

These Gardens of Life

*Many a life I have traversed, so many homes, I have called my own;
Several lineages and parentages I have relinquished – now unknown.*

*Today I stand in a garden new,
Looking ahead at life's play –
May these flowers ever bloom;
While I travel to my next stay.*

*A new meadow I shall till, new flowers I shall grow;
O Lord! I pray, stay in my heart, wherever I may go.*

*If only a particle of Thy knowledge Divine,
Mingles in Thy love's hues;
The entire treasure of this world shall be mine,
If Thy presence my life imbues.*

*Nothing else shall I then seek, nor shall I miss aught;
My garden then shall be evergreen, if Thy name its magic wrought.*

(Translated from Param Pujya Ma's original prayer in Hindi given below)

कई जन्म कई कुल मिले

कई जन्म कई कुल मिले, हमने कई घर सजाये हैं।
अनेक कुल और घर भी, हम छोड़ कर आये हैं॥

इस पल भी इक नई बगिया, सामने हम हैं देख रहे।
फूले फले हमरो बगिया, लो जग वालो हम तो चले॥

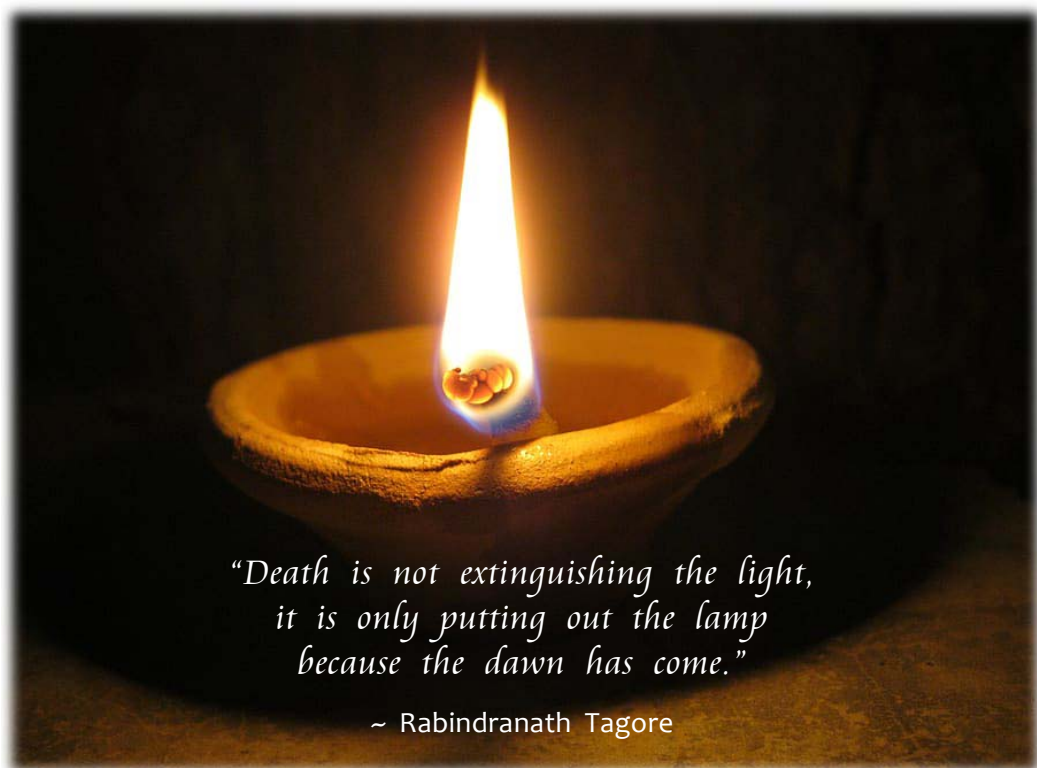
नई बगिया हम बनायेंगे, फिर लौट के यहीं पे आयेंगे।
एको वर माँगें हम आज, तव नाम साथ लिये जायेंगे॥

गर केवल ज्ञान का कण रहे, राम प्रेम का कण मिले।
पूर्ण सम्पदा यह ही है, भगवान तो मेरे संग चले॥

और कछु न माँगूँ मैं, क्या मिले क्या नहीं मिले।
पुनि बगिया सज जायेगी, गर तेरा नाम मेरे संग रहे॥

(मृत्यु से अमृत की ओर - ५.१०.१९७५)





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Love Letters to Her Lord...

~ A Blueprint of the Aspirant's Path

From the 2nd reading of the Srimad Bhagavad Gita
by Param Pujya Ma



All is the Atma... it is That Eternal Atma which bides in all.

All is pre-ordained. Do not clamour for change... all happens in accordance with His dictat.

Engage in all actions that are put before you, knowing that they are placed there by the Supreme Himself.

All these Truths, and many more, are enunciated in this 'second reading' and elucidation of the Srimadbhagavadgita by Ma. One must not merely read... one must absorb and imbibe... then indeed, as Ma Herself said so often, "What a man has done, a man can do!"

She gives us the path... and the strength... what are we waiting for?

ABHA BHANDARI

In Continuation...

Chapter 2

देही नित्यमवध्योऽयं देहे सर्वस्य भारत ।
तस्मात् सर्वाणि भूतानि न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥३०॥

The Lord again says:

This Atma abiding in all individual bodies is indestructible; it therefore does not behove you to grieve for all these beings.

Shloka 30

Until now, they were delineating a sketchy outline of the Atma... now they speak of its Essence. They say that there is only One Atma abiding in your body and in all other bodies as well. That One abides in all. That One and the *Jiva bhav* are seemingly two faces of That One Atma... just as one person can be someone's husband and someone's brother as well!

Do you know... your eternal nature is dependent on That One. That One is the only One. We are all separate thoughts of That Same One. If all is He, then why do I not establish my relationship with only Him? He is the Almighty King.



Death, illness, these stars and moon, this fire and air are all dependent on Him. You feel you can do everything depending on your own strength and if you have people who are subservient to you and who will obey you... yet you experience extreme lacunae also!

O rise and seek His Refuge! Relinquish all other supports and surrender yourself to Him. Then what can you be afraid of? Leave the future to Him. Let Him organize it... or refrain from organizing it... it is His will.

If He wills, you will transcend death.

Knowing all this, imbue your life with this attitude, these qualities – Divine qualities. Transact in life with these qualities and cause their increment.

At first the Lord took me to the pinnacle of knowledge, and now He describes the mental state of one who aspires for such a state. He says “Renounce the world if you so wish... but first renounce it with the mind. External renunciation is not desirable... internal renunciation is true *Vairagya*. He takes us to the heights and then He pulls our leg! He is acquainting us with our present mental state... “Do that which your mind aspires for... decide that which your mind wants... if it seeks to renounce, so be it... but it is the mind which has to instigate the act of renunciation.”



Compare your present state of mind with this Eternal Knowledge. The Lord gives us the freedom to think about the onwards path, but also suggests the correct way. He clarifies that even if one seeks to attain the world, or That Divine Ram, both are attainable through AUM. Do you desire the world or *Paramartha*? The decision is yours.

In *shlokas* 37, 38 and 39, the Lord shows the means to attain...

He therefore gives us direct knowledge, and also brings us face to face with the reality that only He is the Truth... all else is transitory. The mind believes it too... yet, I am unable to experience this Truth. O Ram! You tell me... what do I lack?

O foolish one! You know, yet you do not understand... who can stop the flux of providence? Your own latencies are pulling you towards the fulfilment of your destiny. You are merely an insentient body... your reins are in the hands of Another!

The Gita speaks of ‘*Buddhaya Vishuddhaya*’ towards this very purpose... “Wash the impurities of this intellect hued by the colours of this materialistic world.” Yet, perceive my extreme misfortune! I am near Him, one with Him, yet I cannot see Him! Lord! Neutralize my latencies NOW! This is the only way. I am forced as it were, to do things... but I have to realize that if I want to change the focus of my inspiration, I simply have to withdraw my mind. I have to lift it from the external world and focus it within.

Now the Lord explains *Buddhi Yoga* till *shloka* 40.

स्वधर्ममपि चावेक्ष्य न विकम्पितुमर्हसि ।
धर्माद्धि युद्धाच्छ्रेयोऽन्यत् क्षत्रियस्य न विद्यते ॥३१॥

Now the Lord says:

Even from your own point of view, you should not falter, for there is no greater good for a Kshatriya than to fight a righteous war.

Shloka 31

O foolish mind! You cannot renounce the actions that spring from your innate nature. Who can fight the onslaught of destiny? What you value, is your innate nature... your faith... that is your *swabhava*. Your personality... the modus operandi of your thoughts, has been given to you in accordance with your destiny. It is this which has also determined your family, your ancestry, and various other circumstantial duties. Therefore accept whatever circumstance you have been placed in. You cannot change it. You ought



to engage in the actions sponsored by your nature. Your *dharma* is not determined by your familial sect, or your society but by your innate nature. In the ordinary sense of the word, normally your birth is ordained in a family where your nature, your faith, the thoughts and circumstances of your previous lives find fruition. This is how

varied 'sects' are created. However, do not perceive these as airtight compartments... all your circumstances have been created so that through these, you may find opportunity to progress spiritually. You can change your 'family', your 'sect'... any time you wish. You can also be a Brahmin any time you want! But no matter what, every moment strive to be deserving of Ram's Grace. He Himself will ensure that you are accepted in your new place and family in accordance with your internal growth!

Meanwhile, it is important to conduct oneself in accordance with one's *dharma*. When you have taken *Sanyas* (He only knows if this will ever be possible), then you must stay in His refuge **wholly and completely**... But remember, He has said that *Sanyas* is to be practised at the level of the mind... renounce your thoughts, your desires and your ambitions from the mind. Renounce attachments from the mind. Let only That One *dharma* remain. Let Ram be your only endeavour.

Arjuna was not a *Sanyasi* – he was shirking action on account of his attachments with the world and with his relations. Therefore it is clear that one should not renounce external duties and actions without first severing one's attachment within. That would be a sin. To renounce or relinquish a relationship because it is difficult to handle, or because of antipathy, is not conducive to *dharma*. Do not try to escape.



Your 'war' has to be conducted in the arena of *sadhana*. You have to fight your negative desires, your negative thoughts – do not try to escape this war because of your attachments. This is contrary to the traditions of and the prestige of your new 'family'. *Sanyas* is meaningless unless you have gained victory over these.

O *Sadhak*! This war is extremely essential for you. Your enemies are far more subtle than those of the world around. You have to war against your beloved 'weaknesses'! This alone is your *dharma*. You are a Kshatriya... Arise! Fight with enthusiasm. Give your life for this alone! Do not turn away.

Do not forsake this battlefield... fight even if you lose your life whilst doing so. It is the *dharma* of a Kshatriya to lose his life on the battlefield.

O Ram! I have embarked on this internal war, since I know I have Your support. Now You must unfurl Your flag atop my chariot, and give me the strength and the ability to gain victory in this battle of *sadhana*. If I lose, the defeat will be Yours. Pray protect Thine own honour... I am bearing Thy flag!

यदृच्छया चोपपन्नं स्वर्गद्वारमपावृतम् ।
सुखिनः क्षत्रियाः पार्थ लभन्ते युद्धमीदृशम् ॥३२॥

O Arjuna! Only the very fortunate Kshatriyas get such an opportunity of a gratuitous battle which is a straight path to heaven.

Shloka 32

O mind! You know that a person's intellectual acumen is moulded by his faith. And the Lord is creating your circumstances in accordance with your innate nature and the dictates of providence. Therefore accept humbly whatever destiny decrees, as the 'gift' of God. Accept whatever you have received unasked. To ask, to agonise, to protest... this is a sin. This causes a strain on the mind and causes distortions within. Such thoughts create new latencies – *sanskaras*, which cause deep grooves to be created on the tape of this life's destiny. These latencies then keep waiting for concrete form and force us to perpetuate this cycle of birth and death.

When our actions are spontaneous, and devoid of any such aberrations, then no latencies are created. Just as a child when he first tries to walk or to learn any unfamiliar pursuit, he finds it very difficult... but later, it becomes automatic... a natural action (such as sleeping, driving, etc). Fear, strain and efforts are wrong. All must happen naturally... whether they are actions of the body, mind, thoughts etc. These have all been predetermined even before we were born! It is in accordance with these that the body, mind, intellect and indeed, this world too, are created. Non-acceptance of these cause our strain and our aberrations! Allow all to happen naturally... indifferently. Do not be anxious and do not worry or overstrain. O no! There should not be even the slightest strain on your mind. It matters not what is transpiring with the body... just make sure that His Name perseverates in your mind! Remain established in Him. Do not extricate your body from the world... extricate your mind... separate them as stalk from the reed. Anything may happen – how does it matter to me? Allow everything to transpire naturally...

destiny will do as it is meant to do. Do not undergo the strain of stopping destiny! Do not abhor circumstances that destiny brings. If you do, then you will fight the world – you will militate against the Lord Himself... you will make plans that will not get fulfilled and your angst will increase!



Accept fate with complete indifference. If some 'duty' in the world confronts you suddenly, do not bemoan it. And if some 'duty' of the Supreme Himself is given in your hands, then do not worry about what the world will think or do. If you accept all unconditionally, neither your world, nor your Supreme Goal will undergo any harm. Remember, all 'enterprise' is foolish. He has already decided your fate for you, which you cannot change. So why do you waste your time trying to change God's plan? Do not waste time or energy. Of what avail are dreams, efforts and ambitions? Your aim is to withdraw... how does anything else matter? Listen! If you still continue, it would be like cutting the leaves from the tree of attachment with this world. Why not cut the very trunk of the tree instead? Do away with the roots of attachment. It is the body which is the root cause of all bondage. Endeavour to distance yourself from attachment with this body. Actually, the body and the Atma are very different. Why can I not experience this? If I am able to attain detachment with this body, then I will gain detachment from the entire world. O Lord! Help me change the direction of this intellect which is presently attached to this body.

O mind! You keep criticizing others... why don't you analyse yourself? Know yourself. Why post mortem others? Do not try to escape from this arena of *sadhana*. Fight! Accept the dictates of providence from within your heart. If you try to escape what providence brings, there will be much greater turmoil within you. There will be a much larger accrual of *sanskaras* within. You will then keep running away from these in anxiety. This is sin. To be detached in the mind is to be detached with your *karma* (even whilst

doing the work at hand.) *Sanskaras* are ever striving for fulfilment. Allow them to fructify. Otherwise you will again have to take birth for their completion. So take care! Do not prevent the *sanskaras* from their fruition.

Now understand the difference between *karma* and *akarma*.

अथ चेत्त्वमिमं धर्म्यं संग्रामं न करिष्यसि ।
ततः स्वधर्मं कीर्तिं च हित्वा पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥३३॥

Now the Lord says:

If you do not fight this war of righteousness, you will forfeit your natural dharma and reputation and you will only incur sin.

Shloka 33

The reactions of your mind are your *sanskaras*. Do not try to stop fate. If you try to hamper the pace of providence, you will drown. Do not try to take up cudgels. When a large wave of destiny approaches, just sit down... allow it to pass over you... then rise again. If you achieve a state where

nothing affects you... where no aberrations arise in the mind, where the mind remains unaffected despite everything... this was Raman Maharishi's state. This is a state devoid of the seeds of action. Raman Maharishi's actions were always dependent on the other's **need**. He would act with complete indifference towards the



person and the action itself. He had complete control. O mind! Do not stop all actions. If you do, there is bound to be a terrible war within... and this war will leave several scars of *sanskaras*, which will cause your destruction. Do what you know to be right, but with complete indifference within. Accept every circumstance with complete negation of any sorrow and with transcendence from attachment... all other thoughts or reactions are sinful. Do not try to change what providence brings... be detached within. Accept all with indifference (to self).

...to be continued

She lives on...



...in our hearts

Our dearest Indu Dayal, sister, friend, co-worker... and an integral part of the Arpana family, passed on from this world to reside at the feet of the Lord on 9th January 2021. Our humble homage to the departed soul.

Dr. Ela Anand:

“Indu has been a very beautiful daughter for me. She came into our lives in 1975 when we had our Nursing Home in Jungpura. She was always the first to greet anyone who came there... whether it was a patient or a visitor, they felt welcome and their problem was sorted out smoothly. For us she was a daughter who helped us both in our professional and personal lives. For our children she was an elder sister. I will never forget whenever I needed her, she would spend not just the day but also the night with us.

When we all left to go to Arpana, Madhuban, Pujya Ma decided to put her in a department which needed her attitude and expertise. At that time Urvashi Publications was that department. Even then whenever we met she always welcomed me with her loving smile. I will always miss her by my side at the Arpana Hospital which she had helped to set up.

In recent years she was in charge of the Canteen and whenever I visited Arpana there was a lovely cup of coffee waiting for me. I'm still reeling under the shock of her sudden departure and I pray that she find peace

and contentment at the feet of the Lord.

Niriti Vaid:

“Maybe because one is at a distance, the fact that Indu didi isn’t physically with us hasn’t really sunk in as yet. The warmth of her love, the way she reached out with affection on all occasions, makes it even more difficult to accept this.



Arpana Hospital beginnings – Indu with Param Pujya Ma, Chhote Ma, Dr. Ela Anand and Sister Kamla Surie

Our relationship with her goes back a good 42-43 years... She was to my parents, Dr. AK Anand and Dr. Ela Anand, the eldest of their children and to Varun and me a very beautiful, vivacious, loving elder sister. We looked forward always to our time with her. There is something very beautiful that Pujya Ma taught us when we lost our father, Dr. Anand, very suddenly. Ma asked Varun and me to sit in the *mandir* and list out the very beautiful qualities Papa embodied... as that is truly the only way we could carry him in our hearts. It was as Ma said ‘*phool chun-na*’ and that is exactly what I have been doing now. Indu didi’s quality of making people loved, cherished and looked after is rare to find. She did her best to contribute to the happiness of those around her. I would like to have the same generosity of love towards all and in doing so, always remember her. This is the only way I could think of paying a befitting tribute to her and adequately saying how much I care and love her.

She was a silent worker and a nurturer of people around her. She identified with people and did little things that would bring them happiness. Her objectivity, honesty and accepting all as her family was her strength. She always had time to listen, a hot cup of coffee to share and was interested in the well-being of all. The memories of all the special dresses she made for me, the birthday parties she organized for us, never fail to bring a smile on our faces. Our time in Madhuban together, when I would go and sit with her as she quietly continued her work for the Hospital... she was always very busy but always had time for us...

I’m sure she will find peace at the Lord’s feet and bring happiness wherever she is.”

Nupur:

We all remember her as our lively, very friendly, fun loving, kind hearted and generous mausi. She had a lot of love to give to everyone she met. My mummy remembered the time from their childhood and said she was the life of their family, with a cheerful and positive attitude.

‘Death ends a life, not a relationship’ – this quote has helped me come to peace with the passing away of Indu mausi. Although she is no longer here in earthly form I know our memories together live on. She was an incredible sister and aunt, she will be missed by a lot of people.

Dr. Harkirat Dhillon:

“Indu has brought us all together today. I think she would have liked nothing better than being here with all of us, maybe celebrating some other benign milestone in our lives.

Indu’s passing was sudden and unexpected. Her goodness was being transmitted regularly over facebook. She wasn’t just messing around... the content of the posts was always full of positive and uplifting images and messages. I’m sure she knew that was what we needed.

We all met nearly fifty years ago and for the next ten years there were family dinners, meetings and parties and Indu’s presence and personality stood out, encompassing all with her warmth. I moved out of India to California nearly 40 years ago. I did not have the opportunity to meet Indu too often but it speaks so very highly of her that her memories from all those years ago are fresh... her warmth, her sense of caring, her sense of family have been with me all this time.”

Abha Bhandari:

“Dearest Partner, that is what you used to call me, remember? Your incredible warmth, your sincerity, your love, your amazing memory, your courage to voice your conviction... this mixed fragrance imbues my mind and my heart. It has truly been an incredible path we have walked together...from the earlier association of the late 60’s when our whole Dayal family came to Ma soon after Manju didi had begun to stay at Madhuban. In our almost daily interaction, when you came to work at the Anand Nursing Home at Jungpura... an interaction which was full of fun and laughter... and serious work, I would admire your complete identification with your job at hand and the efficiency with which you would discharge your duties. The ease with which you would take all into your loving embrace is rare indeed. Such identification and efficiency came only from Ma’s love which was deeply embedded in your heart.

How affably you handled the many many tasks you undertook at Madhuban



Indu with Ma and the Arpana family at Defence Colony

thereafter... and with what great enthusiasm. The sales of the publications, the OT at the Hospital, the costumes and props during Arpana's plays, Handicrafts, the Canteen... and all with the utmost dedication and selflessness. Manju didi was a great inspiration to you

which you often voiced to me, as she was to all of us. But you surely walked her path, the path of devotional offering of oneself in the service of the Divine. But maybe the time I remember the most was when you came to stay at Defence Colony for some years, managing some facets of Arpana's work from here. We had ample opportunities then to reflect on so many aspects of life and mostly derive great joy in dwelling on Beloved Ma.

Truly you proved to be a partner in many ways. You were there through so many transforming events of our life. I especially remember the moment when I got the news of the terrible accident that had taken the lives of our dearest Ratti uncle, Reva didi and Priti. You were there. Your reassuring presence was of immense help at that critical time. As I dwell on these times I feel that we so lack in sharing the feelings of our heart while life still throbs. Today I wish to express my gratitude dearest sister for your presence in my life. The gusts of destiny often carry away even the most beautiful flower in their wake and so it is with us all. However I have the greatest faith that as the Gita says our journey may be interrupted by death but it carries on surely in our lives hereafter. I pray that your journey is beautiful, unhindered and speedy as you progress towards the feet of the Divine. Thank you also for waking me up to the reality that life is fragile and can pass to the beyond any moment.

Yet how very arrogant I am...

to presume that I will still be here the very next moment!

How blind I am ...that I choose to expect that these eyes will not close...

How deaf can I be that I hear not the ticking away of each moment of life... lessening this precious opportunity... God given... to be one with Him

How full of ingratitude that this mind wanders... still... to other pastures... when indeed each step should be directed towards my Maker

How inopportune this egoistic pride within, which stands as a boulder... refusing to allow me to acknowledge that each speck of what I call 'mine' is indeed His...

Thank you dearest Indu... sister, friend, partner for bringing these important facts to the fore of my heart! Your bright loving face and radiant smile shall always remain within me. Bon Voyage!"

Deepanjali Dayal:

"Bhui has always been so special and dear to me. She used to say, 'I have loved you ever since you were a little baby. Light as a feather I used to pick you up in my arms effortlessly. I can't do that any more, so come and sit on my lap!' ...and she would give me a big hug. It was during my teens that I began experiencing the deep bond of love that we shared forever. We both spent hours together chatting while I gave her a foot massage, and her favourite Kishore Kumar songs played in the background. She was always there to tell me how to right my wrongs. I often heard her say that she was so well behaved as a child that her daddy called her 'good baba'. She has always been there with me at every important step that I took.

As a human being she was full of life and enthusiasm, also very headstrong. She stood firm with the person whom she supported and spoke fearlessly for what she thought was right. Her love for the Arpana children and Ebony, our labrador, was exceptional. She cared and was concerned about each and every one of us. Like a mother she put in every effort to make things available whenever I needed them. She encouraged and boosted me with confidence always.

Sometimes she would suddenly say, 'Now my time has come!' I often got annoyed, then she



*With her niece and nephew,
Deepa and Shubham,*

would say, 'there is no need to feel so bad about it as this is the truth, we all have to go one day!' I shall strive to imbibe that which I have learnt from you Bhui. You added life to dull moments and you have loved me unconditionally. My five year old son says Indu nani is special, an angel and I love her very much. I love you too bhui."

Deepak Talwar:

"My mind goes back to 1963. The Dayal family had shifted next door to Talwar Nursing Home. I remember Induji as a very vivacious, gregarious, social, outgoing person and her smile... in my mind it was an image of an ideal teenage girl full of life. The word which comes to mind is 'life', unbridled life!

I was fortunate enough to become a son in law of their family in 1978 and all through out, my impression of Induji was of a person who wanted to experience life to the full. Now I understand she faced a lot of challenges within herself but the admirable part is how she faced those challenges and how she reconciled them within her personality so that the smiling part was predominant. In later life, she used to come to our house, full of gifts, full of bounties, always a word of nicety, enquiring about the other person, considerate and enjoying life to the fullest. Induji I know you're there, watching us, we are connected, we will always remain connected and coming and going in life will go on... but this beautiful bond of love, of taking care of each other and feeling for each other will always be there."

Premalata:

"I want to share my experience how we met and that speaks a lot of her. I was sitting alone on a bench, just parallel to the other bench where a couple other girls were sitting. We were all new to this class. As Indu came into the same aisle, the other two girls asked, "why don't you come and sit here?" She looked at me, and then as though she realized I was alone, she said "Oh I'll just sit here". She chose to sit next to me and that's where our relationship began. It was not just a relationship with me... slowly it built with my family... my mother used to say, "This girl, I want her for my family forever." So I used to joke with her, "Pick any brother you want, I have two of them." She would smile it off and say, "We'll see!"... but in her own heart I think she knew her path was different.

She moved on to Arpana, Madhuban and of course life there began in a different spectrum. But when I think of college days, anybody I saw her talk to or meet, she would make them feel better... I've never heard her speak ill of anybody. When I transitioned overseas, we didn't meet that often but whenever we spoke it was as though it was only yesterday we

were talking. Every moment when I think about it, it was not just me... many people wanted to be friends with her but I was glad she was my friend!"

Indu, you've moved on to eternity in your travels but you will always be there with me in my heart. Hopefully we'll all rejoice in her memories... I would like to celebrate her more than anything and remember her beautiful smile which I saw through the flowers sent on facebook."

Vijay Dayal:

"She was such a lovely, wonderful, kind, generous person. My memory goes back to our childhood in Civil Lines, Delhi and then boarding school in Mussoorie... we were all so close together. Here in Madhuban, she would call on me for small jobs... to take things out of her loft or put her stockings on... small, small things... which were so loving and kind of her. We used to have some arguments... but they were always covered by the blanket of love which she showed. Almost made a daily trip to our room to have tea with us. I feel so proud to be her brother. She may not be there in physical form but she is very much with me, with all of us as her love will always remain..."



A close knit family – Indu with her mummy and siblings

Sandeep Arora:

"Indu didi was dedicatedly working with us in Accounts for the last ten years and we had the opportunity to learn so much from her. She truly cared for all the activities of Arpana... whether it was making cheques in the Accounts Department or the working of the Canteen or the growth of the Hospital – she used to have daily discussions with me and even guided me in all these areas. Didi, you have gone out of our sight but will never go out of our heart. You will forever be an inspiration for me."

(The above was a gist of the online prayer meeting held to celebrate our dear Indu's life and times)

Anupam Mehta:

Everyone has spoken from their hearts as she had touched each one so so dearly. I too was fortunate to have her as a dear friend who always thought of others before seeing her own comfort. Her love was flowing like a fountain always, no matter how she felt from within. She was a shadow of Manju and we shared some beautiful moments during the Handicraft Sales at Chandigarh. Vinay and I will always miss her chats.

Arvind Kelkar:

Thanks to Deepak for the opportunity to witness a truly moving tribute to Indu which brought to life such a wide spectrum of Indu's life that kindled memories of my experience of her so spot on that I felt I was actually there. I also experienced the vastness of Ma's family that has influenced so many to give their best to this world.

Punnu Dutt:

Death never struck home so powerfully as with Indu didi's going... Shocked disbelief was the primary emotion, followed by a deep sense of loss. As days pass, I miss all the little interactions we had every single day (since we had adjoining rooms), but the abiding feeling is one of gratitude... gratitude for having known such a sincere and affectionate person and experiencing her spirit of generosity.

Many were the fairs and exhibitions I attended along with her. She definitely had a way with words! Whether it were book distributors or organisers of events, newspaper reporters or potential customers, she had a way of convincing them to help contribute to Arpana and feel privileged in the bargain! Not only did she enhance the beauty of the space we were allotted, she also made lasting friendships with the people around her.

There's much I learned from her and much to remember her by... especially the feel-good messages she delighted in sending out to everyone on her contact list.

Truly, she lives on in our hearts!



Your Grace fills my Life to Overflowing

Part 2

ABHA BHANDARI



The encounter with 'Yamraj' in Dharwad

My second meeting with Ma was destined to be truly spiritual in essence...

This story is centered around my paternal grandmother whom the entire family called 'Bibiji'.

Bibiji had known Ma long before the days of Partition... when northern India suffered painfully a division of its territory and sovereignty. In fact, Ma's mother was a first cousin to my paternal grandfather. My grandparents' roots were first in pre-partition Lahore; but with the predicament that Partition brought, the family was scattered between Delhi, Madhuban and Punjab.

My grandmother used to spend large periods of time with her daughter in Madhuban, Karnal... then in Punjab. My grandmother was immensely drawn to Ma since those early days. She would look forward to meeting Ma whenever Ma happened to travel between Jullunder (where she was posted) and Delhi. For my grandmother, Ma was 'Pushpaji' and Ma lovingly called her 'Mamiji'. For my grandmother, Ma was not only a very dear 'niece' but also a strong spiritual anchor. How powerful their bond was can be gauged clearly by the following event.

Once when Ma reached Madhuban enroute, during one of her regular 'tours' to Delhi, Bibiji was taking a bath. As she was about to do, Ma came calling from outside..."Mamiji! I have come!" Bibiji was so overwhelmed at this news that she did not realize she was bathing and still covered with soap! She



came rushing out and embraced Ma... until... she suddenly exclaimed to Ma, "Why are you wet?" It took a minute or so for her to realize that her surge of devotional ecstasy had not even allowed her to remember that she was still in the midst of bathing! When she realized, she rushed back into the washroom again! Such was the effect that Ma had on her!

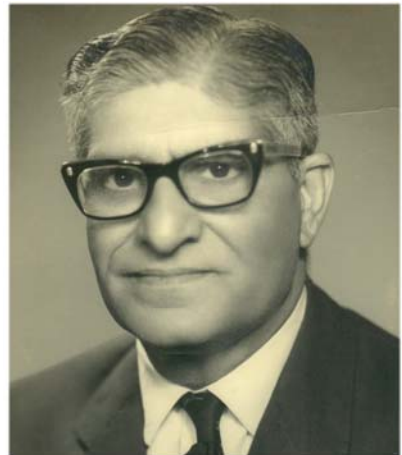
When my parents and I returned from Poona, Dad having retired from the Army as DDMS Southern Command, he took charge of the post of Principal Maulana Azaad Medical College and Dean of the then 'Irwin Hospital' now popularly known as LNJP. The year was 1964. GB Pant Hospital was to be commissioned by Jawaharlal Nehru in early December that year. My father was neck deep into hundreds of last minute details which went into the commissioning of a large civil hospital!

In the last week of November, my aunt rang Dad to say that Bibiji had suffered a heart attack! In those days, whosoever suffered such an attack was strongly advised 6 weeks of complete bed rest... allowing only a visit to the washroom! Dad, unable to extricate himself from his urgent professional

commitment, advised my aunt: “Keep Bibiji completely in bed... make sure she has the medicines prescribed by the cardiologist, and I will come to see her one of these nights.” My aunty replied “It is impossible to do so... she says she wants to go immediately to Pushpaji in Dharwad!” Dad was aghast at the very thought! That very night he drove down to Madhuban, and tried to convince his adamant and unyielding mother...“I will take you comfortably to Delhi and admit you into my hospital under my own care... you can make the visit to Dharwad when you are better!” Bibiji’s reply was unequivocal...“If you cannot arrange for my train tickets to Dharwad, I am perfectly capable of organizing them myself! But go I must!”

Bibiji’s mind was made up. She knew she had very little time in the world... and was completely sure where she wanted to spend that time... in the aura of her beloved ‘Pushpaji’. What we came to know much later was a conversation that she had earlier with Ma, when she wanted to share her misgivings about problematical knots and relationships/events that burdened her heart. Ma had told her then, “Mamiji, why do you worry? When your end is nigh, come to me and you will surely be at rest!” Bibiji knew the time had come for that very last rendezvous!

Dad knew he had failed in trying to convince his very dear mother. He had to return to Delhi the very next morning... and he left with a heavy heart... being a proficient doctor, he too knew the outcome of this journey. He made one last try when he reached Delhi. He tried to get his siblings to talk to Bibiji and cajole her into doing what was ‘safe’ for her. When they too failed, he saw the writing on the wall and purchased 3 tickets. One for Bibiji and two for Mrs. Sheila Kapur, my elder cousin and me... who was all of 12!



Maj Gen Bhandari

Dad boarded us on the train with strict instructions that if Bibiji experienced any chest pain enroute to Bombay, we should disembark and hospitalize her. Surely enough, Bibiji had pain... but she swore us to secrecy and was adamant to remain on that train till she reached Ma. Even my uncle, then posted in Poona, could not deter her!

When the train chugged into Dharwad, dusk was setting in. The golden

orb of the setting
sun was
silhouetted... an
orange globe in
the reddening
sky. The train did
not stop at a
platform as was
customary! As we
drew into
Dharwad, I could
see some people



standing on the railway tracks in the distance. When we came closer and I recognized Ma, my heart was filled with joy! I helped my grandmother to the door of our coach and as the train screeched to a standstill, I could not believe what I saw next! The height of the train door from the rail tracks would be at least 5 feet! I saw Ma... arms outstretched to greet Bibiji... and I saw Bibiji, then in her mid eighties, even in her frail condition... leap into Ma's waiting arms! And I heard Bibiji's quivering but sure words..."I have come to you to die!"

We drove down to Ma's temporary abode in Dharwad, two sheds situated at a distance of about 20 yards from each other... a little garden separating the two, with a grape vineyard greening one side of the path. This was to be our abode for the next month... an abode where I was to be witness to a spectacular phenomenon... of how to prepare for one's end... and I was about to bear witness to the miracle of descending peace in the midst of turmoil.

Since I had last seen Ma at Kirkee, she was always in my innermost heart. I would write an occasional letter to her to convey that I was missing her immensely. There was never a time she would not reply... albeit, through a single line written on someone else's letter to me. Then we heard that Ma had gone to Dharwad. And here I was... once again with my 'Ma'... a fount of love, joy and remarkable energy, despite her extremely frail health. I may mention here that although Ma had, in her childhood, been a Punjab champion in lawn tennis, table tennis and badminton and had also led the Punjab hockey team, she always did so with tight bandages tied around her calves. Poor blood circulation had always been a problem... and now that she was in Dharwad, this problem was accentuated. So much so, that she often had fainting bouts...

However, no physical travail could overcome her strong propensity to respond completely and wholly to anyone who needed her!

Now that Bibiji was with her at Dharwad, Ma's entire attention was focussed on her. Recognizing that the end was nigh, and that the turmoil within was immense, Ma surrounded Bibiji with the love and knowledge that she required so urgently to bring her to a peaceful equanimity and prepare her to fly on wings of joyous poise to the next destination of her *Atma* self.

Bibiji was full of remorse regarding various incidents of her life, where she thought she could have behaved differently towards her kin... and other associates. She wondered how she could now rectify those happenings, since many of those she felt she had 'ignored' or treated wrongly, were no longer there! Anxiously, she would wait for Ma to come to her every morning, to share her load of remorse... and of course Ma was there... unflinching.

As Ma would come to Bibiji's bedside, a soft refrain of Lord Ram's Name would begin every 'session'... with all present singing the Lord's name in soft tones... paving the way for a meaningful interaction between the 'devotee' Bibiji, and her Beloved 'Ma'. I was all of 12, going on to 13... but even I could see the peace that began to descend upon Bibiji's face day by day! Ma explained to Bibiji that no one has any control whatsoever over the physical and gross situations that develop through life... these are all a natural flow of destiny. What we do externally is actually a dictat of the Divine hand... and we cannot do differently. What really makes a difference is our inner thoughts... and she assured Bibiji, that she being such a gentle and pure soul, she had no cause whatsoever for worry! She urged Bibiji to lay all her *karmas* at the feet of her Lord, because all her *karmas* were, indeed, pure in essence. In doing so, she would experience peace in the innermost core of her heart!



Bibiji

Bibiji would listen carefully to Ma... and as she listened, I could see the worry

lines on her forehead reduce! A calm was descending into her heart, which reflected in the soft smile on her face. When Ma held her hand, it was as though she was conducting a quiet confidence through her touch to Bibiji... a veritable miracle was happening before my eyes... and I could only look on in wonder. The conversation between them was assiduously recorded in writing by Chhote Ma, and can be used as a veritable resource for anyone in the same predicament!

We had reached Dharwad on the 3rd of December 1964. My parents reached there on the 8th, as soon as Dad's duties allowed him to come away. Some of my other aunts and uncles and cousins also reached there, and were all very lovingly received and looked after by Ma and her little 'family' of *sadhaks*. Subsequently, they too were witness to the deeply moving conversations taking place between Bibiji and Ma.

On the 13th of December, when Ma awoke early in the morning, she said to Chhote Ma, "Yamraj will come today... but will have to return empty handed... because Mamiji is not ready yet..." Chhote Ma was startled, but did not convey the message to anyone else! Surely enough, by 12 noon, Bibiji's condition deteriorated. Her blood pressure had dropped and her heartbeat had begun to become irregular. Dad, an excellent physician himself, recognized the 'writing on the wall'...and immediately called in a Cardiologist from nearby Belgaum Civil Hospital for consultation.

When the Cardiologist arrived, Bibiji's condition became critical, despite the many endeavours by the Cardiologist to revive her blood pressure. After about an hour of trying, he declared... "It is now a matter of an hour or so... you can place the patient on the ground!" He then returned to Belgaum.

When Ma entered Bibiji's room, she was 'sinking'...Ma sat at Bibiji's bedside and softly began to sing the '*Ram dhun*'... the very same tune is sung till this day in the temple at Arpana. Other members of the family sitting around Bibiji also joined in the chant... Dad was constantly monitoring Bibiji's blood pressure. After barely 15 minutes of the soft recitation of the sacred Name of 'Ram', Bibiji opened her eyes... Dad looked at Ma and smiled... hope seemed to fill his eyes... Bibiji's blood pressure was almost back to normal! In another hour's time, Bibiji was once again urging Ma to answer some of her queries! Ma gently smiled at her and said... "More tomorrow Mamiji... you rest now!"

Surely, Yamraj had come and returned empty handed!

It was not as though through all her busy schedule with Bibiji, Ma did not have her watchful and loving eye over the rest of the 'family'! Since I had reached Dharwad on the 3rd, delightful interludes with Ma during that time still illumine my heart! Every moment with a spiritually evolved Being is bound to lift one's soul... and what I received was a complete 'package' of character building moments... which were all put before me in a beautiful playway method... which was Ma's unique method of interaction with all! Without being aware, we were actually held by the hand and led into the arena of value insemination and character moulding through happy and fun activities... often led by Ma herself!



I and my lovely newfound friends/sisters... Anu and Minni were woken at 5 am. every morning... (a time hitherto unheard of and completely unacceptable to me). We were provided with beautifully bound copies of the Srimad Bhagavad Gita which had interleaves of writing space... to introduce us to Ma's very first reading of the Gita... an appropriate beginning to our journey of spiritual learning. How wonderful I felt to be able to write in this beautiful book... with new pens provided, and hot cups of tea handed over to us to start our day! From the nearby defence quarters, nationalistic songs rang out over speakers... "*Ai mere watan ke logon, zara aankh mein bhar lo paani...*" These intermingled lessons of spirituality and nationality provided an unforgettable atmosphere! Till this day, whenever I hear this strongly emotive song by Lataji, those nostalgic mornings still come to mind!

And how full of magic were those beautiful sessions of story telling with Ma! I used to look forward to the time when Ma would step out of Bibiji's room, and see us sitting in the adjoining room... "Would you like to hear a story?" Her offer was accepted joyously and instantaneously... for Ma's story telling was a virtual enactment of the event as it must have taken place millenniums ago! The beautiful story of Shabri no longer remained a mere story... it was as if we were seeing Shabri before our very eyes... as



she cautiously left her family home to search for what she believed to be more 'valuable'... how she found her 'Guru' who provided her with the assurance that she would surely see Ram one day... and then that surreal moment when Lord Ram actually appeared before her and lovingly embraced her as 'Ma'! Ma's

expressions, her words and her aura unfolded before me a magical world... hitherto unexperienced by me. I found myself wiping away a tear every now and then... so realistic was Ma's description and enactment of this poignant story!

Also unforgettable was the peace bequeathed by Ma's mere presence... I would be drawn to a little foyer outside her bedroom and would 'offer' to sit there, ostensibly to keep watch in case Ma needed anything... but in reality, to just be in her close proximity! One day as I sat there, I noticed a snake with beautiful markings slither into the entrance... and then just remain stationary there. I would normally have been terror stricken... but such was the ambience of Ma's presence that even the snake seemed to soak it in... having spent a few moments there, it turned around and slithered back into the garden outside... as though having 'recharged' its cells! It is after it left that I was left wondering if this incidence was a figment of my imagination...? But no... I knew it had happened when that very day Papaji remarked over dinner, "As I was walking to Ma's room this morning, I noticed a very beautiful snake almost leading my path! It had such a remarkable design that I could not lift my eyes from it!" I realized that I was not the only one who would take refuge in Ma's foyer to soak in Her divine aura!

To be in Ma's presence was indeed magical... but her plans for us were also in complete identification with our age and interests! Ever so often she would encourage us to go for picnics... or the movies... making all the required arrangements, but ensuring the fun element remained intact as we were told to walk to our destination... adding to the adventure... but making sure that we were safe and well looked after!

However, the central focus of my attention remained Ma's interaction with Bibiji. I noticed how calm Bibiji had become... a sweet smile always touching her lips whenever Ma came into her room. She always sought Ma's hand holding hers and derived amazing solace and strength from that touch. It was the 21st of December... all seemed to be going perfectly well... Bibiji seemed to be much better than before... but surprisingly, Ma said to Chhote Ma that morning, "Today is Bibiji's last day!" Surely, by the afternoon, Bibiji slipped into unconsciousness and then, as gently as she had lived, she passed into the arms of her Maker. Ma was by her side... Ram's Name filling the air in Ma's mellifluous invocation of grace.



With Bibiji's passing away, a reaffirmation of my decision to spend the rest of my life with Ma was as strong as ever. I had been witness to the *Shanti mantra* of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad... "From Asat unto Sat, from darkness unto Light... from death unto immortality... Lead me O Divine hand!" I felt I could not distance myself from this innate divinity I experienced in the form of Beloved Ma.

When my parents told me it was time to return to Delhi, I embraced Ma and asked her shyly... "Can I not live here with you?" She hugged me and said, "Little one, you must return with your parents... you must continue your studies... and surely that day will come when you have completed your education... when you will come to stay with me! But be sure to write a letter to me every day till then!" Ma then gave me a hardbound note book embossed with 'Ram'. She said, "Write your feelings in this every day! It is for me, so while you are here, show it to me every day... and when you return, write your daily feelings to me!" Did it feel odd that someone who was so much older... and revered by so many... would take the time to read a little girl's thoughts... that too on a daily basis? No... not at all! I was sure that she herself would read each word... and respond... such was the assurance of Ma's love.

...to be continued



ANNE ROBINSON

A few months ago, a friend asked, “How could a loving God create situations like the pandemic where so many people suffer and die?”

As a Christian from the USA myself, I could understand her confusion. Being at Arpana for over 40 years, I have journeyed from perplexity, bewilderment and turmoil – to a haven of joy and peace through the study and practice of Vedant, as explained and lived by Param Pujya Ma.

My response...

In the Beginning...

The Vedantic view is that the SELF (God) created, out of Himself/Herself, the material world, endowing consciousness (which is an aspect of SELF) in certain forms, so that an infinity of beings could exist and interact.

The Downfall...

Then after eons of births and re-births, those beings forgot that they were ‘parts’ of the SELF and increasingly felt that they were the body in which they resided. Calling themselves ‘I’, each began to act according to what each felt was best for the body they were in.

They soon fell broadly into 3 types:

1. the least aware were ‘tamsic’, only wanting to satisfy the senses and do the least amount of work possible;

2. the next was 'rajsic' who were of the 'you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours' variety; and
3. the most aware were 'satvic' who wanted to help others so they would feel good and gain the admiration of others.

Creator God and Ego

But they all thought that they were the doers, that they made decisions and they carried out the actions they did. They did not realize the truth – that everything in the world was the result of the interactions of qualities. There are only egoistic qualities and humane qualities. The Ego thinks “I am the most important being in the world and everyone should admire me and do what I say!”

The humane person is objective and realizes that that statement is ludicrous. He says, “The Creator God has made the world, the universe and each being in it! The infinite intricacy and complexity is immeasurably beyond comprehension by any human intellect. The Creator God is obviously greater than anything created!” The humane person goes on to appreciate that any person created is created by the Creator God and, therefore, is a child of the Creator God.

Good Versus Evil

All situations are also created by the interactions of qualities, i.e. an egoistic person enslaves another and a humane person works to free him. Ego steals, cheats, lies and takes by force. Humane persons are prodded by their humane qualities to counter the situations and to help those victimized. Humane countering Ego. Good countering Evil.

The drama of the world requires ego (which is the primal ignorance) so that the humane qualities can shine and conquer. Without the backdrop of ego, one could never see the humane qualities – just as you cannot see white when the whole backdrop is the same white.

And, when one's humane qualities encompass everyone, they become divine qualities – the qualities SELF possesses! i.e. when we love everyone, not just a few people, our love goes from egoistic and possessive to a desire for the good of everyone. This is the pathway to regaining the SELF!

This is what Jesus and all the avatars/prophets promised us if we gave up our egoistic qualities and took on the qualities of SELF – that we would become the SELF!

Feeling and Emotion

One more part is required in order to embrace this concept – the meaning of feeling. Our birthright is the peace, joy and love that we feel when all

is well with our soul. This only happens if we are devoid of ego.

Most of us have only experienced this occasionally and some of us have never been able to pin down such an experience. That is because our lives are run according to our ego – i.e. we do everything with the goal of making things better for our own body-mind-intellect unit. Ego means being attached to this body-mind-intellect (b-m-i) unit. Attachment to this b-m-i unit results in emotion.

Emotion measures our success and failure in getting what Ego wants.

Emotion is not the same as feeling: emotion is the subset of feeling that happens when ego is or is not getting what it wants. In other words, we can feel wonderfully joyful, enthusiastic and peaceful when we have no ego. But as soon as ego gets attached, we start worrying that we will not get what we want, what we have will be taken away or that others will not admire/obey us. We get hysterically happy and hyped up if things are going well for this ego or depressed when they are not. This is getting emotional – and it is all due to whether the ego is getting what it wants or not!

Emotion is not based on objective reality but on ego's point of view. We give up the inner haven of peace, joy and love that is our birthright for the emotional roller coaster that is not in our control.

When we see from the point of view of the Creator, the base is always joy and peace and love for all.

Viewing the Drama

It is important to know what emotion is when we look at the drama that SELF creates. Otherwise, we judge and condemn SELF for causing such emotional pain in the world. We may be able to see that what a person does has consequences and falling out a tree may result in a broken arm, but it is more difficult to be at peace within when seeing the emotional pain people go through.

Emotional pain is something we do to ourselves. If we know how to live, emotional pain need not be a factor.

Knowing this, we can see a little more objectively. The pain of losing a loved one can be turned into the beauty of having had such a one in your life and gratitude to God for that gift. When you feel rejected or humiliated, if you can see that it is your ego that is affronted, you can turn to God for love and comfort and get on the right track again. You may even be able to see that the rejection and humiliation have let you see yourself better and given you the motivation to change your negative traits that elicited such reactions.

Knowledge, practiced in our lives, enables us to become more like the SELF

The Goal – Becoming One with the Self

Over eons, the greater the distance between the individual and the Self, the more restless, confused, angry and miserable he/she became. But we all yearn to be happy, find fulfilment and have the love of the other(s). On a deep, perhaps unconscious level, we all are yearning to become one with the Self where truth, clarity of awareness and joy abide.

In *shloka* 14 of Chapter 8 of the *Srimad Bhagavad Gita*, the Lord narrates the simple method of attaining the Self/God/the Lord –

“O Arjuna, whosoever remembers Me constantly with an undivided mind, I am easily obtainable for that Yogi who is ever absorbed in Me.”

Param Pujya Ma explains in the *Srimad Bhagavad Gita – a Guide to Daily Living*:

“Little one, the Lord cannot be attained through knowledge. He cannot be achieved through extensive tapas (endurance and forbearance).

“If you truly love, all these will naturally follow. If the Lord’s memory is constant within your heart, you can attain Him with ease.

“If He is always beside you as your Witness, you can attain Him with ease.

“They who do not let Him out of their memory even for a moment, attain His Essence with ease.

“When your desire is for the Lord, He will be at your side. He will never sever his relationship with you.

“Yoga is union with the Beloved. Yoga is love. When such love happens, the Yogi cannot forget his Beloved even for an instant. That individual lives only for his Beloved. Ultimately, only the Beloved remains.

“This is Yoga. This is love. This is the Truth. This is the Name divine. This is the aspirant’s hope, his thirst and his quest.”

So I Say to my Friend

Difficulties are the path to Truth-Awareness-Bliss that we find in Oneness with the Lord. We can either be miserable or we can use these as lessons to gain the Heaven of His Presence. ❖



O Traveller!
You journey to the Abode of the Lord...

PURNIMA

A bright vibrant personality... from the world passes on
What remains is the 'body', the spirit long since gone.

The body we burn, the body we mourn...
Bears no relation to anyone, mere bones in the urn.

The bones too we immerse ...as we bid final goodbye
There's nothing to hold on to ...but memories of days gone by.

We remember a smile... a word – harsh or kind
Conversations we had... the brilliance of a mind!

The traits we admired, the skills we envied
A powerhouse of talent, now lost to mankind.

The world one inhabits... in a moment meaningless becomes
As the prana leaves the body... and to death life succumbs.

This is a fate that we all have in store
Good, bad, pauper, king, cannot live for evermore.

So in the play of life... let's do justice to our role
That the fragrance we leave behind... is of a good soul.



The Epitome of Dhairya...



Eshi Aunt

A TRIBUTE BY ABHA BHANDARI

Mrs. Krishna Dayal, lovingly known as 'Eshi Aunt' silently passed into the embrace of the Lord having suffered an illness borne with her normal spirit of acceptance and gracious homage to the Divine...

Arpana pays its respects to this beautiful soul

My *Pranams* to the beautiful fragrance dearest Eshi Aunt leaves behind...

Thinking back on the essence of dearest Eshi Aunt, I think *Dhairya* is the word that completely describes her. In the 50 years that I knew her, she was ever calm, ever loving, ever blessing... to my understanding, such a state of being can only emerge from one who has understood the essence and truth of life and living.

It was Eshi Aunt's quiet devotion to spirituality that drew her closer to Ma. Nothing was brandished... the underlying waters were deep... Her devotion lay in her heart... in her eyes... She had known Ma through her youth, but took no time to acknowledge the One who could take her forward to new spiritual horizons. I remember clearly, her heartfelt quest which reflected in her questions to Ma in the little *mandir* at E 22 Defence

Colony in the late 60s... There was never an occasion when Eshi Aunt and Uncle were not there at 6.30 every morning when Ma happened to visit Delhi. It was her quiet resoluteness that drew them to the decision to spend time at Madhuban... but then destiny deemed otherwise.



Eshi aunt (right) with Puja Ma and Dr. Mrs. Kamla Bhandari

My mind goes back to the early seventies... when the music of Arpana's play 'Shabri' was being recorded. Eshi Aunt and Uncle Dayal so readily made their home at Shah Jahan Road available to all of us... we must have been at least 20 people per day... every day... all the day... for over a month! Musicians, singers, cast and crew! It was not a large flat... but the magnanimous hearts that owned it, made it seem palatial. There was room for everyone! And the food and every requirement was micromanaged by Eshi Aunt who always looked as though she was not doing anything... and had not left the comfort of the sofa where she sat knitting all day! Such was her charming demeanour. Blessings, *satsangs*, an appreciation of the arts, fun, jokes... a nostalgic cocktail of aromatic memories still wafts in my mind when I remember those days.

And then came that difficult era... when her husband, Uncle Dayal's health declined... when her own malignancy was discovered and she had



to undergo the difficult and long treatment of cancer. Through all this, her devotion sustained her. Again, never a complaint... never the thought "Why have you given me this suffering Lord"... the travails of the family were considerably lessened by

her positive attitude at all times. I remember, when I went to meet her once in AIIMS, all I received from her was blessings.

With great fortitude, she endured the separation from her life partner when finally, Uncle passed on to his next destination...

It is indeed my loss that my meetings with her in the last two decades of her life were few and far in between... but whenever I did get the privilege of meeting with her, I would deeply appreciate the depth of her acceptance of all that destiny brought. To absorb the vicissitudes of what destiny brought to her was her immense forte... She would endure all dualities with immense devotional acceptance.

How much we learn from our beautiful elders... how blessed are we to have had the good fortune to witness their exceptional qualities closely and learn how life must be led happily... in peace and with the spirit of utter fulfilment.

The Gita says that no step taken towards the divine is ever wasted... it catches one up in one's next life... I am sure that wherever the Lord takes the pure soul of Eshi Aunty, she will again be distributing her love freely but quietly... and will once again be a blessing to all who are touched by her...

Bon voyage dearest Eshi Aunty... may you ever be at peace and abide in utter joy. My homage to you and the beauty that you radiated! Your favourite song used to be...*"Chhupa lo yun dil mein pyaar mera... ki jaise mandir mein lau diye ki!"*... surely dearest Eshi Aunty, your love and blessings shall always remain deep in our hearts as the warmth of that flame of devotion filled yours!

"When death overtakes us,
all that we **have** is left to others;
all that we **are** we take with us."





Param Pujya Ma

Arpana

Newsletter

ARPANA TRUST, Madhuban,
Karnal, Haryana, India
March 2021

Arpana Ashram

Mandir Online Sessions

Param Pujya Ma gave us a simple formula for bonding as a spiritual family... 'Pray together, Work together, Eat together!' Perhaps this would be a classic formula for bonding in every family! The Arpana family too endeavours to adhere to this formula, but for the intervention of COVID!

However, online Zoom sessions are helping the family to connect every morning and evening... and can also be attended by Arpana members all over the world! Since we have been conditioned to live in the world of the mind since birth, these sessions are superb opportunities to glimpse the difference between the Real and the unreal, showing us the way to joy, fulfilment and peace.

Mrityu se Amrit ki Or – Studying Ma's Words

Remembering our very dear Indu Dayal, who passed away on 9th January, Ma's words from 'Mrityu se Amrit ki Or' were studied in the Arpana mandir until 24th January, when Indu's ashes were taken to Ganga Ma. This discourse provides answers to the meaning behind the habitual rituals conducted after the passing away of a dear one.



Delhi Programs

Virtual Celebrations

Children's Day and remembering Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru.

Christmas festivities with Santa Claus!

Republic Day – a special National Holiday!

Students used Zoom to celebrate these festivals through preparing plays, poems and action songs as well as making posters and slogans.



Performance of 'Beauty & the Beast'



Regular Senior Classes Initiated

In line with Government guidance, regular classes were started for standards 9-12 from January 2021. The senior students have shown prodigious interest and exemplary attendance in offline classes and are coming to the Centre regularly.

Distribution of Free Items

Stationery: Essential supplies for school

Hygiene Kits: Emphasis on sanitation for the ongoing pandemic.

Chavanprash: Emphasis on building one's immunity with this Ayurvedic Tonic

Blankets: Warmth for the winter chill

Warm Jackets: Especially appreciated by children of all age groups during winter!



Deep gratitude for education support from Aviva plc, UK (Preschool Balvatika), Essel Foundation, New Delhi (Senior Classes), Technip India (Primary Classes), Caring Hand for Children, USA (Middle Classes), and Arpana Canada (Middle Classes).

Haryana Rural Empowerment

The Differently Abled – Strengthening Their Communities!

On 14th December 2020, 12 disabled persons visited the District Social Welfare Department to attend a training session on voter registration for Panchayat Elections held by Election officials. Led by the president of Sangarsh Federation, all 12 members committed to promote registration of new voters in their villages for the upcoming election.



Shri Satyawar, District Social Welfare officer, introduces the delegation to the subject of election

Celebrating World Disability Day

The Arpana premises, in village Budhakhera, were buzzing with activity and excitement on 3rd Dec. 2020.

The Sangarsh Federation held its annual general body meeting and also celebrated World Disability Day, by arranging Mehndi, Rangoli and Painting competitions for disabled children and adults. ‘My story’, a writing competition, and paper bag making were also organized in which PWD’s enthusiastically took part. Stage performances by persons with disability added to the festivities. Lunch was served by SWG members of village Kailash.



Camp for Assistive Devices

A screening camp was held by Deen Dayal Upadhyay Organization for those who needed assistive devices like mobility aids, hearing aids etc.

Persons with disability (PWDs) register with officials of Deen Dayal Institute

Our deep gratitude to the Tides Foundation, USA, and the India Development & Relief Fund (IDRF), USA, for grants for rural development programs

Arpana Hospital

COVID-19 Vaccination

106 staff members of Arpana Hospital were administered the 1st dose of COVID-19 vaccine on 22nd January 2021. 95 staff members received the second dose on 19th February. 45 senior persons at the Arpana complex received their first vaccination in the first week of March.

Brij Bhushan

Brij Bushan, a labourer, lives in Gharaunda with his wife and three children. After enduring abdominal pain and fever with chills for 10-12 days, he had gone to a local hospital, but they referred him to Arpana. When he arrived, he was in severe pain. He was admitted at once and given an ultrasound test.



The diagnosis showed cholecystitis and hepatic abscess. Treatment was started immediately by the doctor including an aspiration procedure to remove extraneous substances like air, body fluids, or bone fragments from the affected area. After six days, he was discharged in good condition. His family members were grateful to the doctor and staff of Arpana Hospital for his excellent care and treatment.

Deep gratitude to the magnanimous individuals and organizations, especially the Baij Nath Bhandari Charitable Trust, for sponsoring medical care for the poor.

Your compassionate support sustains Arpana's Services

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Mr. Vinod Prakash, President, IDRF, 5821 Mossrock Drive, North Bethesda, MD 20852

Mr. Jagjit Singh, AID for Indian Development, 84 Stuart Court, Los Altos, CA 94022-2249

Send contributions to Arpana Canada:

c/o Mrs. Sue Bhanot, 7 Scarlett Drive, Brampton, Ontario L6Y 3S9, Canada

Please let us know by email or telephone, whenever you transfer funds to Arpana.

Information & Resources Office: 91-184-2390905 Executive Director: 91-9818600644

emails: **at@arpana.org** and **arct@arpana.org**

Contact person: Mrs. Aruna Dayal, Director Development. Mobile 91-9991687310

Websites: **www.arpana.org** **www.arpanaservices.org**

Arpana Ashram

Research

Publications & CDs

Arpana endeavours to share its treasure of inspiration – the life, words and precept of *Pujya Ma*, through the publication of books and cassettes.

Publications

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Contact for Questions, Suggestions and Donations:

Mr. Harishwar Dayal, Executive Director, Arpana Group of Trusts, Madhuban, Karnal - 132037. Haryana
Tel: (0184) 2380801-802, 2380980 Fax: 2380810 Email: at@arpana.org Website: www.arpana.org

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