment is sufficient to capsize the whole casket of pearls down into the dark abyss of passion and lust.

The moss that is momentarily displaced in a tank resumes its original position in the twinkling of an eye. Similarly, Maya envelops even the wise if they are careless even for a minute. Therefore sleepless vigilance is necessary in the spiritual path. The proverb goes: "There is many a slip between the cup and the lip." Before you begin to eat the fruit of wisdom, the monkey Maya will snatch it away from your hand. Even if you swallow it, it may get stuck to your throat. Therefore you will have to be ever vigilant and careful till you attain Bhuma or the highest realization. You should not stop your sadhana falsely thinking that you have reached the goal.

He who lives in seclusion is more exposed to temptations and danger. He will have to be very careful and vigilant. The mind will be tempted to do anything as there is nobody to witness its evil action. All suppressed evil vrittis will be waiting for an opportunity to attack him with redoubled force. He is just like a man who is put in a big bag with a tiger, a serpent and a bear. The enemies anger, lust and greed will take you unawares. When you walk alone in the spiritual path, they will attack you like the thieves who attack a lonely passenger in the dense forest. Therefore, be always in the company of the wise. Do not go astray.

# Chapter Fourteen:

## The Role of Diet in Sex Control

Diet plays a prominent part in maintaining brahmacharya. Purity of food brings in purity of mind. That power which connects the body and the mind is present in the food that we take. Various kinds of food have varying effects on the mind. There are certain kinds of food that make the mind and the body very strong and steady. So it is absolutely essential that we should take pure and sattwic food. Food has a very close connection with brahmacharya. If proper attention is given to the purity of the food that we take, brahmacharya becomes quite easy.

The influence of foodstuffs on the brain cells, emotion and passion is remarkable. There are different compartments in the brain and each food produces its own effect on each compartment and on the general system. Meat, fish and eggs stimulate passion. Mark how elephants and cows that live on grass are quiet and peaceful and how tigers and other carnivorous animals that live on meat are turbulent and ferocious. Instinct or the voice from within will guide you in the selection of articles of diet that are conducive to the keeping up of brahmacharya. You can also consult some elderly and experienced sadhakas.

### **Sattwic food**

Grains, vegetables, legumes, fruits and nuts are all sattwic articles of food and very useful for spiritual aspirants. They are ideal food for yogins and brahmacharins, sattwic articles for keeping up brahmacharya.

### **Mitahara or moderation in diet**

Mitahara is moderation in food. Brahmacharins should always observe this. They should be very careful about their night diet. They should never overload the stomach at night. Overloading is the direct cause for nocturnal emissions.

A glutton can never dream of becoming a brahmachari. Control of tongue is a *sine qua non* if you want to control lust, if you want to observe the vow of brahmacharya. The tongue must be controlled first. Then it will be easy to control the passion. There is intimate connection between the tongue and the organ of generation. Tongue is an organ of knowledge. It is born of the sattwic portion of the water tanmatra. The organ of generation is an organ of action. It is born of the rajasic portion of the water tanmatra. They are sister organs as the source is the same. If the tongue is stimulated with rajasic food, at once the reproductive organ also gets excited. There should be selection and restriction in diet. The food of a brahmachari must be simple, non-irritating and non-stimulating. Moderation in food is very necessary. Stuffing the stomach is highly deleterious. Fruits are highly beneficial. You should take food only when you are really hungry. The stomach will

deceive you sometimes. You may have false hunger. When you sit for taking meals, you will have no appetite and no relish. Dietetic restrictions and fasting are very useful auxiliaries in controlling the camel mind and in the attainment of brahmacharya. You should not ignore them or make light of them on any account.

### **Fasting—a purificatory exercise**

Fasting controls passion. Fasting destroys sexual excitement. It calms the emotions. It controls the indriyas also. Passionate young men and ladies should take recourse to occasional fasting. It will prove highly beneficial. Fasting is a great tapas. It purifies the mind. It destroys a great multitude of sins. Shastras prescribe fasting for the purification of the mind. Fasting controls particularly the tongue, which is your deadly enemy. Fasting overhauls the respiratory, circulatory, digestive and urinary systems. It destroys all the impurities of the body and all sorts of poisons. It eliminates uric acid deposits. Just as impure gold is rendered pure by melting it in the crucible again and again, so also, the impure mind is rendered purer and purer by fasting again and again. Young, robust brahmacharins should observe fasting whenever passion troubles them. You will have very good meditation during fasting, as the mind is calm. The chief object in fasting is to practice dhyana diligently during that period as all the indriyas are calm. You will have to withdraw all the indriyas and fix the mind on God. Pray to God for guiding you and throwing a flood of light on the path. Say with bhav: “O God! Guide me, guide me. Protect me protect me. I am Thine, my Lord!” You will gain purity, light, strength and knowledge. Fasting is one of the ten canons of yoga.

Avoid excessive fasting. It will produce weakness. Use your common sense. Those who are not able to observe a full fast can fast for nine or twelve hours and only take liquids at night.

During fasting, the internal digestive organs such as the stomach, the liver and the pancreas take a rest. Epicureans, gluttons and those who are tireless eaters do not allow rest for these organs even for a few minutes. Hence, these organs get diseased soon. Diabetes, albuminuria, dyspepsia and hepatitis are all due to overeating. After all, man needs very little on this earth. Ninety per cent of the people in this world take more food than is absolutely necessary for the body. Overeating has become their habit. All diseases take their origin in overeating. An occasional complete fast is a great desideratum for all to keep up good health, relieve the internal organs and maintain brahmacharya. Diseases that are pronounced incurable by allopaths and homoeopaths are cured by fasting. Fasting develops will-power. It increases the power of endurance. Manu, the Hindu law-giver, prescribes in his code the remedy of fasting for removal of the five capital sins also.

It is better to drink a large quantity of water, either tepid or cold, according to temperament and inclination, during fasting. It will flush out the kidneys and remove the poison and all sorts of impurities in the body. In Hatha Yoga it is termed as Gata-Shuddhi or purification of the flesh-pot, the physical body. You can add half



a teaspoonful of soda bicarbonate to the water. Those who fast for two or three days should not break their fast with any solid food. They should take some kind of juice. They should sip the juice slowly.

Fast for a day to start with. Then slowly increase the number of days according to your strength and capacity. In the beginning you may feel a slight weakness. The first day may be very tiring. You will feel real Ananda, bliss, on the second or the third day. The body will be very, very light. You can turn out more mental work during fasting. Those who are in the habit of fasting will rejoice. On the first day, the mind will tempt you in a variety of ways to eat something or the other. Stand firm. Be bold. Curb the mind at once when it hisses or raises its hood. Do more japa and meditation during fasting. Fasting is more a spiritual kriya than a physical kriya from the viewpoint of health. You will have to utilize the fasting days for higher spiritual purposes and in the contemplation of God. Always entertain thoughts of God. Dive deep into the problems of life such as the why and the wherefore of the universe. Enquire: "Who am I? What is this Atman or Brahman? What are the ways and means to attain Knowledge of God? How to approach Him?" Then realize your Nijananda state and rest in purity for ever and ever.

# Chapter Fifteen: Nocturnal Emissions

Many young men are troubled by wet dreams or nocturnal emissions. Even if a few of the hints in the following pages are observed, an aspirant will develop the correct attitude to life and will lead a disciplined spiritual life and ultimately attain supreme bliss.

If there is occasional discharge, you need not be alarmed a bit. This may be due to heat in the body, or the pressure of loaded bowels or bladder on the seminal bags. This is not a pathological condition. You should not be afraid of this. You should not mind if the discharge of semen is very occasional. You need not worry about it. This is a slight flushing of the apparatus or a periodical cleansing through a slight overflow from the reservoir in which the semen is stored up. This act may not be attended with evil thoughts. The person may not be aware of the event during the night. Occasional discharges are of no consequence, but frequent nocturnal pollutions cause depression of spirits, debility, dyspepsia, low spirits, loss of memory, severe pain in the back, headache, burning of the eyes, drowsiness and burning sensation at urination or during the flow of semen. The semen becomes very thin.

## **Causes and consequences**

Such emissions may be due to various causes like constipation, a loaded stomach, irritation-producing or wind-producing food, impure thoughts and long self-abuse done in ignorance.

Seminal weakness, nocturnal emissions, lascivious dreams and all other effects of an immoral life will surely lead one to a miserable state of living if not checked immediately. This is accomplished through the practice of yoga. *Nasti Yogat Param Balam*. There is no strength higher than that of yoga. The different methods given in this book will enable you to get success if practiced regularly. Lead a simple, natural life. You will become all right soon. Understand the laws of nature, the principles of hygiene and health. Do not trespass against the laws of health.

## **A warning against evil sex habits and outbursts of anger**

Avoid all kinds of self-abuse. They drain away your vital energy and leave you like a dead man or like the sugar-cane from which the juice has been extracted. Virya is indeed a priceless possession. Do not waste it for the sake of a momentary excitement and sensation.

Give up the evil habit at once. You will be entirely ruined if you continue the practice. Open your eyes. Wake up now. Become wise. Shun evil company. Do not cut jokes with women. Practice chaste look. Up to this time you were blind and ignorant. You were in the dark. You had no idea of the disastrous effects of this evil practice. You will lose your eyesight. You will have dimness of vision. You will have

shattered nerves.

Do not look at the reproductive indriya. Do not also touch the generative organ with your hands now and then. This will aggravate your Kama vasana. When it gets erection, repeat 'Om' mentally and attentively. [See *Om Yoga Meditation*—editor.] Think of purity. The cloud of impurity will pass off soon.

Sexual excesses and outbursts of anger and hatred should be given up. If the mind is kept cool and calm at all times, you will have wonderful health, strength and virility. Energy is depleted by fits of anger. The cells and tissues are filled with morbid poisonous materials when one loses his temper and entertains deep hatred. Various sorts of physical ailments crop up. The blood becomes hot and thin, and consequently, night pollution results. Various sorts of nervous diseases are attributable to excessive loss of the seminal energy and frequent fits of explosive anger or wrath.

### **Get up before 4 a.m.**

Night pollution generally occurs in the fourth quarter of the night. Those who are in the habit of getting up from bed between 3 and 4 a.m. and doing japa and dhyana avoid this. Make it a point to get up at least at 4 a.m. regularly.

It is helpful to always wear a Langoti or Kaupin or loin cloth rather than the Western type of underwear. This will help you in keeping brahmacharya.

### **Japa and meditation**

Practice japa and meditation in the morning, as soon as you get up, for an hour or two or even three. Also, meditate for a while before sleeping. This is a great purifier. This will strengthen the mind and the nerves. This is the best remedy.

### **Some helpful suggestions**

Purify the mind by cultivating devotion to God. Do japa and meditation. Study spiritual books. Pray to God. Observe brahmacharya. Do not mix unnecessarily with women. See only the Divine Mother in them. Develop Atma-bhava in all.

Avoid bad company and evil conversation. Overcome laziness and always keep the body and mind engaged in some useful work. Keeping the mind constantly engaged is one of the great secrets of brahmacharya. Lead a disciplined, active life. When bad thoughts appear in the mind, repeat the Name of God and pray to Him. Ultimately, the Lord's divine grace and helping hand is the sure antidote for all diseases. Rely on God. Be devoted to purity and piety. Cherish sublime thoughts. Read sacred literature. Naught shall assail you.

Meditate on the advantages of celibacy. Think of the lives of akhanda brahmacharins. Think of the evils of a sensual life: loss of health, shame, disease and death. Cultivate discrimination. You are the child of the Lord of the universe. Bliss is within you. There is not an iota of pleasure in sense objects. Dissociate yourself from the body; identify yourself with the Lord. If your mind is pure and healthy, your body too will be pure and healthy. Therefore, forget the past and take

to a new, better life of virtue and spirituality, love of God and aspiration for the higher divine life. Learn to find taste in divine life. Do more sadhana with greater intensity. You will be a completely changed and blessed person.

# Chapter Sixteen: Some Powerful Aids to the Practice of Celibacy

You cannot have perfect celibacy unless you follow the auxiliaries. You have to take particular care about your diet and the company that you keep. Anything that brings impure thoughts into the mind is bad company. Oh aspirants! Fly away from the company of worldly-minded persons. Get away from the bustle of cities and tumultuousness of the world. Those who talk of worldly affairs will quickly pollute you. Your mind may waver and begin to wander. You will have a downfall.

Do not make friendship with undesirable people. What you need is a complete change of your vision, your attitude towards the other sex. Behold the Divine Mother in every woman and consider every woman as your own mother.

## **Control of the palate**

First, dietary control. There is an intimate connection between self-control and control of the palate or tongue. He who has controlled the tongue has already controlled all the other organs.

Do not overload your stomach at night. The night meals should be very light.

## **Avoid bad company**

Obscene pictures, vulgar words, and novels which deal with sex excite passion and produce ignoble, mean, undesirable sentiments in the heart. Whereas, the sight of a good picture of Lord Krishna or Lord Rama or Lord Jesus and hearing of the sublime songs in praise of God induce noble sentiments and sincere devotion in the heart, produce a divine thrill and tears of joy and love, and elevate the mind. Do you see clearly the difference now?

Remember, friend, that there is nothing so utterly ruinous to the soul as evil company. Aspirants should shun ruthlessly all sorts of evil company. They should not listen to conversation concerning women and sensual subjects, because the mind gets easily excited. It will begin to imitate what it hears. Desires will crop up. Attachment will also come in.

Do not witness vulgar sensuous scenes wherever it may be. Do not indulge in seeing naked pictures. All these tend to increase passion and deplete virya. You should strictly avoid these.

Those who are in the habit of reading novels that deal with passion and love cannot remain even for a single second without novel-reading. They always want their nerves to be tickled with some sensational feelings. Reading such novels fills the mind with base, lustful thoughts and excites passion. It is a great enemy of peace. They taint the mind. Do not read those magazines which excite your lower instincts.

Immoral songs produce a very bad, deep impression in the mind. Aspirants should run away from places where such songs are sung.

Strive your best to divert your mind and eyes from external objects that prompt sexual desires. Give up the sort of reading, conversation, imagination and associations that are likely to stimulate the sexual desire. Do not converse with those who are eager to convey irritating news and disturb your mental poise. Live with spiritual advanced men and stop reading all books except those that are directly spiritual.

When thoughts of lust arise in the mind, do not wrestle with them. The best method is to ignore them. If you are not successful in doing so, be in the company of someone who is superior to you spiritually, who is more advanced than you spiritually. If you go into seclusion, the mind will chase you and drown you in sensual thoughts. You will lose your balance. Be careful. The sensual thoughts will pass away with a little vigilance.

### **Watch the thoughts**

An evil thought enters the mind and there comes an erection of the indriya. Is this not a marvel? Because this occurs very often, it does not appear to you as a miracle or a marvel. You have ignored this vital point on account of your ignorance.

Mind is a great electrical battery. It is a large dynamo indeed. It is a powerhouse. The nerves are insulated wires to transmit the electric currents, nerve impulses, to various organs, tissues and the extremities, hands, legs and feet.

There occurs a vibration of thought in the mind owing to the vibration of psychic prana. This force of thought is transmitted with a tremendous lightning speed along the nerves to the organs. The physical body is a fleshy mould prepared by the mind in accordance with the samskaras and vasanas for its own experience and enjoyment. The mind sways the organs of an undisciplined passionate man who has boisterous rebellious indriyas. But it becomes an obedient faithful servant of a trained, developed yogi.

An ever-vigilant brahmachari should always watch his thoughts very carefully. He should never allow even a single bad thought to enter the gate of the mental factory. If his mind is ever fixed on his Dhyeya or Lakshya or object of meditation, there is no room for the entry of an evil thought. Even if an evil thought has entered the trapdoor of the mind, he should not allow the mind to assume a mental state with this idea. If he falls a victim, the thought-current will be transmitted to the physical body. Burning of the indriyas and the physical nervous system will follow. This is a serious condition.

The bad thought should be nipped in the bud by supplanting them with counter, divine thoughts. It should not be allowed to penetrate the physical body. If your will is strong, the evil thought can be driven out at once. Vigorous prayer, vichara, atmic contemplation, saguna meditation and satsanga can nip the evil thoughts in the bud at the threshold of the mental factory. The combat will be keen in the beginning. When you become purer and purer, when your will-power develops, when you

develop more sattwa or purity and when you have a habitual meditative mood, you will be established in physical and mental brahmacharya. Understand the power of thought and utilize it profitably. Understand the ways of the mind. Learn how to use the pure will. Become a vigilant, dexterous watchman of your thoughts. Curb them before they raise their heads out of the mind through skill and wisdom.

It is the mind that really does all actions. A desire arises in your mind and then you think. Then you proceed to act. The determination of the mind is put into action. First there is sankalpa or thought and then comes action. Therefore, do not allow the sexual thoughts to enter the mind.

That which is thought of is spoken by the tongue. That which the tongue speaks of, the organs of action do. That is the reason why it is said in the Vedas: "Let my mind think of auspicious things." Entertain sublime divine thoughts. The old evil sexual thought will gradually vanish, just as the old nail in a plank goes away by inserting over it a new nail.

### **Seek Satsanga or good company**

The glory of satsanga or association with the wise saints, yogins, sannnyasins and mahatmas is indescribable. The glory and power of satsanga is described in various ways in the Bhagavata, the Ramayana and other scriptures. Even a moment's company with wise people is quite sufficient to overhaul the old vicious samskaras of worldly-minded people. The magnetic aura, the spiritual vibrations and the powerful thought-currents of developed adepts produce a tremendous influence on the minds of worldlings. The personal contact of mahatmas is a blessing in reality for worldly persons. Service of saints purifies the minds of passionate men rapidly. Satsanga elevates the mind to magnanimous heights. Just as a single matchstick burns huge bundles of cotton in a few seconds, so also, the company of saints burns all ignorance, all thoughts and samskaras of passion and evil actions within a short time. This is the reason why Shankara and others have spoken so highly of satsanga in all their books.

If you cannot get good satsanga in your own place, you can visit places of pilgrimage like Rishikesh, Benares, Nasik, Prayag and Haridwar. Study of books written by realized persons will also be tantamount to satsanga. The only potent specific for inducing burning vairagya and desire for liberation is satsanga.

### **Cultivate Viveka and Vairagya**

One should try to get viveka or discrimination between the real Self and the unreal impure body. The aspirant should point out to the mind the defects of a sexual life, namely, loss of energy, enervation of the senses, disease, birth and death, attachment and various sorts of miseries. These ideas should be hammered into the mind repeatedly. The aspirant should always think of the ever-pure immortal Atman and the glory of the spiritual life, namely, the attainment of immortality, eternal bliss and supreme peace. Gradually the mind will be weaned from looking at a woman, however beautiful she might be. The mind will shudder to look at a woman

with an evil thought. Ladies also should undergo the above practices to get themselves established in purity.

A viveki does not note any difference between a male and a female. The same tattvas—passion, anger, greed and moha—that are present in a man are found in the female also. It is only a lustful man who is filled with burning passion that finds imaginary differences. The differences are all mental creations or kalpita bheda.

Nothing can tempt you in this world if you develop vairagya, if you subdue your indriyas, and if you shun the unreal, impermanent sensual enjoyments and pleasures of this fleeting world as dung, as poison. You will have no attraction for women and other earthly objects. Lust will be unable to take hold of you. You will have eternal peace and infinite bliss.

Constantly remember: “Through the grace of God, I am becoming purer and purer, every day. Pleasures come but not to stay. Mortal flesh is only clay. Everything will pass away. Brahmacharya is the only way.” Develop viveka and vairagya.

Aspirants should study Bhartrihari’s *Vairagya Satakam* and other works on vairagya. [Including Sivananda’s *How to Get Vairagya*—editor.] This will induce vairagya in the mind. Remembrance of death and the pains of samsara also will help you to a considerable extent. It will not be out of place here to draw the reader’s attention to some Buddhist monks who always keep a human skull with them. This is to cause vairagya in them 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 philosophize thus: “O skull! Some time back you tempted me with your shiny skin and rosy cheeks. Now, where are your charms? Where are those honeyed lips and lotus-like eyes now?” Thus he developed intense vairagya. If you analyze 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 or the body of a female. Why not try this method?

### **A note of clarification**

Brahmacharya should be practiced by both men and women. Women also can keep a mental picture of the component parts of the body of a male in order to create in themselves disgust for the physical body of a male and to develop vairagya.

Mere condemning of lust is not sufficient to wean the mind from sexual craving. Remember this point well. Lust is potent. Lust is virulent. Lust is formidable. Lust is uncontrollable by persons of weak will. One should be aware also of the ways of Maya, which entangle him in her net or snare. A woman should be aware of the charms of a man which entice her and make her a prey to man and man should be aware of the charms of a woman which entice him and make him a prey to woman. A woman is a temptress for man and a man is a tempter for woman. Man also has much charm in him to entrap a woman. Man appears more beautiful in the eyes of a woman than a woman in the eyes of a man. Man also tries to entrap a woman by his



dress, ties and bows, by his smile, outward show of affection, glances, gestures, flowery words, various ways of dressing his hair and other tricks.

Lust is a potent force, very difficult to be got rid of. That is the reason why the shastras and saints censure and condemn women in order to create dispassion and discrimination in men and wean them from lustful tendencies and aggressive attacks. Sri Shankara, Sri Dattatreya, Sri Rama, Sri Tulasidas have all criticized women not out of hatred, prejudice or dislike, but out of compassion for elevating people from the quagmire of samsara. Their criticism of women implies and includes criticism of man also. Their criticism aims at weaning the minds of worldly persons from sexual transgression and creating disgust for sexual pleasure, and dispassion for worldly objects. This is misunderstood by people.

The same scriptures and saints who censure women in one place praise them in another. They say, "Women should be honored. They are manifestations of shakti or the energy of the Lord. Only those who honor women can attain prosperity." Therefore, O women! Try to know the heart of the scriptures and the saints and become wise.

The minds of young people are saturated with impure samskaras and vasanas owing to vicious company and the false modern civilization. Even the company or talk of a woman is quite sufficient to drag the mind into vicious thoughts. So, I have to place before the minds of the vast majority such a mental picture that the very company of women will do havoc. When I say that a woman is only a leather bag, I do not hate women in any way. It is only to produce disgust and induce vairagya. Really, a woman should be adored as Mother Shakti. She is the creatrix, generatrix and nourisher of the universe. She must be revered. In India, religion is preserved and maintained only through the devotional element in women. Devotion is a fundamental characteristic of Hindu ladies. Despise lust, but not women.

In the beginning, till you acquire vairagya and viveka, you must treat the company of woman as poison. When you obtain viveka and vairagya, then lust cannot take hold of you. You will see and realize, "*Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma*. All is Brahman only." You will have Atma-drishti. The sex idea will then vanish.

### **A vow is a great help**

A vow of celibacy will give you sure protection against temptation. It is a strong weapon to attack lust. If you do not take a vow of celibacy, the mind will tempt you at any moment. You will have no strength to resist the temptation and you will become a sure victim. He who is weak and effeminate is afraid of taking the vow. He brings in various excuses and says, "Why should I be bound by a vow? My will is strong and powerful. I can resist any sort of temptation. I am doing Upasana. I am practicing will culture." He repents in the long run. He has no control over the senses. That man only, in whom the subtle desire for the object to be renounced lurks in the corners of the mind, brings in such sort of excuses. You must have right understanding, discrimination and dispassion. Then only your renunciation will be lasting and permanent. If your renunciation is not the outcome of discrimination

and dispassion, the mind will be simply waiting for an opportunity to get back the object that has been renounced.

If you are weak, take a vow of celibacy for a month and then extend it to three months. You will gain some strength now. You will be able to prolong the period to six months. Gradually you will be able to extend the vow to one or two or three years. Do vigorous japa and meditation daily. You will hate lust now. You will experience freedom and indescribable joy.

O Mohan, you have done an unpardonable crime in breaking the vow of celibacy. How can there be religion or spirituality where there is passion? You are an old man. Why should you repeat shamelessly that old ignoble act, bringing this excuse: “Old vasanas are powerful; circumstances are strong.” Nobody will hear your answer. You will have to curb your passion whenever it raises its hood. May Lord Shiva give you strength to control this dire enemy and to continue spiritual sadhana.

### **Will culture and auto-suggestion**

If you can render your will pure, strong and irresistible by eliminating desires, by eradicating raga-dwesa, by reducing your wants and by practicing titiksha, passion will die. Will is a powerful enemy of passion.

Lust takes its origin from impure resolution. Indulgence strengthens it. When you resolutely turn away from it, it vanishes and dies.

Write down on a piece of paper, in bold letters, the word “Om Purity” six times. Keep the paper in your pocket. Read it several times during the course of the day. Fix it also in a prominent place in your house. Have the word image “Om Purity” clearly before the mind. Remember several times daily the brahmachari-saints and their powerful actions. Think over the multifarious advantages of a pure life of brahmacharya and the disadvantages and evils of an impure life. Never leave the practice. Be regular and systematic. Gradually you will become purer and purer and ultimately you will become an urdhvareta yogi. Be patient.

Daily feel: “Through the grace of God, I am becoming better and better, every day, in every way.” This is auto-suggestion. This is another effective method.

### **Change the Drishti or angle of vision**

You should entertain the view of women as mother, Divine Mother (Ishwari), or the divine Self. Women also should entertain the view of men as father, Divine Father (Ishwara) or the divine Self.

Seeing a woman as your sister will not suffice. You may fail. Seeing a woman as a sister and a man as a brother will not help much in the eradication of sex attraction and impure thoughts. Such an attempt has deceived and deluded many. Pure love will degenerate at any moment into passion when one is careless and non-vigilant. Only seeing the opposite sex as a cobra will help the sadhakas to a very great extent! After cobra-bhav comes mother-bhav in man and father-bhav in women. Then lastly comes Atma-bhav in both. Real struggling aspirants only can

realize this well, but not dry philosophers.

The cultivation of the Bhav is very difficult. You may fail to develop the Bhav that all women are your mothers and sisters one hundred and one times. It does not matter. Stick to your practice tenaciously. You are bound to succeed eventually. You will have to destroy the old mind and build a new mind. Nevertheless you will have to do it if you want to attain immortality and eternal bliss. You will surely succeed if you are fiery in your resolve and if you have an iron determination. The bhav will gradually manifest by constant practice. Soon you will be established in that bhav.

A man or a woman should practice self-analysis and self-examination. They should have a proper understanding of the ways in which lust operates and plays, and the things and emotions which excite passion and the manner in which one falls a victim to the other. Then only control of lust is possible.

The mind will again try to do some mischief inwardly. It is very diplomatic. It is very difficult to find out its ways and secret underground operations. It demands a subtle intellect, and careful repeated introspection and vigilant watch. Whenever the mental image of a woman crops up in your mind with evil thoughts, repeat Om mentally and vigorously. Gradually, old evil thoughts will die. Whenever you see any woman, repeat mentally this mantra. Your drishti or look will become chaste. All women are manifestations of the World Mother. Destroy the idea that a woman is an object of enjoyment and substitute the idea that she is an object of worship and a manifestation of Mother Durga or Kali.

Change the bhav, change the mental attitude. You will have heaven on earth. You will be established in brahmacharya. This is an important method for becoming a true brahmachari. See the Atman in all women. Reject all names and forms and take only the underlying essence, Sat-Chit-Ananda. All names and forms are unreal. They are unreal like shadows, water in a mirage and blueness in the sky.

For a scientist, a woman is a mass of electrons only. For a Vaiseshika philosopher of Rishi Kanada's school of thought, she is a conglomeration of atoms. For a tiger, she is an object of prey. For a passionate husband, she is an object of enjoyment. For a crying child, she is an affectionate mother who gives milk, sweets and other indulgences. For a jealous sister-in-law or mother-in-law, she is an enemy. For a viveki or a vairagi, she is a combination of flesh, bone, urine, fecal matter, pus, perspiration, blood and phlegm. For a full-blown jnani, she is Sat-Chit-Ananda Atman.

Passion will arise when you think of the body of a female. When you are in the company of ladies, think of the one immortal pure Self or Atman that is hidden in the bodies of the ladies. Constantly make the endeavor. The sex idea will gradually vanish, and with it, the attraction and lust also. This is the most potent method to eradicate passion and the sex idea. Mentally repeat the formula, "There is one Sat-Chit-Ananda Atman." This will lead to the annihilation of passion and to the Vedantic realization of unity or oneness also.

There is neither sex nor sexual vasana in Brahman. Brahman is nitya-shuddha, eternally pure: By constant thinking on that sexless Atman, you will be established

in brahmacharya. This is the most powerful and effective method. This is the best kind of sadhana for those who know the right technique of vichara. But, only advanced students in the path of Jnana Yoga can rely on the method of Brahma vichara alone for the destruction of passion. For the vast majority of persons, a combined method is very congenial and healthy. When the enemies are very powerful, a combined method of staves, pistols, shot-guns, machine-guns, submarines, torpedoes, bombs and poisonous gases is used for the destruction of the enemies. So also, in the destruction of this powerful enemy, passion, a combined method is absolutely necessary.

# Glossary

**Achara:** Right conduct; good behavior; custom; practice; external observance of established rules and laws; teaching.

**Ahimsa:** Non-injury in thought, word, and deed; non-violence; non-killing; harmlessness.

**Akhanda:** Unbroken (literally: “not broken”); indivisible; undivided; whole.

**Amrita:** That which makes one immortal. The nectar of immortality that emerged from the ocean of milk when the gods churned it.

**Aparigraha:** Non-possessiveness, non-greed, non-selfishness, non-acquisitiveness; freedom from covetousness; non-receiving of gifts conducive to luxury.

**Apsara:** A celestial damsel, nymph, and dancer.

**Asambhava:** Total inapplicability; impossibility.

**Ashanti:** Absence of peace of mind; restlessness; distraction.

**Ashram(a):** A place for spiritual discipline and study, usually a monastic residence. Also a stage of life. In Hinduism life is divided ideally into four stages (ashramas): 1) the celibate student life (brahmacharya); 2) the married household life (grihasta); 3) the life of retirement (seclusion) and contemplation (vanaprastha); 4) the life of total renunciation (sannyasa).

**Asteya:** Non-stealing; honesty; non-misappropriateness.

**Asura:** Demon; evil being (a-sura: without the light).

**Atma(n):** The individual spirit or Self that is one with Brahman. The true nature or identity.

**Atmabala:** Soul-force.

**Atma-drishti:** The seeing or sight of the Self (atma); the vision of the Self; knowledge of the Self through direct vision or knowing; the vision of seeing everything as the Self.

**Atmajnana:** Direct knowledge of the Self; Brahma-Jnana.

**Atmic:** Having to do with the atma–spirit or self.

**Avidya:** Ignorance; nescience; unknowing; literally: “to know not.” A Sakti or illusive power in Brahman which is sometimes regarded as one with Maya and sometimes as different from it. It forms the condition of the individual soul and is otherwise called Ajnana or Asuddha-maya. It forms the Karana Sarira of the Jiva. It is Malina or impure Sattwa. Also called ajnana.

**Ayurveda:** “Life-knowledge.” The ancient system of Indian medicine formulated by the sage Dhanvantari and considered part of the Vedic revelation.

**Bala brahmacharya:** Brahmacharya observed from childhood (bala).

**Bhava:** Subjective state of being (existence); attitude of mind; mental attitude or feeling; state of realization in the heart or mind.

**Bhranti:** Delusion; wrong notion; false idea or impression.

**Bhuma:** The unconditioned Infinite; Brahman.

**Brahmachari(n):** One who observes continence; a celibate student in the first stage of life (ashrama); a junior monk.

**Brahmacharini:** Female “brahmachari.”

**Brahmacharya:** Continence; self-restraint on all levels; discipline; dwelling in Brahman.

**Brahman:** The Absolute Reality; the Truth proclaimed in the Upanishads; the Supreme Reality that is one and indivisible, infinite, and eternal; all-pervading, changeless Existence; Existence-knowledge-bliss Absolute (Satchidananda); Absolute Consciousness; it is not only all-powerful but all-power itself; not only all-knowing and blissful but all-knowledge and all-bliss itself.

**Brahmabhavanam:** Meditation on Brahman; feeling of identity with Brahman, as well as of everything as Brahman.

**Brahmachintana:** Constant meditation on Brahman; constant thought of or awareness of God.

**Brahmanishtha:** Remaining steadfast in the Absolute (Brahman). One who is firmly established in the Supreme being, in the direct knowledge of Brahman, the Absolute Reality.

**Brahmatejas:** The effulgent splendor of Brahman.

**Brahmavadin:** Literally “one who walks the path of Brahman.” One who advocates that there is one existence alone—Parabrahman.

**Brahmic:** Divine; pertaining to God (Brahman).

**Buddhi:** Intellect; intelligence; understanding; reason; the thinking mind; the higher mind, which is the seat of wisdom; the discriminating faculty.

**Chakshuh:** Eye; the visual sense or faculty; the subtle organ of sight; sense of seeing.

**Chamatkara:** Remarkable traits and abilities; cleverness; shining forth with divine glory.

**Charu:** A preparation of boiled rice, milk, sugar and ghee, to be offered into the fire for gods; a sattvic dietary regimen usually taken by yoga-practitioners and celibates. Havishya.

**Charvaka:** The Indian materialistic school, also known as Lokayata (“restricted to the world of common experience”). Its central teaching is that matter is the only reality, and sense perception is the only valid means of knowledge or proof. Therefore sense satisfaction is the only goal.

**Chitta:** The subtle energy that is the substance of the mind, and therefore the mind itself; mind in all its aspects; the field of the mind; the field of consciousness; consciousness itself; the subconscious mind.

**Dama:** Self-control; control of the senses; restraint.

**Dattatreya:** A famous sage, son of the Rishi Atri and Anasuya. His birth was a divine boon, hence his name: Datta—“given”—and atreya—“son of Atri.” Considered a divine incarnation and known as the Lord of Avadhutas, he is often revered as the embodiment of the Supreme Guru. He is credited with the authorship of the

*Avadhuta Gita, the Jivanmukti Gita, and the Tripura Rahashya.*

**Deva:** “A shining one,” a god–greater or lesser in the evolutionary hierarchy; a semi-divine or celestial being with great powers, and therefore a “god.” Sometimes called a demi-god. Devas are the demigods presiding over various powers of material and psychic nature. In many instances “devas” refer to the powers of the senses or the sense organs themselves.

**Devi:** Goddess; the Supreme Shakti (Divine Power) or Divine Mother, or a demigoddess.

**Dhanvantari:** The great rishi who first revealed the principles of Ayurveda to his students.

**Dharana:** Concentration of mind; fixing the mind upon a single thing or point. “Dharana is the confining [fixing] of the mind within a point or area” (Yoga Sutras 3:1).

**Dharma:** The righteous way of living, as enjoined by the sacred scriptures and the spiritually illumined; characteristics; law; lawfulness; virtue; righteousness; norm.

**Dhatu:** Element; original element; core; constituent; the vital force in the human being by conserving which, through celibacy, the yogi develops ojas and tejas.

**Dhriti:** Steadfast; constant; sustaining effort; firm; patient; enduring.

**Dhyana(m):** Meditation; contemplation.

**Dhyeya:** Object of meditation or worship; purpose behind action.

**Drishti:** Seeing; sight; vision; view; opinion; gaze; perception.

**Gandharva:** A demigod—a celestial musician and singer.

**Ghee:** Clarified butter.

**Grihastha:** A married “householder;” the second stage (ashrama) in life.

**Havishya:** Sacrificial food. See Charu.

**Indriya:** Organ. The five organs of perception (jnanendriyas) are the ear, skin, eye, tongue, and nose. The five organs of action (karmendriyas) are the voice, hand, foot, organ of excretion, and the organ of generation.

**Jagrat:** The waking state.

**Japa:** Repetition of a mantra.

**Jiva:** Individual spirit.

**Jivanmukta:** One who is liberated here and now in this present life.

**Jivanmukti:** Liberation in this life.

**Jivatma(n):** Individual spirit; individual consciousness.

**Jnana:** Knowledge; knowledge of Reality–of Brahman, the Absolute; also denotes the process of reasoning by which the Ultimate Truth is attained. The word is generally used to denote the knowledge by which one is aware of one’s identity with Brahman.

**Jnani:** A follower of the path of knowledge (jnana); one who has realized—who knows—the Truth (Brahman).

**Kala:** Time measure, as in the time required to recite a mantra. It also

sometimes means levels of creation or manifested beings.

**Kalpāna:** Imagination of the mind; the association of name and permanence to objects; presumptive knowledge; assumption; creation.

**Kalpita:** Imaginary; created (artificial, unreal); dreamt.

**Kalpita bheda:** Imaginary difference.

**Kama:** Desire; passion; lust.

**Kauravas:** The opponents of the Pandavas in the Mahabharata War, led by Duryodhana.

**Kaya:** Physical body.

**Kosha:** Sheath; bag; scabbard; a sheath enclosing the soul; body. There are five such concentric sheaths or bodies: the sheaths of bliss, intellect, mind, life-force and the physical body—the anandamaya, jnanamaya, manomaya, pranamaya and annamaya bodies respectively.

**Kriya:** Purificatory action, practice, exercise, or rite; action; activity; movement; function; skill. Kriyas purify the body and nervous system as well as the subtle bodies to enable the yogi to reach and hold on to higher levels of consciousness and being.

**Kutir(a):** Hut; cottage; house; building; hermitage.

**Lakshya:** Perceivable object; object or point of concentration-attention; target; vision.

**Lila:** Play; sport; divine play; the cosmic play. The concept that creation is a play of the divine, existing for no other reason than for the mere joy of it. The life of an avatar is often spoken of as lila.

**Lokasangraha:** Solidarity of the world; uplift of the world.

**Mahatma:** Literally: “a great soul [atma].” Usually a designation for a sannyasi, sage or saint.

**Mahavakya:** Literally: “Great Saying.” The highest Vedantic truth, found in the Upanishads expressing the highest Vedantic truths or the identity between the individual soul and the Supreme Soul. There are four Mahavakyas: 1) Prajñānam Brahma—“Consciousness is Brahman” (Aitareya Upanishad 3.3); 2) Ayam Atma Brahma—“This Self is Brahman” (Mandukya Upanishad 1.2); 3) Tat Twam Asi—“Thou art That” (Chandogya Upanishad 6.8.7); 4) Aham Brahmasmi—“I am Brahman” (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 1.4.10).

**Maithuna(m):** Sexual intercourse.

**Malina:** Impure; defective.

**Mantra(m):** Sacred syllable or word or set of words through the repetition and reflection of which one attains perfection or realization of the Self. Literally, “a transforming thought” (manat trayate). A mantra, then is a sound formula that transforms the consciousness.

**Mara:** The embodiment of the power of cosmic evil, illusion, and delusion; Satan.

**Mauna(m):** Silence—not speaking.

**Maya:** The illusive power of Brahman; the veiling and the projecting power of



the universe, the power of Cosmic Illusion. “The Measurer”—a reference to the two delusive “measures,” Time and Space.

**Meru:** The mountain, of supreme height, on which the gods dwell, or the mountain on which Shiva is ever seated in meditation, said to be the center of the world, supporting heaven itself—obviously a yogic symbol of the spinal column or merudanda. The name of the central bead on a japa mala (rosary).

**Mitahara:** Moderate diet.

**Moha:** Delusion—in relation to something, usually producing delusive attachment or infatuation based on a completely false perception and evaluation of the object.

**Moksha:** Release; liberation; the term is particularly applied to the liberation from the bondage of karma and the wheel of birth and death; Absolute Experience.

**Mumukshu:** Seeker after liberation (moksha).

**Mumukshutwa:** Intense desire or yearning for liberation (moksha).

**Naishthika brahmachari:** One who has taken the vow of life-long celibacy; a permanent brahmachari.

**Nijananda:** The bliss beyond sense perception.

**Nirmala:** Without impurity; pure; without defect or blemish.

**Nirvikalpa samadhi:** Samadhi in which there is no objective experience or experience of “qualities” whatsoever, and in which the triad of knower, knowledge and known does not exist; purely subjective experience of the formless and qualitless and unconditioned Absolute. The highest state of samadhi, beyond all thought, attribute, and description.

**Nirvikara:** Without transformation, modifications, or change; changeless.

**Nitya:** Eternal; permanent; unchanging; the ultimate Reality; the eternal Absolute. Secondly: daily or obligatory (nitya karma—that which must be done every day).

**Nityashuddha:** Eternally pure.

**Nivritti:** Negation; the path of turning away from worldly activity; withdrawal. Literally, “to turn back.” The path of renunciation.

**Nivritti Marga:** The path of renunciation or sannyasa, of withdrawal from the world.

**Niyama:** Observance; the five Do’s of Yoga: 1) shaucha—purity, cleanliness; 2) santosha—contentment, peacefulness; 3) tapas—austerity, practical (i.e., result-producing) spiritual discipline; 4) swadhyaya—self-study, spiritual study; 5) Ishwarapranidhana—offering of one’s life to God.

**Ojas:** Vitality; vigor; luster; splendor; energy; spiritual energy. The highest form of energy in the human body. In the spiritual aspirant who constantly practices continence and purity, other forms of energy are transmuted into ojas and stored in the brain, manifesting as spiritual and intellectual power.

**Pandavas:** The five sons of King Pandu: Yudhishtira, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula, and Sahadeva. Their lives are described in the Mahabharata.

**Prana:** Life; vital energy; life-breath; life-force; inhalation. In the human body

the prana is divided into five forms: 1) Prana, the prana that moves upward; 2) Apana: The prana that moves downward, producing the excretory functions in general. 3) Vyana: The prana that holds prana and apana together and produces circulation in the body. 4) Samana: The prana that carries the grosser material of food to the apana and brings the subtler material to each limb; the general force of digestion. 5) Udana: The prana which brings up or carries down what has been drunk or eaten; the general force of assimilation.

**Pranamaya kosha:** “The sheath of vital air (prana).” The sheath consisting of vital forces and the (psychic) nervous system, including the karmendriyas.

**Pratipaksha bhavana(m):** The method of substituting the opposite through imagination; thus, fear is overcome by dwelling strongly upon its opposite, viz., courage. Reflecting on and cultivating those traits which are opposed to spiritual obstructions.

**Prayaschitta:** Atonement (through various prescribed acts); expiation; mortification.

**Raga-dwesa:** The continual cycle of attraction and repulsion; like and dislike; love and hatred.

**Prayascitta karma:** Expiatory action; bodily mortification; penance.

**Rajas:** Activity, passion, desire for an object or goal.

**Rajasic:** Possessed of the qualities of the raja guna (rajas). Passionate; active; restless.

**Rajoguna:** Activity, passion, desire for an object or goal.

**Rakshasa:** There are two kinds of rakshasas: 1) semi-divine, benevolent beings, or 2) cannibal demons or goblins, enemies of the gods. Meat-eating human beings are sometimes classed as rakshasas.

**Rasa:** Taste; essence; savor; juice; nectar of delight.

**Riddhi:** Highest experiential delight; nine varieties of extraordinary exaltation and grandeur that come to a yogi as he advances and progresses in Yoga, like the supernatural powers or siddhis. Increase; growth; prosperity; success; wealth.

**Rishi:** Sage; seer of the Truth.

**Sadachara:** Morality; right behavior.

**Sadhaka:** One who practices spiritual discipline—sadhana—particularly meditation.

**Sadhana:** Spiritual practice.

**Saguna:** Possessing attributes or qualities (gunas).

**Saguna Brahman:** Brahman with attributes, such as mercy, omnipotence, omniscience, etc.; the Absolute conceived as the Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer of the universe; also the Personal God according to the Vedanta.

**Sama:** Calmness; tranquillity; control of the internal sense organs; control of mind; calmness of mind; the state in which the mind is kept in the heart and not allowed to externalize; it is the constant eradication of the mental tendencies, according to the *Aparoksha Anubhuti* of Shankara; same; equal.

**Samadhi:** The state of superconsciousness where Absoluteness is experienced

attended with all-knowledge and joy; Oneness; here the mind becomes identified with the object of meditation; the meditator and the meditated, thinker and thought become one in perfect absorption of the mind.

**Sambandha:** Relationship; connection.

**Samsara:** Life through repeated births and deaths; the wheel of birth and death; the process of earthly life.

**Samsaric:** Having to do with samsara; involved with samsara; partaking of the traits or qualities of samsara.

**Samskara:** Impression in the mind, either conscious or subconscious, produced by action or experience in this or previous lives; propensities of the mental residue of impressions; subliminal activators; prenatal tendency. See Vasana.

**Sankalpa:** A life-changing wish, desire, volition, resolution, will, determination, or intention—not a mere momentary aspiration, but an empowering act of will that persists until the intention is fully realized. It is an act of spiritual, divine creative will inherent in each person as a power of the Atma.

**Sannyas(a):** Renunciation; monastic life. Sannyasa literally means “total [san] throwing away [as],” absolute rejection.

**Sannyasi(n):** A renunciate; a monk.

**Satchidananda:** Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute; Brahman.

**Satsang(a):** Literally: “company with Truth.” Association with godly-minded persons. The company of saints and devotees.

**Sattwa:** Light; purity; harmony, goodness, reality.

**Sattwa Guna:** Quality of light, purity, harmony, and goodness.

**Sattwic:** Partaking of the quality of Sattwa.

**Satya(m):** Truth; the Real; Brahman, or the Absolute; truthfulness; honesty.

**Shakti:** Power; energy; force; the Divine Power of becoming; the apparent dynamic aspect of Eternal Being; the Absolute Power or Cosmic Energy; the Divine Feminine.

**Shanti:** Peace; calm; tranquility; contentment.

**Shastra:** Scripture; spiritual treatise.

**Shreyas:** Good; blessedness; Moksha.

**Shruti:** That which is heard; revealed scripture in the sense of divine communication. Usually applied to the Vedas, Shankara also spoke of the Upanishads as Shruti.

**Siddhi:** Spiritual perfection; psychic power; power; modes of success; attainment; accomplishment; achievement; mastery; supernatural power attained through mantra, meditation, or other yogic practices. From the verb root sidh—to attain.

**Srishti:** Creation; projection or gradual unfoldment of what exists potentially in the cause; evolution of the universe from its seed state.

**Shuddha:** Pure; clear; clean; untainted.

**Smriti:** Memory; recollection; “that which is remembered;” code of law. In this latter sense, Smriti is used to designate all scriptures except the Vedas and

Upanishads (which are considered of greater authority: shruti).

**Sruti:** See Shruti.

**Sukha(m):** Happiness; ease; joy; happy; pleasure; pleasant; agreeable.

**Sukhadeva:** The son of Vyasa who was liberated before coming into incarnation. He is considered a supreme renunciate, a perfect avadhuta.

**Swarupa:** “Form of the Self.” Natural–true–form; actual or essential nature; essence. A revelatory appearance that makes clear the true nature of some thing.

**Tanmatras:** The pure elements; the subtle essence of the five elements, elemental essence.

**Tapas:** See tapasya.

**Tapasya:** Austerity; practical (i.e., result-producing) spiritual discipline; spiritual force. Literally it means the generation of heat or energy, but is always used in a symbolic manner, referring to spiritual practice and its effect, especially the roasting of karmic seeds, the burning up of karma.

**Tattwa:** “Thatness.” Principle; element; the essence of things; truth; reality.

**Tejas:** Radiance; brilliancy (especially spiritual); the element of fire; Agni; heat.

**Titiksha:** Endurance of opposites; forbearance; tolerance; the ability to withstand opposites like pleasure and pain, heat and cold, etc., with equal fortitude; the bearing of all afflictions without caring to change them and without anxiety or lament.

**Tyaga:** Literally: “abandonment.” Renunciation—in the Gita, the relinquishment of the fruit of action.

**Tyagi:** A renouncer, an ascetic.

**Upasana:** “Sitting near” or “drawing near;” worship; adoration; contemplation of God or deity; devout meditation; both teaching and learning.

**Urdhvareta yogi:** A yogi in whom the seminal energy flows upwards.

**Urdhvaretas:** The state of being an urdhvareta yogi; one who is an urdhvareta yogi.

**Vairagi:** A renunciate.

**Vairagya:** Non-attachment; detachment; dispassion; absence of desire; disinterest; or indifference. Indifference towards and disgust for all worldly things and enjoyments.

**Vaishya:** A member of the merchant, farmer, artisan, businessman caste.

**Varnashrama:** Related to the four castes and the four stages (ashramas) of Hindu life; the laws of caste and ashrama.

**Varnashram dharma:** The observance of caste and ashram.

**Vasana:** Subtle desire; a tendency created in a person by the doing of an action or by experience; it induces the person to repeat the action or to seek a repetition of the experience; the subtle impression in the mind capable of developing itself into action; it is the cause of birth and experience in general; the impression of actions that remains unconsciously in the mind.

**Vasana(s):** A bundle or aggregate of such samskaras.

**Vedas:** The oldest scriptures of India, considered the oldest scriptures of the

world, that were revealed in meditation to the Vedic Rishis (seers). Although in modern times there are said to be four Vedas (Rig, Sama, Yajur, and Atharva), in the upanishads only three are listed (Rig, Sama, and Yajur). In actuality, there is only one Veda: the Rig Veda. The Sama Veda is only a collection of Rig Veda hymns that are marked (pointed) for singing. The Yajur Veda is a small book giving directions on just one form of Vedic sacrifice. The Atharva Veda is only a collection of theurgical mantras to be recited for the cure of various afflictions or to be recited over the herbs to be taken as medicine for those afflictions.

**Vega:** Motion; velocity; force; inertia.

**Vibhuti:** Manifestations of divine power or glory; the special forms in which the Lord reveals himself; might; prosperity; welfare; splendor; exalted rank; greatness; miraculous powers; superhuman power resembling that of God (Ishwara). The quality of all-pervasiveness (omnipresence). Also sacred ash from a fire sacrifice.

**Vichara:** Subtle thought; reflection; enquiry; introspection; investigation; enquiry/investigation into the nature of the Self, Brahman or Truth; ever-present reflection on the why and wherefore of things; enquiry into the real meaning of the Mahavakya Tat-tvam-asi: Thou art That; discrimination between the Real and the unreal; enquiry of Self.

**Vicharashakti:** Power of enquiry.

**Vikara:** Change, change of form, or modification—generally with reference to the modification of the mind, individually or cosmically.; gluiness; manifestation.

**Vimala:** Purity; unblemished; without stain or defect.

**Virochana:** King of the demons (asuras). According to the Chandogya Upanishad, along with Indra he went to the Creator to learn the nature of the Self. Misunderstanding the teaching: “Virochana, satisfied for his part that he had found out the Self, returned to the demons and began to teach them that the body alone is to be worshiped, that the body alone is to be served, and that he who worships the body and serves the body gains both worlds, this and the next.”

**Virya:** Strength; power; energy; courage; seminal energy.

**Vishaya:** Object; object of perception (sensory experience) or enjoyment; subject matter; content; areas; range; field-object domain; sphere; realm, scope; matters of enjoyment or experience.

**Vishuddha:** Supremely pure; totally pure.

**Viveka:** Discrimination between the Real and the unreal, between the Self and the non-Self, between the permanent and the impermanent; right intuitive discrimination.

**Viveki(n):** One who possesses discrimination (viveka).

**Vrata:** Vow; a resolution; rule of conduct.

**Vritti:** Thought-wave; mental modification; mental whirlpool; a ripple in the chitta (mind substance).

**Yama:** Restraint; the five Don'ts of Yoga: 1) ahimsa—non-violence, non-injury, harmlessness; 2) satya—truthfulness, honesty; 3) asteya—non-stealing, honesty, non-misappropriateness; 4) brahmacharya—continence; 5) aparigraha—non-

possessiveness, non-greed, non-selfishness, non-acquisitiveness. These five are called the Great Vow (Observance, Mahavrata) in the Yoga Sutras.

**Yogabhrashta:** One who has fallen from the high state of Yoga.

**Yogi(n):** One who practices Yoga; one who strives earnestly for union with God; an aspirant going through any course of spiritual discipline.