

THE WILL TO WILL NOT

The mind flits fast from one idea to another; it fondles for a moment and forsakes the next. You may manage to keep your mouths shut, but it is next to impossible to keep the mind shut. Mind is of that nature; it is woven so out of the yarn of desire. Its characteristic is to flutter and flit, hither and thither, through the outlets of the senses, into the external world of colour, sound, taste, smell and touch. But it can be tamed and put to good use by man. If we keep it engaged in good pursuits and good adventures, particularly in the contemplation of the Universal, the Absolute, the Eternal, that is to say, of God, then, it will not go astray and land man in ruin; for, God is the source of undying strength, of lasting joy and the deepest wisdom. The age span, 16-30 years, is crucial, for that is the period when life adds sweetness to itself, when talents, skills, and attitudes are accumulated, sublimated and sanctified. If the tonic of unselfish Seva (service) is administered to the mind during this period, life's mission is fulfilled—for the process of sublimation and sanctification will be hastened by this tonic. Do not serve for the sake of reward, attracting attention, or earning gratitude, or from a sense of pride at your own superiority in skill, wealth, status or authority. Serve because you are urged by Love. When you succeed, ascribe the success to the Grace of God, who urged you on, as Love within you. When you fail, ascribe the failure to your own inadequacy, insincerity or ignorance. Examine the springs of action, disinfect them from all trace of ego. Do not throw the blame on the recipients of the Seva, or on your collaborators and co-workers, or on God.

God Allows You To Claim That You Have Served

Do not revel in the conceit that you are members of the Seva Dal—an opportunity by which thousands in this city can well profit. Egoism of that nature can undermine your efficiency as a Dal member; it will certainly undermine your spiritual progress. The sense of 'I' and 'Mine' grows out of the ignorance of the majesty of God and His immanence. Anger and greed are the progeny of this evil. This malignant quartete is the root of all the calamities that man encounters upon earth. Seva in all its forms, all the world over, is primarily *Sadhana*—spiritual discipline, mental clean up. Without the inspiration given by that attitude, the urge is bound to ebb and grow dry; or, it may meander into pride and pomp. Just think for a moment: Are you serving God? Or, is God serving you? When a pilgrim stands waist deep in the Ganges, takes in his palms the sacred water and, reciting an invocatory formula, pours the water as an offering to the Deity, or *Arpan* as he calls it, what he has done is only poured Ganges into Ganges. When you offer milk to a hungry child, or a blanket to a shivering brother on the pavement, you are but placing a gift of God into the hands of another gift to God! You are reposing the gift of God in a repository of the Divine Principle! God serves; He allows you to claim that you have served! Without His Will, not a single blade of grass can quiver in the breeze. Fill every moment with

gratitude to the Giver and the Recipient of all gifts. Nurture the will to 'give', to renounce the little for the 'big' the momentary for the sake of the momentous? The Seva Dal badge is not a decoration, which can be secured without a 'price'. It is a symbol of high character, generous feelings and steady endeavour. It is the external indicator of internal enthusiasm and strength, skill and faith. As iron is drawn by the magnet, these qualities that shine through you, will draw the dejected, the downcast and the distressed towards you. If you are proud and self-centred, blind to the kinship that binds all in fraternal love, the badge is a betrayal.

Progress And Peace Depend Upon Sacrifice

Eating is followed by elimination; inhalation has to be followed by exhalation; blood has to flow in and flow through, to circulate and maintain health. Taking in has to be succeeded by giving up; they are the obverse and reverse of the same process. This is true of individuals, societies, nations and the human race. Progress and peace depend upon sacrifice, renunciation and 'service'. Do not circumscribe your Seva to the time when I am in Bombay, or to the limits of the Dharmakshetra. Be alert to the call, everywhere, at all times; be ready with the smile, the kind word, the useful suggestion, the knowledgeable care, the pleasant reply. Look about for chances to relieve, rescue or resuscitate. Train yourselves that you may render help quickly and well. Seva is the most rewarding form of austerity, the most satisfying and the most pleasurable! It springs out of Love and it scatters Love in profusion. It plants a seed on stone and is delighted to see it sprout! Plant it with Love, and the seed will discover Love inside the stone and draw sustenance therefrom.

Japa And Dhyana Will Render You More Efficient

Dr. Mistry has mentioned in his report that you are doing good work in Bombay, donating blood, visiting hospital wards, maintaining First Aid Centres in your blocks, leading Bhajans, promoting Bal Vihars, etc. But, it is not the quantity that matters; nor is it the variety. It is the inner joy, the Love that you radiate that is important. Mere sentiment and sympathy are of no use; they must be regulated by intelligence. Shower cheer on the sad; soothe those that have lost the way; close your eye to the faults of others, but keep them open to discover your own. All these are hard jobs. Practice alone can make you perfect - practice, not only in the item of service, but, in meditation on the Divine. *Japa* (inner chanting of holy words) and *Dhyana* (meditation) will render you more and more efficient in the field of service. *Dhyana* is necessary, since it leads to *Dharana* (fixing the mind steadily on some desirable objective) and *Samadhi* (perfect equanimity). Practise *Dharana*, fixing your gaze at night, when you sleep on the terrace in the open, on a star that shines above your head! The practise of Seva will cleanse the mind and sharpen concentration. Many members of the Seva Dal have told Me that they are now able to do *Dhyana*

longer and steadier. There are some who recommend drugs, soothers, and the like, to those eager to do *Dhyana*. But they do not know that drugs are deceptive, debilitating and dangerous, they have deleterious consequences. I recommend Seva. You may be full of the urge to serve, but without vigilance and intelligence, service cannot be fruitful. Each little detail has to be attended to. For example, you compel some people to sit down, instead of standing and obstructing the view for others; you do not realise that there are some who are unable to squat on the floor as a result of physical handicaps! You move more at the back and on the sides of the gatherings, leaving the central mass unattended. You need not fuss around Me; attend rather to the needs of the old, the sick, the children, those in the sun, the thirsty, the exhausted. Do not hurt the feelings of anyone, by harsh treatment. Do not hinder any one's chance of *Darshan*. Show each one the courtesy you extend to the guests you receive at your own homes. This is your home and they are your guests. Let them have sweet memories of their visit to Dharmakshetra and of the Seva Dal. This is an *Adhyatmik* army - a spiritual platoon - engaged in cleansing itself. This movement must spread fast in India and march soon into overseas lands. Members of the Dal can be sent to other places in order to train others in this practical *Vedanta* (philosophical essence of the *Vedas*). For, if a person is imbued with the urge to serve and the belief that all are embodiments of the Divine Principle, that is itself the most potent *Japa* the most beneficent *Dhyana*. Practise what you preach; be what you profess to be. Your word and your work have to tally. Keep your senses and the mind, under rigorous control; be sweet and soft in speech, do not injure the feelings of even a little child. Then, this Dharmakshetra will become a Prasanthi Nilayam, the Abode of Peace and Joy. If the Seva Dal and the volunteers of Bombay city, men and women train themselves on these lines, and succeed in this *Sadhana*, one of the festivals now celebrated at Prasanthi Nilayam can well be held here! We can tell people that they got this grand chance as a result of the goodness, virtue and efficiency of the Seva Dal.

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