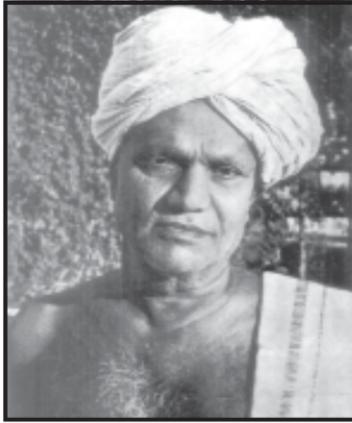


॥ Hari:Om ॥

Biography of **Shri Mota**

**A Revolutionary
Self-realized Saint
of Gujarat**



**Translated by :
Prof. H. G. Chhikniwala**

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Publisher's Note

God's grace has enabled us to be fortunate enough to present this English translation, our ninth publication in the last five years of Pujya Shri Mota's 'Life' a part of his biography, published in 1975 in Gujarati by Ishvar Petalika & others.

The 'Life' was authenticated by Shri Mota himself before publication. It has gone into several reprints and is also being revised. Ours is its first English translation, based on his letters, conversations, discourses, etc. published later on.

We are thankful to Prof. H. G. Chhikniwala for preparing this valuable translation in time, which is also faithful in tone and true in detail to the spirit of the original.

We also thank many of our well-wishers who prefer to remain unknown, for their kind help and financial assistance in making this publication possible.

We also acknowledge our heartfelt gratitude to the devoted trustees of Shri Hari:Om Ashram, Nadiad, as well as Surat.

We hope this small volume will come to be appreciated by readers and admirers of Pujya Shri Mota.

We very gratefully acknowledge a **very hefty donation towards the publication of this book, from Master Shiva Ketul Patel of U.S.A.**, who enables us to offer this book at less than half of its cost price. We

are thankful to him for his generous help in making Pujya Shri Mota's priceless literature available to readers at a very reasonable price. Pujya Shri Mota's books are all in Gujarati only and deserve to be translated into Hindi as well as in English, of which the demand is increasing day by day. Books like 'Prem', 'Karma Gatha', 'Raga-dweshha', etc. are waiting to be translated.

We are also very thankful to Shri Sanatbhai V. Patel, Managing Trustee of Hari: Om Ashram, Nadiad, and to Shri Rajendrabhai Raval, Trustee of Hari:Om Ashram, Nadiad, for their valuable help and encouragement in the publication of Pujya Shri Mota's books.

Thanks.

Hari:Om.

(February, 2013)

Parija Hari Sharedalal

50.42, 40th Street,

LIC Sunny Side,

New York 111004, USA

Contact 718 361 7381

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**A Word about Author,
Pujya Shri Mota**

(Sept. 1898 to July 1976)

This little book is just a fragment of an unfinished autobiography of a Saint of Gujarat. It narrates in his own words, events and experiences (in chronological sequence) of an ardent, soul, a Gandhian social worker, during the freedom struggle and also after independence, who grew to be a spiritual saint, known as MOTA. He was inspired by Gandhian ideals, worked religiously for the Harijan Sewak Sangh for many years, lived in the Sabarmati Ashram and also in other ashrams, collected funds for the Sangh, lived frugally and left his university education incomplete at Mahatma Gandhiji's behest.

Born in Savali near Vadodara, as Chunilal Asharam Bhagat, he grew to be a saint and established ashrams in Nadiad, Surat, Kumbhakonam near Trichi, etc. He was guided by various saints on the path of spirituality, Shri Dhuniwala Dadaji, who was his Sadguru, Shri Sai Baba of Shirdi, Shri Balyogi, Shri Upasani Maharaj. In his early life he had also attempted a suicide by plunging into the river Narmada at Garudeshwar, but was miraculously saved.

That made him aware of his Life's mission. He laid great emphasis on the continuous chanting or recitation of the mantra Hari:Om which has its proven magical effects.

He also emphasized observing silence, self-purification by means of 'guna' and 'bhava' and wrote books numbering 62, to collect donations to build rooms for primary schools in villages, to encourage sports, swimming competitions, scientific research, social service, etc. and donated lakhs of rupees initially for the publication of a Gujarati encyclopaedia which

is now being published as ‘Vishwakosh’ from Ahmedabad. 25 volumes are already out and some are also being revised and reprinted. He never used or allowed to be used a single paisa for his own personal needs. He chose his own time, place and manner of death and left a will stating that no monuments be built of bricks and mortar, to commemorate his name and memory. He always shunned publicity of every kind, except through his books and allowed observance of only a couple of festivals in the last few years to help his followers to grow spiritually to develop a strong bond, and thus uplift the society. Thousands of his followers in India and abroad are helped spiritually to enjoy a peaceful life and spread the mantra of “Hari:Om”.

They also believe in his promise to help them whenever they remember him and pray sincerely : “I am omnipresent”. Pujya Mota was a rare saint of Gujarat, who lived a simple life with the poor and very common people in rural areas.

A kind of new secular interest, especially among the rising younger generation, is evident in the increasing number of Hari:Om ‘Dhoon’ and ‘Nama-Samaran’ sessions, occurring almost in all parts of Ahmedabad, every week, regularly, attended by followers and admirers, young and old, with enthusiasm. Interest in Pujya Mota’s thought and teaching is also evident from the increasing sale of his books in Gujarati and English, and Hindi. A very regular Hari:Om ‘Dhoon’ session also occurs in New Jersey (USA) every month. It shows us how Pujya Mota’s ‘presence’ is inspiring all people. Let us hope his message spreads all over the World to make our lives happy, and the World a better place for the whole of Humanity.

Hari:Om.

(January, 2013)

– Prof. H. G. Chhikniwala

A Divine Touch

Literature regarding Pujya Mota's life and work and letters is already available under various titles published so far. However, Shri Bhagatbhai Sheth, Proprietor of R. R. Sheth and Company, and its manager Shri Dhirubhai Modi have expressed their cherished desire to Shri Mota to make it all available for easy reference in one volume and that too available at its cost price for readers. Shri Mota appreciated their gesture of goodwill and also permitted such a publication.

We were entrusted with the work of editing it. Their good feeling and regard for us may have outweighed our competence in this task. We have accepted it as a great honour. In fact all that we have been able to compile and edit was scrupulously prepared and provided by Pujya Shri Nandubhai, an ashram-inmate, of Pujya Mota. So, Shri Nandubhai in reality deserves the chief honour and credit for editing the book.

But Shri Nandubhai has become an inseparable part and parcel of Shri Mota, and hence he has pushed us to the forefront by disclaiming all credit in authorship. The editing of this book has been delayed beyond our expectations. But the reasons behind it were not our indifference or laziness at all. From both sides we enjoyed perfect freedom and indulgence as to choice in editing, and revision after revision took place with a view to publishing and presenting Shri Mota's life and work in the best possible manner in this book. Revision

continued even up to the final stages of printing in the press, to a cutting edge. We have been witness to the working of some mysterious power of inspiration in this. And still we do not claim to have represented the all-round personality and genius of Shri Mota in this book. It is our limitation. Whatever is of merit to the highest degree is all due to Shri Mota's genius and nobility.

Shri Mota's language (style) is not literary. But it has its unique power and domestic flavour as it emanates from the holy source (Gangotri) of inquisitive spiritual quest. His output in verses need not also be evaluated from the poetic view-point. It may not be judged as artistic poetry. He has always enjoyed the facility of expressing his ideas (speech) in the form of versification. And hence his conscious striving (inner conflict) and his stream of thought find their characteristic expression in it. His poetry should be evaluated in this light.

We trust and believe that the readers will also come to experience the same kind of divine touch (inward stirring, stimulation) as we have experienced of Shri Mota's unique distinction in life and work to a considerable degree. We heartily thank Hari:Om Ashram and Shri Bhagatbhai Sheth for entrusting us with this editing work.

Guru Purnima,
V. S. 2031

– **Editors**

Shri Ishvar Petalika, Prof. Ramesh M. Bhatt and others who are no more.

॥ Hari:Om ॥

**Dedicated to Respected
Shri Nandubhai Shah**

We feel ourselves truly blessed while dedicating this book to Shri Nandubhai Shah, who dedicated his entire life at the feet of the teacher (Mota) in all awareness, consciously and voluntarily, who received the unique blessings of the teacher and who made his own life also truly blessed by making his incessant stream of love of heart flow to the Guru, who endeared himself to all and lived and remained till the end in the service of the Hari: Om Ashrams.

Managing Trustee

Dt. 15-8-2003

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Hari:Om Ashrams, 'Maun-Ekant Mandirs' or Silence Rooms enabling one to live in solitude, prayers and 'Guna-Bhava Vikasak Yojana' or schemes and projects promoting merit and true feeling.

॥ Hari:Om ॥

Note : The present volume contains only Part-1 of the whole work which has five parts. The present volume stops at page 172 of the original edition published in 1975.

– Translator



**SHRI MOTA'S
BIOGRAPHY**

(Narration of Self-Experience)

॥ Hari:Om ॥

Quotation

Facing photograph of the entrance (door) of the house of Shri Mota's birthplace (Savali) pg. 3.

“These incidents contain real truth or total reality as we say that one and one make two. To bring to light vividly or actually what has happened as facts of life, with the noble aim or a special holy purpose, cannot be considered as self-praise...it is absolutely appropriate for us to narrate life's concrete, natural experiences just as they have occurred and that too, when the proper occasion arises (as pre-destined). This is the purposeful, pre-ordained manifestation of one special aspect of life (of real existence). There is a difference between self-praise and bringing to light such real truth as actually experienced. Self-praise may even be exaggerated and may not give voice to the actual reality of life as experienced.”

– Shri Mota

‘Jivan Darshan’ pg. 92

* * *

*“Lives of great men all remind us, we can
make our lives sublime.”*

– H.W. Longfellow

*“A great book is the precious life-blood of
a master-spirit.”*

– John Milton

1. Student Life*

My early childhood was spent in hardship and in dire necessity due to extreme poverty. No type of spiritual feelings had been awakened in me then, however, an indomitable desire for school learning, an intense ambition for formal education, had been awakened in me on account of acute, harsh predestined events which happened in life.

While I was in Gujarati (vernacular) school, there was no prospect or possibility of my further education, because of our severe unbearable poverty. We had a small one-room, rented house, with a front portico, (uncovered space) facing the main street in Kalol, (Dist. Panchmahal). My father was addicted to opium and had his hookah habit. Every night he used to keep ambers burning, not of coal but of cow-dung, near the entrance outside and thus could enjoy smoking (inhaling) from the hookah whenever he liked, by using the cow-dung fuel kept alive. The night police taking their rounds would also sit with him sometime to chit-chat, and some

* Pujya Mota's name : Shri Chunilal Asharam Bhagat. He was born on 4th Sept., 1898, in a village named Savali in Baroda (Vadodara) district. His father was a cloth-dyer (rangarej), by profession and of a cheerful, devoted disposition by nature, who enjoyed singing 'bhajans', songs in praise of God.

All reference from now on, in the rest of this book to him will be by the name of Shri Mota.

of them would also enjoy sharing my father's hookah. Thus my father had become familiar and friendly with the local policemen.

One day a guest had visited us and was sleeping on a cot on the '*otla*' or open space in the front portion of the house. That night two policemen, while on their rounds, came to our house, sat and started talking to my father. One of them asked, "O Bhagat, who is this person sleeping here?" My father replied: 'He is our guest.' So the policeman asked: "Then why haven't you informed the police station about him?" My father answered: "Only *dalits* or lower people like '*koli*' or '*vaghari*' are required to inform, not we!" Not even hearing him fully, the policeman lost his temper, was furious and started beating my father and began to drag him to the police station.

I could not watch this terrible scene. Without changing my dress, I ran to Nagarwada, where a Rao Saheb, named Shri Manubhai, lived. I woke him up at night and told him all the facts about my father being beaten by the policemen. He had great sympathy for me. He used to pass by our house everyday and as my mother used to work at his house as a help in grinding, squashing (pounding food grains), etc. he knew us all very well. I was weeping profusely and sobbing continuously while telling him about my father's pitiable condition. He at once ordered his horse-and-carriage and kindly came with me to the police station at night. He called the aggressive '*jamadar*' (constable) at once and ordered him to set my father free immediately. The

jamadar and the policeman were astonished to see such a respectable dignitary (VIP of Kalol village) visit the police station at night, but seemed reluctant to set my father free. So the Rao Saheb loudly ordered them to call the sub-inspector of police to the station forthwith, instantly, and added that he wished to sue the police authorities on the charge of beating this *rangarej* (dyer), Mota's father. He also declared that the poor man whom they had beaten was to be taken to a hospital at once, in his own horse-and-carriage by him, so that the marks of injury received by the man could be examined by a doctor.

Hearing such words the two or three policemen on duty and the jamadar also were afraid and they set my father free. But this incident set me thinking, as a warning. "Poor people are humiliated, avoided and insulted by everyone in this world and society. They are also cursed and treated with offensive language, etc. But what should we do in order that inspite of poverty, we are not so ill-treated or insulted, etc.?"

Such an intense feeling arose in me at that time. On thinking I came to realize that the Mamlatdar Saheb of our taluka is well respected and saluted by even the most respectful citizens of our village. So I must also become like him. (I must also grow and rise to such a status in the society). For that, I must receive high education. And therefore, an intense desire for studying arose in me.

An English school had recently opened in Kalol. They used to charge fees. Who will grant freeship in the early years of the school ? So I took up the responsibility

of cleaning (sweeping, etc.) of its whole building. For it, I was paid Rupee one and a half per month. I had to clean all the benches, tables, chairs, seats, blackboards, etc. Sometimes I was needed to work as a peon of the school also and keep studying.

By God's grace, I was good at studies and ranked number one. But going on like this, it could take me more years to study and finish school. If by God's grace, I could be permitted to skip a few years, I could hope to save at least two to four years. By God's grace again, a new headmaster came to our school (by appointment). I prayed and prayed and with a view to achieving my aim of saving some years, I came to establish intimate relationship with him through continuous prayers, etc. I used to visit his house, do the necessary daily buying of vegetables, etc. (do the household chores) and used to be of help in many ways like that. I used to play with his children (do baby-sitting) etc. His wife was very kind and affectionate to me. She used to provide me with some food sometimes. She loved me as if I were her own son. And gradually, I came to be treated like a member of the family. (I was so loved). And so, I finished the first four years of studies in only a year and a half.*

I went to study in the English school at Kalol. Since then, I used to visit frequently the Nagarwada in Kalol, on account of my contact and relationship with the Headmaster of the school. Being poor, I was treated kindly and sympathetically by everyone. I was given old and untorn garments fit for use. But this soul (Mota)

* 'Jivan Pokar' pp. 178-179

never wore them at all. Nor did I refuse to accept such gifts. I took them lovingly and used to put them on to please them for a while. I took such garments home wearing them in the giver's presence to show my gratitude for such gifts. But I used to part with them in favour of someone poorer than myself. But that too, out of love, and not out of pity at all.*

I mention all this in my writings because when one is fired with a volcanic zeal for doing something good, by heart, and the bright hot fire of feeling is all aglow, then one cares not at all for so many given tasks to do.

While I was in the seventh year of study in the Kalol Gujarati School, and was so pained and acutely affected by poverty, I thought: "Let me start earning now. So that with whatever little I may gain, be God's grace, this hand-to-mouth condition might become bearable." My father was working as a cloth-dyer in Godhara at that time, so I went to him. A merchant lived in our neighbourhood. Once I went to his shop and earnestly requested him to give me a job- "Please see if my work satisfies you, for a few days, and then if I am found fit, do employ me."

He gave me the job and asked me to clean the shop daily and do many such menial duties as required, trivial tasks of miscellaneous nature. Everyday early morning, I took the keys to the shop, and swept and brushed and cleaned everything perfectly well. Normally the bed-

* 'Jivan Pokar' pp. 178-179

sheet, seat-covers, pillow-covers, etc. remain unwashed, unclean and stained with black ink, etc. for days together, but / had to please my master by doing even the most trivial type of work in the most perfect manner, since I needed the job. I used to wash the bed-sheet, pillow-covers, etc. daily, spread them out so well that no wrinkles formed at all, and took utmost care to see that not a grain of dust or dot remained. I used to arrange everything to make it look decent. Daily, entering the shop, I used to bow down and sprinkle rice, '*kumkum*' flowers etc.

The owner of the shop (Shethji) was pleased with my work in this way, and in a few days, he gave me the appointment. But with what pay? (Five Rupees Only) per month! In those days it was not bad. I was given new responsibilities gradually, one after the other. And soon enough, I was given the responsibility for weighing the food-grains delivered by farmers coming with cart-loads from villages. At that time, it was considered a normal practice or customary rule to use the balance in the buyer's favour to the extent of two to two and a half pounds (seer) for each '*maun*' (40 seers) of grains weighed. It was not wrong to do so too. I used to talk to the farmers with love and affection; I used to keep them also pleased. I weighed everything most properly and equally fairly for both parties, i.e. buyer and seller. My master (employer) thought that this Chunio (Mota)

is sure to do everything in favour of his employer, His interest lay in extracting the maximum in weight from the selling farmers. He used to think like that. (It was normal I was poor, in tight conditions, and in bad need of money all the time. So I had to work. But since it was considered a normal practice (to overweight and underpay) in those days. Nobody took it as an offence, or morally improper. When my employer came to know that I was weighing very accurately while buying grains from farmers, he got wild and angry with me. And, when I was alone, he even taught me the entire technique of weighing in such a way as to extract the maximum to our best advantage. He showed me how to exercise some light invisible pressure on the chain connected with the vessel used for putting the weights in and holding the scales skillfully in a certain manner*. So that at least an amount of two and a half seer of weight could be gained on the other side of the balance. Thereafter, I used to continue, weighing the cart-loads, but not implementing his skillful advice.

But once, owing to a dispute between him and a farmer, checking of the correct weight (as done by me) was assigned to some other person. Then my misdemeanor or scandalous disobedience of not following his advice was exposed thoroughly. So I was scolded in public in the presence of many and was given

* 'Jivan Darshan' pp. 249-251

a piece of his mind. And so, even though I was in bad need of money in those days, I gave up that job. And I resumed my studies with God's name (Hari:Om) on my lips. By God's grace, I was quite clever in my studies and so no time was wasted at all.*

I cleared my matriculation with very good marks in 1919. I scored distinction marks (more than 70 percent) in Mathematics, Sanskrit, and Gujarati subjects. I was ranked number one among successful candidates from Petlad High School. I was awarded a prize also. And that made my admission to a college very easy, by God's grace. Even at that time, a noble feeling was alive in me that conscientiously I must spend the minimum of the financial help or support I was receiving for my college studies. It would be best on my part if I could spend the least (and save the most). I was to study in a college in Vadodara, but where would I stay? That was a problem. One Nagar gentleman from Kalol had been appointed as a 'Fellow' in Vadodara College. So I requested him, "Kindly allow me to stay in your room. I will look after all the necessary arrangements about the room." He

The maternal aunt named Prabhavati, of the principal of Kalol School, Shri Ghanshyam Natvarray Maheta was the spiritual mother of Shri Mota. She used to come to Kalol frequently. She loved Shri Mota deeply. Her heart was full of devotion. She had a sweet voice. She had studied vocal music under a famous musician called Maulabaksha. She used to sing the devotional songs of the religious poet, Dayaram, with deep devotion, in her sweet voice. Shri Mota used to stay at her (spiritual mother's) house in Vadodara on Principal Ghanshyambhai's recommendation. He used to obey her perfectly in every way, as his own mother. He had unflinching faith in every word of hers. Shri Mota used to obey even her servant, and remained deeply engrossed in the '*bhajans*' (devotional songs) sung by the spiritual mother (God-mother).

obliged and accepted my request out of his feeling of love for me. At that time the hostel was known as “Residency Hostel”. It was situated in front of a big ‘*maidan*’ (open ground used for cricket matches) lying on the road between the college and the hostel.

Now only one problem remained unsolved- about my meals. At that time the hostel mess charged Rs. 23 to 24 per month. I could not afford that much. But in case I could afford and spend so much, my sponsors would have lovingly continued to help and bear the expenses. But I thought that by the grace of God, I must subsist on the minimum of personal expenses and that would be the best. I found out a remedy. In the centre of the city (Vadodara), on the other side of Mandavi on way to Champaner Gate, on the left hand side is situated a Haveli (a residential temple, palace of God) belonging to the Vaishnav sect of devotees. Once as I remembered. I had been there in my childhood with my mother. I found out that temple. I met the main or head-priest and bowed to him. I said “I am a college student and I want to partake of the holy Prasad (food served to a God) daily. So I will be highly obliged if you kindly allow me or let me have only one dish or leaf-plate (*patarali*) every day.” He agreed. It cost only one and a half anna (six paisa, or one-sixteenth of the value of a rupee currency no longer in use). The food served was very hygienic and clean and cooked in pure ‘*ghee*’. I used to set out daily, early in the morning from my hostel and keep reading on the way, while walking on the footpath. I had to cover two miles and a half each way, up and

down. I would take my bath at the temple and eat my food there and return. Even on my way back, I used to read while walking on the footpath. This was my daily routine. The first term was spent well, by the grace of God. But when my spiritual mother, (who financed my education) came to know about it, she disallowed it. (The temple food at a concessional rate). How much she really loved me!

Moreover, I used to prepare tea daily for members of a student's club living in the hostel, who were all Nagar students (members of the distinguished Brahmin caste). I had to prepare tea about two-three times in a day. If any of the club members assigned me some small duty, I used to do it out of love. I had to do a lot of such work for many persons in addition to my own daily study work. Still, I enjoyed helping them all. As a result, all the members also reciprocated by helping, me (financially). Whenever they went to see a drama in a theatre or visit the cinema house, they used to buy my ticket too. They would also ask me to accompany them whenever they went out on pleasure trips. I too, on my part, remained consciously cautious enough about my conduct so as to be positively helpful to them.

* * *

* Once Shri Mota desired to visit a cinema house independently. He could not afford it at all. So a conflict arose in his heart. He resolved with determination that even if the friends invites him to visit the cinema at their cost, he should not accept such offers at all, because the habit so formed could become an addiction and the desire may persist in spite of him. So he decided to stop seeing the cinema for good.

2. On the path led by Gandhiji

During my college days, I could feel well-settled and even enjoyed complete peace of mind, by the grace of God. Days passed joyfully. Then, came a sudden explosion. Gandhiji, from his sickbed, declared his challenging decision of non-cooperation in protest against the Rollett Act.

The sixth of April was decided upon as the day to observe collective prayer, fasting and strike in order to prepare the people for a non-violent struggle. The people responded to his call very positively, but on that day terrible riots occurred in Punjab. The government acted ruthlessly and persecuted the people. People were shocked to hear the news as more and more details about the slaughter in Punjab came to light and demanding for justice against such atrocities, for the simple cause, Gandhiji gave to the nation, the call for the freedom struggle for total independence through '*satyagraha*' or fighting for truth.

I, for myself was so much deeply moved at that time that I came to think of my college education, in such circumstances, to be futile. If the youth of the country do not work for the nation, who else will? The atmosphere was charged with tumultuous agitation. If I left college studies, it would mean the total shattering of my dreams and ambitions about my future. Even my

family members were also indulging in seeing happy dreams, as I was their source of support. If I left college then there was no possibility for continuation of my studies in a new institute to be opened in Ahmedabad in Gujarat Vidhyapeeth. Even otherwise all those who were helping me financially in my studies at that time, were also in favour of my continuing my study there. They were strongly against the idea of my giving up college studies. I was also deeply pained to think about the unhappiness to be caused by me to all such people. I could not think of declining or turning away from the helping hand extended so lovingly to help me. But I was also convinced at heart that it was my duty to serve the country at that time.

Those who were supporting me, out of love, tried to persuade me that it was improper on my part to give up studies at such a juncture. My decision was just a result of excitement and unwise with regard to my family members as well as for me. I will be ruined and so will be my family. All the poor family members were helplessly dependent on me alone. I was accused of sending them all to the street, or exposing them to beggary. Why should I not think positively? How strong was I fired with the zeal to proceed and further my studies? All your happy dreams about your future will now be hanging in the air. At least wait for two or three years, continue your studies until this outburst of excitement subsides or fades out and thereafter you may do what you like.

It was very appropriate on the part of my relatives and well-wishers to prevent me from being swept away in the current or whirlpool of excitement when everywhere the air was full of ho-ha, clamour, noisy din. Therefore, I have not only never ignored or turned a deaf ear to their advice, but also kept on brooding and pondering about it for days together. I have come to think about it with a calm mind. The scene of my father being cruelty beaten up by the police-men has played an important part in my decision to give up college study. At that time I even felt that my life's course was to run on different lines and by God's grace change its direction. (I felt as if God was controlling my future life). It is our duty to serve our country as well. Many young men like us might have laid down their lives for the sake of freedom as won by the other countries after their struggles for independence or wars for freedom. If young people like us do not join in the freedom struggle, who else will do it ?

I remained engrossed in this sort of whimsical thinking. On giving up college studies, I had to face only darkness everywhere. It was only for me a kind of plunge into the dark abyss, unknown. No help from home or family was expected at all. There was no question of seeking a new job. Only the blind plunge in sheer desperation was the course open to me. I had often tried to console or warn my mind that such a step was leading to my sure ruin. (Or that would have to face days of dire necessity only). No one would help me. I would perhaps be starving for food. And even to expect help

from others was not (morally) right or proper. All such help must be declined or rejected even if it be offered. Now I must live or subsist on the strength of my efforts only. (I must be totally self-reliant). So, my dear soul (self) (Mota), please think again and again on this issue. I had tried to see clear visions about my bad future on persistent contemplations. I was truly aware !

Those were the days of such turmoil and exciting disturbance, that college students could not concentrate on their studies properly. The same atmosphere was experienced everywhere. And the students who decided to take the plunge into the dark, by giving up their studies as a result of cyclonic, stormy unrest were all very clever students. Such a one, along with me, from Vadodara College was Shri Pandurang Valame, (who later became well-known in the society by the name of 'Ranga Avadhoot' of Nareshwar). We were the first two who left Vadodara College to join the non-cooperation movement and we were to move the said resolution, proclaiming non-cooperation declared by Gandhiji, in the special Congress Session at Kolkata in 1920. And that resolution was also meant to be passed. Before it happened we had decided to give up our college studies. This is the history of my quitting college.

By the end of June of the same year, admission was obtained to Gujarat Vidyapeeth. But how to manage the fees? With difficulty I could manage somehow from what I earned by selling 'Navajivan', published every Sunday. I earned one paisa per copy sold by me, so the earning was restricted to my ability to sell copies. I had

to pull on for seven days with such earning or meager income. On certain days I could get only one meal per day*.

Once it so happened that only 50 copies of 'Navajivan' were sold. I had to pull on for seven days on such a meager sum. In those days, Vidyapeeth classes were being conducted in Shri Dahyabhai Ijjatram's bungalow, near Kocharab Dhal.

And this soul (Mota) used to stay in the very first room in a chawl opposite Gujarat College. Now, I had to stretch those seven paise, one day at a time, for seven days. I used to cook my own food (during student days at Vidyapeeth). During such days of hardship, I had to subsist on a very scanty diet of grams and dried rice only, for several days at a time. I know a number of acquaintances who lived in the city. In case I approached anyone, I could have easily secured a square meal without obligation. But it was beneath my dignity. (I would never like such obligations).

By God's grace I luckily got a private tuition assignment Monthly income being Rs. 35/-, which was more than enough for a man like me in those days. The reason for mentioning this is that even in the worst of trying or challenging circumstances, If one boldly faces the situation, with determination with God's grace, solutions could be found out.**

In those days the atmosphere in Gujarat Vidyapeeth was not at all conducive to studies or favourable for

* 'Jivan Pokar' pp. 202

** 'Jivan Pokar' pp. 204

academic pursuits. While students' minds remained preoccupied with joining rallies frequently, with visits of national leaders of eminence, and attending their public lectures etc., how could they think of studies at all or do it well ? It made them think about the need for a viable alternative to the education being imparted In government colleges, a syllabus aiming at nourishing and strengthening national feeling (of independent outlook), for collegians, and thus some thinkers with a national outlook thought about taking advantage of the situation.

And thus Gujarat Vidyapeeth came to be established where those who had quit college studies (under Gandhiji's directive or mandate) came to study. But the time itself was not fit for studies. Lecturers in different subjects did come to teach us all. And their lectures were also studied, well prepared, scholarly and doing good justice to the essence of their respective subjects. Their sympathetic and affectionate attitude towards students, willingness to help etc. were also manifest They used to think very well as to how their students could benefit from all the available facilities, too. After sometime the Gujarat Vidyapeeth was shifted from Kocharab Dhal to Bhulabhai's Vanda, opposite Ellis Bridge Railway station. Preparations were also started to build a new building for Gujarat Vidyapeeth.

While all this was about to happen, once Gandhiji came in out midst and addressed us. Even that was a new explosion. He told us, "I had supposed that all of you would quit college studies and join In the work of

national service. Our country consists of countless villages. You have to reach them and tell them about all the facts regarding events occurring in the country. Make the villagers aware of all that had occurred on account of British Rule. Tell them about the massacre in Punjab, and start doing such work that a new consciousness, new dynamism (force) is awakened among them. Engage yourselves in such vital activities. I have ordered you to quit college for this purpose. It seems to me as if even after sacrificing your fondness for one type of degree, you have still kept alive your fondness for another kind. My aim In asking you, all the youth to give up college was to harness you In national service for national awakening. So think about your duty and do some serious research and deep thinking about what I am telling you now. And if you think it right, give up your study here at Vidyapeeth also. Join in the national service at once. Right now your youthful energies are much needed in such service.”

This speech of Gandhiji pierced our hearts. What he was saying was absolutely right. So “Swarajya Ashram” was established under Shri Gidwaniji’s chairmanship. I accepted to be trained under it. On finishing training, I was sent to work in Vagara taluka in Bharuch district. The people there were backward and I met with many difficulties in my work of serving. I could not earn a single ‘paise’, neither for transportation nor towards postage. Work was to be done despite many discomforts and hardships. Monetary help was much needed but it was impossible. I could not continue.

I opted for continuing my study in Gujarat Vidyapeeth, but faced hurdles about my admission there. I had to take a test, I took that too. I was ordered to produce a certificate of service work done with recommendation by Sardar Shri Vallabhbbhai Patel. I could obtain that too. Something wonderful happened in the examination; I appeared for, by the grace of God. I was given a question paper which was actually meant for the annual examination to answer. I had prepared very well for it I was very glad for being given that paper. I performed very well and cleared it and thus my further study began.

Now only a few months remained before my graduation (or degree examination) but Gandhiji came again to address us in the Vidyapeeth. He said, -How can you all sit here studying, cool and calm, while the whole country is burning?" It made my mind agitated again. And the fond desire for graduation degree, was again abandoned, though it could have been obtained had I, but stayed for some three to four months.

Meanwhile, Shri Gidwaniji received a letter from Shri Indulal Yagnik, telling him that there was a great scope for those desiring to do Harijan 'seva' (service), and that students from Vidyapeeth were required to take up such work. My elder brother was working under Shri Indulal Yagnik, but his health did not permit him to work now, though his illness, due to tuberculosis had not yet been diagnosed or clearly confirmed. Shri Indulal Yagnik had established a Harijan Ashram in Nadiad. I was allotted work in it. And my fond desire for a graduate degree was finally given up.

It was not that I was forced to do such national service work to support my family for want of another job. I was offered a high school teaching job in the city of Kampala in East Africa for a monthly income of 24 pounds at that time and with an increment of two pounds every year, four months leave with pay after three years of service and second class return fare for steamer voyage to and from India. I had shown the telegram containing this offer to Parikshitbhai who read it. But since the middle of 1923, I came to give up even the idea of national service, by the grace of God, and was determined to dedicate myself as God willed it, to do only Harijan Seva in the name of God*.

I was not even enrolled as a member of Gujarat Harijan Sevak Sangh, but ordinary as well executive meetings of the Sangh were often held at my house in Nadiad. Once, the 'ever-green young man', Shri Narasinha Kaka attended one such meeting. He simply observed in detail all the proceedings being carried out at the meeting. We also discussed and passed the necessary resolutions during the meeting and after it was all over, Narasinha Kaka spoke to us: "Untouchability will never be abolished in this way. We must give a programme for Harijans to resort to 'Satyagraha' again the Hindu community. Harijans should go to fetch water at public wells, to bathe and wash in the public ponds, and go to temples for 'Darshan'. Such and other different programmes should be announced for Harijans, so that a strong protest movement gets momentum. I only feel

* 'Jivan Sanshodhan' pp. 382

that all those measures suggested by your Sangh (separate schools, separate ashrams, scholarships, separate wells dug for Harijans, etc.) are designed only to perpetuate untouchability. I think it is all meaningless that you youngsters are working (attempting to learn) at the primary level like learning one, two, three etc.” His true prevent feeling was expressed in his speech.

We have been working under Mahatma Gandhi’s advice and guidance to achieve his aim. Some of the workers of Gujarat Harijan Sangh were also not so well satisfied with the programmes mentioned above. So when they had visited Mahatma Gandhi in the Sabarmati Ashram once, he too had specifically instructed them to stick to this kind of constructive programme. He had instructed the workers to mix with Harijans, mingle naturally with them, and to work enthusiastically to listen to their genuine complaints and remove the hurdles, troubles, difficulties, harassment, if any, caused to them by the Hindu community. They should also help in reviving their (cottage) Industries.

In spite of it all, I made up my mind to accept and positively respond to the challenging speech made by Narasinha Kaka. I decided to resign from the Sangh activities and approach him, and plunge into the ‘Satyagraha’ programme as suggested by him. So my friend (partner) Hemantbhai and I resigned at once from the Sangh, the next morning packed up our belongings and reached Narsinha Kaka’s house in Anand. He was very much surprised to see us there (at his house). We told him that having resigned from the Sangh, we were

determined to join or jump into his newly suggested 'satyagraha' programme aimed at abolishing untouchability. Now he must lead us. We were ready to work at any cost, to face even physical retaliation like breaking one's head, etc. at any well or (public place prohibited for Harijans). Seeing such resolve and strong determination on our part, he was astonished and speechless. He was also not expecting us there.

Mahatma Gandhi was in Borsad during those days, examining the Irvin-Gandhi accord or agreement Narasinha Kaka just thought for a while and told us that he would like to go to Borsad and consult Gandhiji on this issue. He went there and informed Gandhiji in detail about all the events that had occurred so far. Gandhiji persuaded him that because Harijans had not yet become internally strong and might not be well prepared to participate in such activities, it would only worsen their social situation, if they were required to go for 'satyagraha'. They would only face endless harassments, etc. We are not likely to achieve more liberal or better conditions for them (Harijans) and they are also likely to become weaker and more cowardly by joining the Satyagraha movement. Therefore, it is not at all proper to ask them to join such 'satyagraha' as suggested by you, for the present Narsinha Kaka returned to Anand and narrated the whole dialogue between him and Gandhiji as it had occurred. He told us that he was sorry and regretted his ability to proceed in the matter. But he also added that he was pleased to find in both of us virtues like courage, adventure and the power of endurance.

The purpose behind writing about this incident is that it is not at all proper on our part to take lying down, challenges or allegations against our personal valour or manliness. It is equally right that we must act in all humility, with discretion on many such occasions. We must not blindly plunge into darkness also to show such manliness.*

* * *

* 'Jivan Darshan' pp. 297-300.

3. Life's Struggle

I, this soul (self) was the first student from Gujarat Vidyapeeth, to join the Harijan Sevak Sangh. I had worked under Shri Indulal Yagnik as his secretary. Moreover, I had to handle the accounts of the Sangh in addition to the same of the Ashram and the school.

Shri Indulal Yagnik gave up the duties of the Harijan Sevak Sangh for some reasons, due to circumstances. The centre of that work was shifted from Nadiad to Godhara. Shri Indulal had fixed my pay as Ashram administrator at Rs. 65/- per month. But I always lived in needy circumstances, experiencing hardships. It was not possible to receive it in cash each month. Though teachers working in the villages usually got their pay regularly each month, I earned Rs. 50/- only per month for my work in the Vidyapeeth school. Complaints were received by Pujya Bapuji (Gandhiji) about such a high (excess/surplus) salary for a Harijan Sevak. He had called me to him and inquired whether It was reasonable for one who had vowed to serve the poor people of our poor country to receive so much by way of salary. I had replied that I had no other source of income needed to support my family. My elder brother, who had been working for a long time for the Harijans and in public political activities, was in Dr. Cook's Mission Hospital in Anand and suffering from tuberculosis. In addition to

that, there were six other souls who were dependent on me (Mota). My mother, brother's wife etc. were working too hard (to help us all). On my telling all this to Pujya Bapuji he asked me: 'How can you at your young age manage to work for two institutions at a time ?' By God's grace I had been told enough to tell him clearly at time that, "William Pitt, the Younger, was the Prime Minister of England at the age of 24." (He had achieved the position of the Prime Minister at the very young age of 24). Gandhiji laughed to hear such an answer. But in a short time, I received an order from Gujarat Vidyapeeth that I had better decide to work in any one of the two institutions. The reason given for it was that I might not be doing full justice to two institutions at the same time single handedly (as I was unassisted).

Only about three months after this incident, I was assigned the responsibility of working in both these institutions. Moreover, one had to cook one's own meals in the Ashram in those days, store water and help in storing etc. It being the first such '*ashram*' in Gujarat at that time, initially the boys had to be taught everything like how to take a bath, wear clothes, to get up, behave, to prepare their beds, to eat, etc. It meant that during each of their activities we had to be present and on our feet. There were not more people working there then, as there are now. This soul (Mota) was all alone in the '*ashram*', too. Initially, there was one Harijanbhai as helper, later there was one upper class man to help at intervals. After they had left, I had to keep the '*ashram*' going and the school too. Such a condition which was considered inappropriate about three-four months ago,

was now condoned and became surprisingly acceptable. Moreover, that was the time I came to be infected with a disease called 'Fefaru' (hysterical fits) causing sudden fits. Though this fact was known to the other superior authorities of the Sangh, yet no one felt at heart for him (me) or thought as to why this worker (Mota), who had to shoulder the responsibilities for two institutions at a time, and who was not physically fit or in a position to handle them properly, could not be assigned duties of only one of the institutes, which would be better. But nobody had thought like that at all. As a result, I tried to pull on as long as I could. And when, (this soul) I found it impossible to continue on account of my physical condition, I made an application requesting to be partly relieved and given responsibility for only one institution. And therefore, the ashram duties being cancelled, only the school administration remained as my responsibility.*

My elder brother was suffering too much because of consumption (tuberculosis). My own economic condition being acutely tight, I had to incur debts to meet with his medical expenses. As for my own self, I would prefer to live in such a way as to incur no debts at all. But both my mother and elder brother used to taunt me and called me a 'miser'. In order to get him cured, he was taken to Bhavnagar as a first class passenger by train. But as I came to know, he used to write letters secretly to most of our relatives and ask for monetary help without my knowledge. I had to repay all such debts. Moreover, a certain amount of such loans was also collected from our relatives.

* 'Jivan Pokar' pp. 121.

My brother died, but how could I repay the outstanding debt incurred? I was then in the service of Gujarat Harijan Sevak Sangh. I had taken a firm oath, with desperate determination, since then I had vowed to serve the nation only and not accept any other duty. The reason behind such an oath was that both my mother and brother's wife were forced to do extra work because of extreme poverty. It was desirable for both of them and for all to do such work during their spare time. But my mother still felt that in spite of my advanced study, our good contacts and some influences, etc., and though all others would be pleased to see him (me) well-settled, I was not taking up a good job. Though it was quite easy and most likely for me to do so I was not in the least willing to do so, and would also never be willing. Very often, my mother used to taunt me because of our bad economic condition; for that reason as well as for the fear or being instinctively swayed to go out to earn money as impelled by our poverty, I had taken '*Gangajal*' (Holy water) in my hand with all awareness and vowed to serve only our country. I have never felt any kind of regrets or discontent on account of such an oath. But how could I repay the debts incurred during my brother's illness, in the midst of our helpless economic conditions? Such recurring ideas often made me too sensitive on the issue. No solution to this problem was available to me. No way was open at all. I was often out of my mind, confused and restless on that account as the ideas pressed on me. Other (mental) reasons had also entered my life. On the one hand, we faced extreme poverty and on the other there was no possibility as to the repayment of the debts In spite of our willingness.

From this conflict arose such a tumultuous storm inside me which affected my health and body, and I caught in the chronic disease called 'Fefaru' (hysterical fits).

At that time, I was doing responsible work of the Harijan Sevak Sangh (then known as Antyaj Mandal) with Shri Indulal Yagnik. I had been entrusted with the duty of sending funds regularly, each month to all Harijan institutions all over Gujarat, keep accounts, to correspond with all of them and keep records and all the work regarding the administration of the Nadiad Ashram, already established there as well as of the Harijan School in Nadiad, newly established by Gujarat Vidyapeeth. That was also my responsibility. Bhai Parikshitlal had not yet joined it. Heavy responsibility and very hard work. It produced pressure on the mind and tension. In those days it was also a very difficult task to make or help Harijan children openly fetch water from a public well. This Harijan Ashram was situated at a distance of about one and a half kilometer (furlong) on way to Dabhan from Mission Hospital (Nadiad). And about half a furlong from there near Rama Talavadi, (small pond), was a public well for Hindus. Farmers from the neighbouring areas to and fro would collect water from it. Christians had built a separate well for them. But by the grace of God, we had continued our adventure of collecting water from the Hindu well. Farmers would often threaten us with the likelihood of being beaten by them for collecting water from that well. And at times such events also occurred actually. And still, we had continued the bold, adventurous practice of collecting water from the said well. In the year 1922-23, Harijans were far more deeply hated and despised by the Hindu

community as compared to our times. Hence there was every likelihood of the farmers causing some harm or injury to the Ashram children. We were constantly perturbed whether children would be harmed as a result of their (Hindus') persistent clamour. There was a public pond near the garden in Nadiad where a stream of warm water coming from under the soil continuously falls in the pond. We daily used that place for the completion of bath, etc., for all the children. There also we had to enter into serious discussions / scuffles with our Hindu brethren.

This also severely aggravated my tension. This body (I) was afflicted with the 'Fefaru' disease as a result of such and other incidents causing mental tension (pressure). Quite often, on my way to or from duty or home, I used to suddenly fall down from my bicycle and become unconscious. I might be having with me then, money belonging to the ashram, and yet God always saved me. At that time, my heart was not fired with the strong loving devotion to God, to make me express my gratitude to Him for saving me. But today, it is clear as a lamp burning with ghee (or as sunlight), to me, that the omnipotent Lord, with a thousand hands and a thousand eyes was protecting me even then in every way and took great care (as He is doing now also).

* * *

4. Worshipping Hari (chanting His name)

It so happened that for the purpose of rest and recovery from my 'Fefaru' disease, I took leave and went twice to live on the banks of the Narmada. Once I was accompanied by Shri Maheshbhai Mehta and Shri Bhanuprasad Pandya. The second time, I was alone. So I stayed for a few days in a Ranchhodji temple on the Mokhadi Ghat of the Narmada. A sadhu mahatma, renounced recluse, also stayed there. I used to serve him daily. I suffered from my 'fefaru' fits about four-five times there also. On my departure from the temple, I bowed down to him and asked for his blessings. He only advised me to continue chanting God's name (Hari:Om) and also added that I would be cured as a result of constant chanting. But I thought that I could have experienced deeper trust and faith in his words, if he had given me some precious natural herb/root or fruit from the jungle. I could not make myself believe at that time, that by mere chanting of Hari:Om could be cured of my disease. It could not be true. Moreover, the 'sadhu maharaj' (great sage, recluse) had also assured me that within the course of one year, I would surely meet a 'Sadguru', who would help me achieve my life's development. But at that time 'life' and 'development' were mere words to me. What was true was my frenzy, acute desire to serve the country. But that desire did not

enable me to survive my poverty. I had even attempted to commit suicide, by once jumping into the river Narmada on my way home.

On the banks of the Narmada, a little further from Garudeshwar, there is a tall precipice overlooking the river. From the edge of that cliff walking back a few steps and then running straight ahead, I had plunged into the lap of mother Narmada. I still remember vividly how my feet touched the holy water of the river current. The picture is still imprinted on my mind and I see it vividly. As soon as my feet touched the cool current, a cyclonic storm arose from the water! The force of the (cyclone) whirlwind tossed my body high up and flung it quite far from the cliff. I saw something wonderful in the center of the cyclone. The form I saw was quite unlike that of a mother in a gross body. It was an unworldly type, just supernatural. As I was miraculously saved from death on that day, I was deeply convinced at heart that: “By His grace, I am meant for something.” (A divine message).

Naturally, no one can believe such a fact in our age of reasoning or (our) intellectual age. Some people may even question the wisdom of my bringing it out. But it seems necessary (to me) to put before the world, in all humility and lovingly, the real experience undergone. There is a kind of rigidity or inflexible persistence in holding an opinion which justifies only one’s own beliefs and contradicts that of the others. It is not at all true to say that the experience narrated above was a matter of hallucination (a creation or figment of intensely activated

imagination). By the grace of God I have derived inspiration from that vision (glimpse of Mother Narmada). I have also derived, in addition, the spirit of adventure, courage, patience, power of endurance, determination and such other powerful, virtuous qualities. It cannot be considered a trivial event of my life, which so suddenly and spontaneously turned the direction of my life (which changed my life so dynamically). It is not at all possible to occur as a result of intensely aroused feeling or imagination only.

I returned to Vadodara after this event. There, in the house of my spiritual mother, I fell down from the second floor, as a result of my lung disease ('Fefaru' attack - fits), rolling on the stairs and landing on the floor where bricks were stored, which cause impressions (marks of injury) of bleeding on my body, under the skin. Recovering my consciousness to some extent, I got a glimpse of that sadhu mahatma of Narmada, who said, "O man! Just try a little of '*nama-smarana*'-chanting of Hari:Om! Stupid, what will you loose just by trying or experimenting?" All this arose, in fact, in my mind. But it was not at all ready, at that time to be touched deeply by the feeling of importance to be given to such words or the implicit experience (deep impression) of the 'sadhu mahatma' (sage, recluse). Later, on recovery, I conveyed all these facts to my spiritual mother. She was highly pleased to hear it. She said, "O, Chunia! You are very fortunate and blessed! Now you must keep on chanting God's name only, while getting up or down, while sitting or standing, moving about, taking meals,

etc. Engage yourself totally in chanting of His name while doing any activity. It will surely cure you”.

I trusted this mother of mine far more than I could trust that sadhu-mahatma at that time. She impelled and inspired me to do this chanting of God’s name. Then on, I hammered it in to my consciousness and continued to chant. I often forgot about it, but soon recalled to memory and so continued. A marked difference came to be noticed in the intensity, as well as duration of pain caused by ‘Fefaru’ (lung disease) and I was completely cured of it in three or four months.

This chapter opened a new course of my life by God’s grace. (The experience opened a new chapter in the course of my life). The search of spiritual development had begun. And after one year, in reality, on the banks of Sabarmati in Ahmedabad, a Sadguru (initiator to realization) met me. (I met a true teacher who helped me very much on the path of spiritual development). (See note on ‘Sadguru’ in the glossary).

God’s grace is always raining on us during events considered good or bad in life. This is not a matter of fiction. It is a fact derived from real life. (It is based on real experience). In the year 1928, a Harijan ashram in Bodal (taluka Borsad) was to be inaugurated by Shri Sardar Patel. I happened to go there with my mother, from Nadiad. Sardar’s mere presence was enough to draw huge crowds of people and cause clamour and commotion. Some people in the morning were trying to trying to beat a snake in the field of the ashram. I interfered and preventing them from injuring the snake,

got it set free. (I saved the snake from death). There was much noise and clamour during the day as well as at night due to over-crowding and therefore, I was sleeping in the field, a little far, in order to have peace, solitude and good rest. Pujya Shri Thakkarbapa also joined me there for some reason, seeing me enjoying good rest. Shri Shrikant Sheth also followed suit and joined us. I was sleeping in the middle, in between the two. About midnight I felt a severe blow/stroke on my head. I felt as if I had been hit forcefully in the center of my head with some weighty object. I was startled and at once stood up. I saw something like blood and a sting on my thigh. Others suddenly woke up and tried to apply salt, neem leaves, etc. They told me that the neem tree juice would not taste bitter as I had taken enough of it earlier. But then I began to feel as if I was sinking into a state of unconsciousness. I, at once, remembered one statement of Gandhiji at that time. "There is no violence involved, but pure non-violence in continuous beating in order to keep the victim of a snake-bite full conscious." On remembering this, I was determined in my mind not to become unconscious at any cost. I began chanting God's name loudly and more loudly. I continued to do that at the top of my voice. I became unconscious under the influence of the snake's poison on the one hand, and on the other struggling to avoid becoming unconscious by constantly chanting God's name as strongly inspired at heart. That was a desperate struggle, like the one in which the elephant was caught by a crocodile. Coming face to face with death itself, I

vigorously continued chanting God's name, repeating it soulfully. It went on.

I was taken to Bodal village for treatment of snake-bite, and thence to Asodar. Thereafter, I was kept in the Mission Hospital at Anand. In this war of life and death situation, by God's grace, the practice of chanting God's name became a constant and endless one. It also became deep-rooted in my heart. Before this incident, I was striving to form the habit of so doing at all the time, during any type of activity too, but it had not become constant or endless. On many occasions, I had to admit defeat about it, during this period. But this blessed incident (of snake-bite) proved a boon, or blessing in disguise. It made an almost impossible task easy to achieve. It made me experience the infinite Grace of God! It is perceived clearly in all the good or bad incident of life. Only our face does not remain so inclined with deep feeling, in all sincerity, turned towards Him. Therefore, man does not experience His blissful, benevolent grace during all such vicissitudes of life.

While I was working in the school at Nadiad (Marida Bhagol), some Muslim boys used to come and trouble us very much. I tried very hard to persuade them. We managed to get their addresses through persons known to them and also informed their parents about our complaints. Those Muslim boys used to harass us in many ways. Our school building was situated on the main road. They would collect dust in handfuls and throw it all inside the school, make loud noises, and also harass the students going in and out. All around was

Muslim population. We thought of all rational means to use to pacify them, but to no avail. At last, we thought that surrendering to such threats was a challenge to our manliness. We met some Muslim teachers of Urdu schools and made our point known in detail to their Kazi, or head-priest. But when that also failed, I decided to mete out appropriate physical punishment to the boys. I then thought out a full-proof plan to beat them. I thought about its consequences too. Next time, when they began to throw handfuls of dust into our rooms, I had been standing well-prepared with a thick cane in hand, hiding behind a door, so as to prevent their running away, and I pounced upon some three or four boys like a wolf. They began to cry and shout for help and returned with many more people to fight with us. Some of those people were just those to whom I had already complained against the boys repeatedly. This mob of Muslims was excited enough and ready to beat me. But I was not the least afraid. It was necessary to do something at once, so as to change their anger and excitement into calm and gracefully, God showed me the way. I removed all the clothes covering my body, except a small piece of '*langot*' (cloth covering the genitals), and seeing this, all of them were stunned. It changed their attitude from anger to one of surprise, seeing this suddenly changed condition of my near naked body. I told them then, that they could beat me very well as I was now fully exposed to their blows. I had already complained to some of them about the boys, and even approached their parents at home, as well as their Kazi Saheb (head-priest). We had

also informed the Muslim teachers staying in the vicinity of the school about the facts of the harassment caused to us. But none of them had tried to tell the boys not to do so. “Just see that none of you is willing to admit that the boys are at fault. Are we supposed to tolerate such harassment perpetually? You are all wise and mature. Now you must do justice”.

Their excitement had subsided a little, seeing my exposed body, so they at least listened peacefully to my statements. It had the right effect. At least one wise person stood out in my support. So the whole mob changed their attitude. All of them began to say, “It’s good you have punished these boys. Now they will not repeat their mischief. O Bhagat, if they turn up again to do such mischief, punish them severely.” And thus they all dispersed.

Thereafter, those Muslim boys totally stopped harassing us. I had to cross their Muslim locality daily on my way to and from school by way of Marida Bhagol. I used to lovingly talk to the very boys whom I had beaten, while passing by their houses. I used to give them grams worth two-to-four paisa. They also then became my friends.

Never tolerate a situation challenging your manliness and disgracefully proving you helpless later. Do not be desperate also to find your way out. We must always give due thought about how far we can be prepared to face the situation and then act wisely, carefully.

In spite of my appointment as joint secretary of Gujarat Harijan Sevak Sangh (association in the interest of untouchables of Gujarat), I have never suffered from a loss of dignity complex while undertaking any type of menial work. Once, I was required to go to a city bank for wither depositing or withdrawing money. The bus stop was located near the ashram itself, near 'Sarvasakshi Amlī'. (a tamarind tree known for its prime location as witness to all), Just as I was entering the bus, I could hear the words of one of the two passengers already seated in the bus, talking to each other, and I immediately stepped out of the bus. Of course, their conversation was about some past incident in which they were both involved, but it flashed like a lightning in my mind and I intuitively decided not to go by bus. Such ideas were not a result of any rational thinking. Then I decided to ride a bicycle and go to the city. And I saw the same bus (which I had given up or chosen not to take; had met with a serious accident near the Vidyapeeth, and the passengers in it were also injured. Had I been one of them, my fate could also not be different from theirs. (I would have also met with the same fate).

Once with four or five students of the Navasari Ashram, we had set out from the Ashram on bicycles to meet some political prisoners in the Nasik jail. We were Mota Makanbhai, Morarbhai, Simubhai and others whose names I cannot remember. It was Diwali time. The road from Navsari via Valsad and Dharampur passed through thick forests. Heavy rains had washed the roads

and made breaches. The flow of water had created big pits and holes in many places. It was getting dark while we had passed Dharampur. Grass had grown up to about six feet tall all along the road. While cycling through such thick forest, I had a sudden premonition that it was not advisable to proceed in the dark. I told my ashram friends that we would be camping in the particular spot in the forest. We made a clearing around and under a big tree and collected logs from the woods and lit a bonfire. We kept vigil at the spot by turns. The next morning, under a good sunrise, we resumed our journey. At a little distance from the camp site we saw a huge, broad and deep pit on the road. Had we continued cycling on the road last night, we could have fallen in it. God's grace saved us all.

6. Whenever I happened to go to sleep at the Bokad Bavali* near Nadiad, some people staying near by or frequenting the area used to come to threaten me, beat and pester me, and even threatened to kill me. Once I was witness to three such persons hiding there and dividing their loot (stolen goods). They saw me and one of them said that I should be better finished (murdered) there and then in order to prevent them from being identified. But by God's grace, none of them made any such move. The Bokad area was dangerous in every way.

7. Under-trial prisoners at the time of Satyagraha, were often subjected to great hardship and harassment. In order to make them confess or reveal secrets, they

* (Bokad Bavali, a place near Nadiad, was once infested with dacoits and wild life. It is free from danger now and has no signs also left of its old bad times. New buildings are now built on the spot.)

were forced to bend on their knees and hands and heavy weights were placed on their backs. The police used to torture and humiliate them. They had tried to torture me too, in the same way. I could manage to continue to strive consistently, by the grace of God, spending all my time sincerely in prayers, singing devotional songs (bhajans), in remembrance (chanting His name), in meditation and in study to proceed in my quest. I had acquired the skill of concentration ('*trataka*' - not closing your eyes for long periods at a stretch). So I practiced that skill of staring hard and long into the eyes of the 'jamadar' (police official), who came to make me stand like a cock to torture me. I could do it successfully by the grace of God on instant thought. Then I was transferred to the Kheda Jail without any such torture*.

8. Everyone knows about my favourite '*bhajan*' (devotional song) - "No one is known till now, who has lost his dignity while worshipping Hari (Lord)". The same song contains a line which tells that the dear Lord gave (handed over in person) the garland (necklace) to Narasinha Mehta. To a modern mind, such a fact is unacceptable, and still I write here about a few incidents of my own life. With a view to keeping our Hindu culture alive, Shri Malaviyaji had established a Hindu University in (Banaras) Kashi. He had appealed to the Hindu society for donations to keep it going. Culture is the root of life. My fascination for culture, by the grace of God, had always been strong, unique and consistent and is still so. (I feel the same, strong fascination for it

* 'Jivan Darshan' pp. 84

even now.) It aroused in my heart, a kind of excitement and a joyous feeling to give. But my economic condition at that time was too bad to describe. I had to support a family of seven with my meager income of Rs. 47 and a half. The remaining Rs. Two and a half were paid as compulsory contribution to a co-operative society. I could not afford to do any wasteful spending even for myself, for my personal needs in daily life. I could afford a haircut only once in a month. I did not own any shaving instruments. But my heart yearned to donate funds to the Hindu University in spite of my tight (economic) condition.

Once a friend and I left the Sabarmati Ashram to go to the city for some work. We had walked just a little, when under a tree to the right of the road, near the Chandrabhaga bridge, I felt like going aside to ease myself (answer nature's call-urinate), I asked my friend whether I could go. He agreed. I was just like that (immature) at that time. Some people might say it was an insane act, but such small acts could strengthen my aim to develop truly in life. As I was just standing up after passing urine, I saw a piece of paper lying quite near me. I picked it up and showed it to my friend. It was a packet containing two rings. On the paper was written: 'This is for you.' Both of us went to the market, sold the rings and sent the money to Banaras. This is solid proof of (my) intense, active feelings*.

9. And in 1938, I (my body) was bed-ridden as a result of passing blood in stool. I was admitted as

* 'Jivan Darshan' pp. 85

an indoor patient at the Vadilal Sarabhai Hospital. As I could not be cured, I had to go to Karachi, where appropriate treatment and medicines cured me. Then I happened to read a leading article in Harijan Bandhu, written by Gandhiji, appealing for donations on the event of Thakkar Bapa's completing 70 years. Gandhiji stated in it that Rs. 70 thousand was a meager sum and that it must be collected soon. I was expected to donate something to that fund in the opinion of a sister staying there.

I had nothing to give. I did not even like the idea of borrowing to serve that purpose. The sister said that if I really desired to donate some money, sincerely, then I would get it as a god-send. With what zeal and the spirit of sacrifice, Thakkarbapa had served the 'adivasis' (aboriginal) and the Harijans (untouchables)! There is nothing haphazard or casual about it, but he has created an organization also! I had a feeling even then, that there was a lack of accuracy, care, perseverance, neatness in accounting, etc. (in) about his life.

Thus inspired by the sister's urging and the feeling of her life dedicated to the service, I was eager to experience the joy of giving something, even as a token, to the said fund. I was in an expectant mood. I was already aware that given the grace of God, such a probability just existed. Now it so happened that on the New Year's Day (Indian calendar), we were visiting some well-meaning gentlemen from Karachi in the company of Bapu and the two sisters. We went to the bungalow of Mr. Chagla, the ex-mayor of Karachi. He

was saying his prayers (*'namaj'*), as we were informed. We waited outside in our car. Before we entered the house, I came to notice a folded piece of paper lying on the way. The roads in Karachi are kept so clean that it is easy to notice such things lying en route. Pointing to that paper, I told a sister to take it. On opening it, we found a five-rupee note in it. It was also written in Urdu that the amount was meant for my own use as I like it. I donated this god-sent amount, by the grace of God, to the Thakkarbapa Fund*.

10. My friends knew about my severe financial condition. I have never asked them for any help at all. Once I happened to be in a pressing need for money in trying circumstances. I never felt like asking anyone for money at any time and so I never asked. But the amount was needed urgently. The assurance at heart through knowledge and devotion, that God never fails to send the needed help to his devotees in times of crisis, was not insignificant. Such an assurance or consolation was capable of sustaining me with hope and warmth, but it was not in a concrete form. What I needed then most, was such help of hope and warmth, by the grace of God, in a concrete form. Its arrival could save me from my pressing need. But I have never prayed to God for such a real help. Such seriously critical situation is also meant to create in us a sense of true feeling (being one with God) and to keep it alive so that one actively lives like

* Shri Mota's elderly respectable gentleman, Shri Parshadbhai, alias Priyamvadanbhai Natverlal Mehta, who was manager, Scindia Navigation, Karachi, and the son-in-law of the well-known scholar, Shri Narasinharao Bholanath Divetia.

that. I never bothered about tight financial conditions. But that never solved my problems. It did not disappear. But I could experience the presence of God's grace as I was never overpowered by such financial crisis, nor was I deeply involved (at heart) about them.

Once, in the evening we were on our way to pay respects to a Sadhu Maharaj (saintly recluse) on the banks of river Kaveri (Kumbhakonam). With me were a local merchant, Shri Hasmukhbhai Mehta, and Shri Nandubhai Bhatt of Ahmedabad. I came to notice a loose packet made of worn-torn cloth. On opening it, we found a gold chain in it. It was accompanied by some writing in Tamil: "This is for your use." The chain was sold in the bazaar by Hasmukhbhai and the amount was given to me. By the grace of God, it helped me to overcome my financial crisis.

11. Once after returning from Karachi to Sabarmati Ashram, my stay at the Ashram was from July to August and up to the half of September also. I had to return to Karachi but when to go was undecided. A postman, one day handed over to me a registered parcel containing currency notes worth Rs. 605/- and a line written in the Urdu script. I went to my companion Mr. Qureshi (Saheb) to read it to me. It said: "You are ordered to go to Karachi by air on your birthday." A little four-seater plane was available in those days for the flight, but tickets were hard to get. But luckily after two-three attempts (inquiry), I could get a ticket and I enjoyed the flight on my birthday.

The entire passage (flight-hours) at that time was spent in an indescribable trance-like condition of mind. How could one like me even imagine that I would be flying like that? My monetary financial condition would never permit it. How did I receive so unexpectedly, such a big amount like a windfall? (It came from heaven by itself!).

* * *

5. The Quest

While studying in Petlad, I happened to be in good contact with Shri Janakidas Maharaj. After school hours and during free periods, I got out early and went to him very often. I swept the premises, even washed his clothes sometimes, or often sat silently near him. He used to talk with others, while I listened quietly. I did not have to ask him anything. I liked only listening to him for long. He was simple and frank (open) by nature. His style of living was also simple. A colour merchant of Petlad, held him in high regard with devotion and great respect. On that account the Maharaj stayed there. The Sheth Saheb (colour merchant) had made all the arrangements for his stay there. The Maharaj did not perform any obligatory rituals like conducting regular sessions of religious discourses. He did not even read or recite the classics in Sanskrit (Shastras). I have no knowledge if he were doing it during my absence. I did not participate in any type of sports activities during my school days. Whenever I was free, and when he was also in Petlad, I surely went to him but I never conversed with him. He used to inquire of me sometimes, as to where I was staying, what I was doing or studying, etc. When I was in the final year before matriculation, he had been kind enough to have warned me as a precaution to study well and hastily in time because I was going to suffer from

some severe illness. (It was a prediction). He even told the principal of the Sanskrit School (Pathshala) managed by the merchant to arrange for a quick and thorough completion of the entire syllabus (courses of study, of all the subjects) leading to my matriculation. He had been instructed to teach me whenever I was to be free. As I was staying with others (not with one's own kinsmen), I was not in a position to attend the school and classes as per schedule.

The Sanskrit Pathshala (primary school) was at a little distance from the house of the Diwan Saheb of Petlad. I had been able to complete the entire syllabus in Sanskrit under the '*acharya*' (principal) of that school, in a short span of two to two-and-a half months, especially the complete section dealing with grammar. Moreover, as I had been kindly and duly forewarned by Shri Janakidas Maharaj, the study of all the other subjects for success in matriculation examination had been quickly completed, with the help of guide books printed along with the books in question-answer form dealing with the respective subjects. I happened to go to Ahmedabad on some occasion. My elder brother and mother etc. were staying there, but I decided to stay at Shri Ghanubhai's house. And as per the sure prediction of Shri Janakidas Maharaj, I was taken seriously ill. My condition was critical enough to be fatal. I remained unconscious for several days.

During this long illness, I intensely remembered Shri Jankidas Maharaj and my heart filled with love for him. This body suffered for a long time. After a little recovery,

I resumed my study, but the doctor prohibited it. I had not been able to sit for the preliminary examination leading to the final. But the Head Master of the High School, Shri Ishwarbhai Patel, who hailed from Sojitra, was very affectionate towards me, as I had been a brilliant student during school days, and therefore, I had been allowed (given the 'form' or necessary permission) to appear for the final examination even without getting through the preliminary examination formality. I would have surely failed in the final examination, if Shri Jankidas Maharaj had not kindly warned me in time. Sincere and selfless contacts with the righteous souls had evolved and led to successful results as it was experienced in my case. I realized also that if one feels the right inclination towards or desires for such a good contact and if one feels the urge to approach such souls, then mere sitting besides such a noble soul or '*Satpurush*', surely gives us great peace of mind and ease at heart. And hence, I frequently felt the strong urge to approach him (Jankidas Maharaj).

Moreover, as he (Jankidas Maharaj) had also urged and advised me to go and pay my respects to Shri Sarayudasji Maharaj in Ahmedabad, and seek his blessings, I had acted accordingly. I was not yet fully aware of the great significance of '*Satsang*' (contact with the righteous or saintly souls), when all incidents occurred (as described above). But now, I am able to assert, as a result of retrospection, that Shri Jankidas Maharaj was an experienced 'mahatma' (a realized soul, liberated one). He used to visit Shri Santram Maharaj's

temple in Nadiad, quite often when I was fortunate enough to meet him. He remembered and recognized me well from our former days, and by that time I had already entered in the field of spiritual quest or right self-development. In response to his inquiry, I had frankly confessed about the difficulties (confusion) faced in this field. But I did not explicitly reveal to him the difficulties faced and confusing situations encountered during my quest. Any yet, whenever I was near him, I held all such thoughts in my mind in a prayerful mood, and while he was conversing with others etc., or while he was speaking anything at all, I received solutions to my problems. I continued with the same practice also during the visits of other 'mahatmas' (saintly souls) at the Santram Maharaj temple later.

During my tenure with the Harijan Sevak Sangh, I could go out on one month's leave to a far-off solitary place; I have never enjoyed a single day's unnecessary casual leave in that field of service. I used to go to Harijanvas even on Sundays and do some work, or start some activity. I could meet the people there with good feeling, mix with them and move about also. In Nadiad, I spent a long time doing such work. I consider it as a great blessing by grace of God on me! There was one Shri Chunilal Vyas, an acquaintance, doing the same work in the Sangh at that time. He always liked to cause me some irritation. He said that our first duty was towards the Harijans, and that after of so much work handled by me single handedly, now I was responsible for a small school only. That he said was an act of

serious insult meant for me. He called me a coward because I was not retaliating. He said I was afraid of everybody, and that I lacked the guts and courage to tell the truth to people.

So long as this brother (fellow) was working under me in Nadiad, he used to remind me of such things very often. Even after his transfer from Nadiad, he would not refrain from doing so whenever he happened to meet me. But, by that time by the grace of God, I had already entered a stage of '*sadhana*' (spiritual quest), so I had learnt to accept cheerfully, firmly and contentedly, whatever conditions or circumstances I had to face (meant for me) to enhance my spiritual development. I did not think of them in any other light. That period of one year at Nadiad was very necessary for me to achieve stability and harmony. It was an act of God's grace for me.

Though I was working on for a small school in Nadiad, my activity was not restricted to that school only. Functions were organized with a view to eradicating untouchability about once or twice a year. Once such a special function ('*sneha sammelan*') was organized to celebrate Gandhiji's birthday on Bahdarva Vad Baras (12th day in the second half of '*bhadarava*' month in the Indian calendar), when Harijans as well as prominent citizens of Nadiad were invited, and dry fruits were served in plates to them all. It was also arranged for all invitees and hosts to sit together on a mat. Harijans of different categories were invited. Invitation cards to persons of eminence from Nadiad were

delivered in person-hand to hand. This social gathering was quite successfully completed, by the grace of God. Shri Gokuldas Talati (known as 'Bapu' in Nadiad) and Shri Fulchand Bapuji Shah and some other eminent gentlemen graced the occasion by special invitation. But this social gathering created quite a stir and a lot of protest in Nadiad the next day. Voices of protest were heard from different parts of Nadiad continuously.

The respective authorities of the castes to which Shri Gokuldas Talati and Shri Fulchand Shah belonged, collectively decided to ostracize (declare as out of caste) them. There were some members of their castes who stood in support (not protesting) of the two eminent citizens. It led to a division of members of their caste. The influence of the merchant class (vanik, bania), was also felt on the caste to which I (Mota) belonged. Cries of protest were raised to ostracize (declare as out of caste) me also. But it died down somehow as a result of my own humble and always well-meaning attitude to my own caste members and also probably because of Pujya Shri Godadia Maharaj's kind feelings for me. He used to stay at the Nadiad \ cemetery whenever he came to Nadiad. I used to go to sleep at the same place every night. This had brought us into a closer relationship of harmonious understanding, by the grace of God. Hence, I approached him very often. He had already got an inkling about my progress in the 'sadhana' (quest). I did not on my part let go of any opportunity to serve him physically (to serve as a personal attendant devotedly like a disciple). Members of my own caste (Bhavsar) also used to meet him frequently.

Once for this soul, the (my) activity on the path of 'sadhana' (spiritual quest) began, by the grace of God, I rarely slept in a house, but always slept in the cemetery (crematorium, 'smashan'). He (I) spent nights in places full of grave dangers. Moreover, He (I) deliberately sought and obtained, by the grace of God, opportunities to spend nights in palaces infested with serpents, lions, tigers and such other wild animals. Man cannot free himself from the pressure of popular social customs and manners, etc. He is terribly afraid of people also. He cannot behave in a manner contrary to popular norms, beliefs; and he is constantly under their pressure. In order to achieve freedom from such fears, this soul (I) strove hard, by the grace of God, whenever occasions occurred or chances arose. In those days, I happened to pass by the houses of relatives in the city, singing 'bhajans' (songs) and even dancing on the road. I encountered aunts and uncles and other relatives also, but none of them called or stopped me. When I saw them, I would fold my hands, bow my head and offer respects in by mood of holy excitement, but I never stopped on the way. In such a mood of excitement, I could sing freely and loudly by the grace of God, in rhythm! created by the mood, and the effect it had on my heart, the joy and delight of elation, no one can understand. I have never taken any premeditated steps or measures to create such a mood of fearlessness in me, but whenever on various occasions in life, such occasions/circumstances arose; a strong conscious awareness of fighting heavily against odds in order to become fearless had already arisen in me, by the grace of God.

It was not that I only wished for such occasions or opportunities to make me fearless by living in dangerous places like cemeteries, etc. I deliberately chose or preferred places of solitude or loneliness, far from the madding crowds, their clamour and commotion, so that I could concentrate on my spiritual efforts peacefully and cheerfully. Not that I was unafraid initially, but I continued to pray remembering Hari's name constantly. Fear is a result of a kind of collective impressions, cumulative influences; if they are removed, fear is also ineffective and not felt. I could achieve a state of fearlessness as a result of such an understanding, deep-felt, arisen in me, by the grace of God.

Moreover, I had never enrolled myself as a member of the congress. But I willingly surrendered (enrolled) to participate fully in the 1930 National agitation (war). That gave me an opportunity to experience how far I could act fearlessly. By the grace of God, I could then suffer silently. The Thakor of a village called Devan of Borsad Taluka, deceitfully invited volunteers and arranged a lecture meeting at night. He got everyone of us beaten heavily by thick sticks from all sides. This soul (Mota) did not budge an inch from that spot. Receiving blows, but continuing to chant Hari's name. Many such incidents occurred during that 1930 uprising (war).

My going to jail was also motivated by my urge for 'sadhana' (quest). My mother would never (bless) permit me to go to a far-off place for a long duration for this purpose. At the time of this 1930 uprising (war), I told her that the time was then ripe to repay

our debt to the Motherland. The salt we partook of, of our Motherland had to be now paid for. The same obligation to our country now posed a challenge to us to join the war for independence in high spirits. Now we could not afford to sit idle, watching passively. I requested my mother to permit me to join the war (struggle for independence): "Please let me go ! Arrangements would be made, by the grace of God, to meet our household expenses, our daily routine." She did permit me somehow, though not wholeheartedly. I had written to Parikshitbhai to make necessary arrangements regarding my regular office work. I had also made the necessary financial provision. I observed silence perfectly during my imprisonment. I spoke to no one. I remained engrossed in my activities of prayers, chanting God's name, meditation, etc. I did all the duties assigned by jail authorities, with enthusiasm and loving devotion. Many of the prisoners were exposed betraying while doing such work. They resorted to cheating and deception to such an extent, that I wondered how far such people could cultivate the true spirit of non-violence! I felt that there was no such probability about such people. They had perhaps joined the struggle as a result of general excitement in the atmosphere My time in the jail was spent in all conscious alertness, by the grace of God, in prayers, chanting, meditating each moment. This fact was experienced and witnessed by Bhai Parikshitlal Harivadanbhai and Hemantbhai*.

* 'Jivan Darshan' pp. 53-55

(This soul) I have consistently and continuously tried to cultivate the quality of humility in all (his) my life's routine (daily activities) with knowledge and devotion. By the grace of Cod, I have always been trying to reduce my humility (ego) up to a zero degree. On account of my humility to such a degree, I was often considered to be an 'idiot' by many people. It is not easy to cultivate such humility. I have not known it (true humility) to arise (be born) unless one's tendency to assert or state with force many of one's beliefs, convictions and different varieties of one's understanding of life. Hence I never laid stress on my own unique perceptions of life, but always paid due respect to those of others; their advice, instructions, etc. were devotedly and lovingly implemented by me. This fact is known to many people. This could not happen unless I cultivated the quality of detachment in due proportions. While I was working as a joint secretary of the Gujarat Harijan Sevak Sangh in the Sabarmati Gandhi Ashram, I was often required to go for a natural call during working hours. While on the way, I was jokingly addressed by my name Chunibhai, instructed by the girls in the 'kanya chhatralaya' (girls school hostel) not to go ahead, but go back to work. I used to agree and co-operate in all awareness of their motive; others could call me a fool for doing so. I was fully aware of the harm to be caused to the system by not answering such a call of nature duly, in time. But I was more conscious about the motive or aim of cultivating restraint. Any such act done in full awareness of its aim proves to be less harmful. I have experienced

this quite often, by the grace of God. During my tenure at the Nadiad Ashram, I was often required to visit student's villages during the holidays. We used to stay with them in their locality. We stayed even in the colony of sweepers (bhangiwas). We went with them to a river or pond or water reservoir and made them clean their utensils, pots, big vessels, etc. vigorously to make them look shining and bright, and used the same for fetching drinking water. While returning with such shining utensils washed by the students, we were often threatened by the local people who were quite excited at us. We did our cooking also in their locality, and sang 'bhajans' etc. at night. All this was easy for me only because of the faith, loyalty and honesty produced from the sense of duty and devotion to my quest*.

(This soul) I was never free for even a single moment during those days of my quest. It was all work and only work for me. I have greatly benefited also owing to it. It has done me no harm at all. I have often been subjected to many acts of injustice, but why should I narrate them? Where would I write its history? Whether justice has been done to this soul (me), during service is not to be judged by us. I have never felt regrets. My compassion or good feeling towards my friends has only increased because of such experiences and never decreased**.

When I went to an uninhabited lonely place for 'sadhana' for about a month, I did not care for eating or

* 'Jivan Darshan' pp. 60-61

** 'Jivan Sopan' pp. 190

for food etc. Whenever I felt hungry, I just drank water from a nearby pond or river etc. I normally selected a place which was totally uninhabited, far from human population, and full of natural beauty. There was no possibility or likelihood of encountering any human being. Mostly, I could starve myself or go without any food at all for at least four or five days, or sometimes more. But God always helped me to do without food and I never felt the pain of hunger. I was also solely possessed by love of God). New ideas dawned from various types of exercises, study or spiritual experiments conducted during 'sadhana'. Just as, while learning archery one has to keep one's eyes fixed on the aim or object of target only, concentrating single-mindedly, similarly my mind remained fixed in such type of feeling, with all eagerness. Although there were frequent periods of lapses, when my concentration declined or got mild and I severely suffered its ebbing effect.

Once I happened to go to a spot called 'Dhunvadhhar', near the river Narmada, by the grace of God. Facing it and standing in front of it, I could see at the far end, on the left side something like a cave. And I heard an order of doing my 'sadhana' by sitting in it. Only the noise of the waterfall (cascade) was terrible enough to make one afraid, and I was required to sit inside the cave and do my 'sadhana' by concentrating my mind. It was not at all easy. The place itself was so full of danger, which no one could survive or endure. It is not even correct to say so. Most people would easily admit defeat or withdraw or run away

from such a place. But I received the 'order' by the grace of God! I had to think only about how to obey the order with love and devotion. Once such an idea is born, deep in one's heart, with zeal and ardent urgency, all the necessary intuitive solutions are also easily available from the idea itself. Such is my conviction born out of repeated experiences, all alive and vivid! I do not write here about all the measures I undertook in order to approach the cave near the waterfall. I stayed there for twenty one days, by the grace of God! Each moment of the day was spent in cultivating a strong feeling desiring His grace and in conducting various types of study or exercises in relation to the Quest. That was His great blessing! For the first five or six days, God just helped me to survive without food! Later on some people skillfully tied a food-vessel with a rope, lowered it and shook it in such a way that I could catch it. It was only once in a day. I used to pass my urine and stool also in the same spot. This soul has suffered and endured many ordeals and hardships of this type.

Once I had been to Madhya Pradesh on one month's leave from the Gujarat Harijan Sevak Sangh. There, I sustained myself for 24 -25 days, without eating or drinking anything other than my own stool and urine which I could pass till the last day easily and fully. Drinking my own urine and eating only out of my stool made my system very clean from inside and kept my body in a good condition too. I felt no disgust or aversion while consuming my own stools at all. No such averse feeling was there while drinking urine. There was no bad

odour or unpleasant smell in the stools. It only tasted like cow-dung or cattle-dung. All such things are possible when one's feeling is intense and highly activated. This kind of practice may be compared with the practice of '*aghoris*' (*hatha yogis* or *sadhus* living like absolutely uncivilized people). It can never be considered that such practices are quite necessary for everyone. Nobody suggested it to me; but I was under my own orders. (I had spontaneously done it all).

Once this soul (I) happened to go to a lonely place like Chitrakoot. There a '*Brahmin pandit*' used to bring my food regularly once everyday. On such occasions I deliberately avoided talking to anyone at all, bringing me the food. I had not conversed with the '*pandit*' also, but while I was returning from the place, he had taken my address. This *pandit* had once visited Nadiad. My mother gave him all the necessary items for his cooking his own food, as he would not accept food cooked by anyone else. He informed me that he never slept inside a house. I told him that I used to sleep every night in the local cemetery only, so he could also accompany me. That night both of us slept in the cemetery. I used to conduct my '*sadhana*' regularly and he also did the same. I had an impression at that time that he must be learning the art of black magic. He later talked about it to me. There is a special type of being called '*Preta*' or '*ghost*' (known as evil spirit) just as human beings are also a type of '*being*'. It can be made manifest with the use of '*mantra vidya*' - the science of mantras chanted specifically. He also made it manifest as a

demonstration to convince me. He told me that he had now to take one last step only to complete his learning. In order to complete the whole process, he was required to perform a special type of ‘sacrifice’ in which he had to make special ‘offerings’. If he could complete all the rituals properly and culminate the process, he was likely to accomplish full powers as a result of learning that art. I replied that I was not at all concerned about his accomplishment of that type. We want independence. He argued that with the help of his ‘*preta vidya*’ (the art of black magic), one could even shake or disturb or shake the Viceroy, too. But he was required to reach the final stage of completing the process. He then demanded from me a sum of money to enable him to buy all the items required as ‘offering’ to be made in the ‘sacrifice’ (ritual). I informed him about my economic condition in detail. He suggested that I should arrange or go out for donations and collect the necessary amount. I made it plain to him that it was not possible for me to collect the amount. I gave him money enough as fare to reach Ahmedabad and wished him goodbye!

I was going to complete fasting for 40 days. After 38 days, I met one Godadia Maharaj. He asked me as to why I was undertaking such long fasts. I had better stop it. He even advised me to eat at once. Initially, I agreed, but then I thought, “Why should I break up my fasts now that there are only two more days left? Since we (I) have pulled on for so many days, now only two

*Once in Karachi, I was observing ‘Roja’ (fasts).

more days to go”. Thus enforced or impelled by my subtle sense of ego, I did not obey the order (command) given by Godadia Maharaj. At that time I was going somewhere by car with one of our elderly hosts. Meanwhile on the way, my attention was caught by an innocent looking man in rags (dirtily dressed), sitting on a verandah (raised platform). He beckoned to me with his hand and called me to him. (He signaled by hand that I approach him). I stopped the car, and in spite of my host’s protests, went near the ‘fakir’. He asked me whether I had not yet overcome my egoism. He offered me a sweet and ordered me to break my ‘*roja*’-to discontinue fasting, etc. I realized at that time that God had arranged it all to destroy my subtle righteous egoism. So I was on the point of eating the sweet offered by the ‘*oliya fakir*’, but my host intervened saying that after so many days of fasting, eating the offered sweet directly, would make me ill or sick. But I paid due respect to the command of the ‘*oliya*’ and ate the offered sweet on the spot and thus broke my fast. It is necessary to destroy the sense of pride and power gained as a result of a pious oath well-kept. God graciously enables us to destroy such pride or egoistic righteousness.

(This soul) I had willingly and fully sensibly trained myself in cultivating the quality of humility. I used to forgo and waive my rights to accept a lower position in the field of service than I deserved. I was the chief in the Nadiad branch (school) and the Ashram

* Shri Mota took only tea, twice a day, during such fasts and nothing else)

also, but I appointed a subordinate teacher as Principal and worked under him, so that he would get the best of training and the opportunity to learn. I was transferred as the chief administrator in the Bodal ashram, but I had personally requested the sangh's (association) managing committee to appoint Hemantbhai as chief administrator in my place, and thus, I had myself made Hemantbhai my senior and that too, on my own demand (request).

Though working in the same institution, I never indulged in advising or instructing others (colleagues). I seldom or rarely offered my advice or instruction to the chief (Head) of the institution. I deliberately avoided taking any initiative or unwanted responsibility. I used to observe as much of silence as possible by the grace of God. In allotment or work or duties, I could remain equally efficient with all. The purpose behind writing this fact is, to enable all 'swajans' (followers, well-wishers) to understand and emulate, if possible.

Shantiniketan had been established to commemorate the memory of Maharshi Debendranath. And yet the original place of his 'samadhi' (memorial) was lying in a wretched state, requiring repairs, proper care and cleanliness, etc. Besides, daily after breakfast a crowd of beggars waiting outside the kitchen would throng the premises and try to loot the left-overs creating unruly scenes. On these two accounts I had a desire to meet Shri Rathindranath, the son of poet Laureate Rabindranath, the chief administrator of Shantiniketan.*

* 'Jivan Sopan' pp. 75-77

Shri Mallikji had warned me against meeting Shri Rathindranath, who by his peculiar nature was likely to disregard or ignore me. But once we decide to do something we have to do it with love and humility. We need not care about the consequences of such actions (duties) personally. It is one of the qualities of a true seeker of Truth. Once I sent my name on a piece of paper at a time convenient for him, when he was available. He called me inside and asked for the purpose of our meeting. I told him, “I dislike two things in the midst of this holy atmosphere. One is the poor, undesirable condition of the very place where Maharshi Debendranath had experienced the high state of Samadhi for about eight hours, leading to his proclamation of the name as “Shantiniketan”. It is not suitable in relation to the dignity of the place, (The condition is unsuitable and undesirable). The other is about the crowd of beggars waiting outside the kitchen at the time of breakfast, who after it is over, clamour and fight for the residue or leftovers of food etc. That creates a sense of pity and bad mood or feeling at heart. I have come to you to request to please make the necessary arrangements in both these matters. It would be very desirable and noble.” * He listened to both my requests very attentively. He did not utter a single word. He did not

Shri Gurudayal Mallikji, Professor of English at Shantiniketan lived with his family in Karachi. I had many occasions of discourse with him. He had the true feeling for ‘Satsang’ (discourse with the holy) and was fairly advanced on the path of ‘Sadhana’. He is a realized soul, who has reached the depths of spirituality. His humility is worth emulating as an ideal for seeker. Shri Gurudayal Mallikji is now no more.

* ‘Jivan Sanshodhan’ p. 174.

respond in any way. I took my leave of him and immediately left the place. I was satisfied in my own way, as I had approached and met him.

Once during my period of 'Sadhana', I (this soul) had come to face a period of great difficulty and disturbance. It was so severe that I could not achieve anything in spite of all efforts. I could not rise in sublimity. At that time I (Mota) took the shelter of Shri Sadguru in all devotion and awareness and cried out for help. I made great entreaties, in the form of prayers (poems). At the end of a stanza in each such prayer, I took the name of 'Keshan, the name of my Sadguru. * But such experiences are possible only when our heart is fully in tune with the Sadguru in all devotion and love. Our love for the Sadguru with a desire of total surrender (self-sacrifice) cannot be compared with any other feeling. Our heartfelt feeling towards the Sadguru is fully capable of making us more concentrated and single-minded in our 'Sadhana'.**

In 1931, when Hemantbhai and I were put together in the Sabarmati Jail, he asked me repeatedly as to what I was muttering or chanting. On his frequent insistence only I replied that I was doing the "Hari:Om Japa". I said nothing else. Our other fellow prisoners did not even know about it. Then how could I have told anyone about those strange incidents in my life which may be

* I have gained constructively and positively as a result of such prayers in my life. It is my direct experience. It is a fact that the Sadguru helps indeed, "vaishnav nathi mayo tun re". These prayers are included in a book published under the title "Keshav Charane Kamale" (At the Lotus Feet of Keshav).

** 'Jivan Sanshodhan' p. 201-204

known as wonderful? There are many such factual experiences related to the field of 'sadhana' which remain concealed deep in one's heart only. I have kept silent about it all even in the presence of most loving, sincere friends. But keeping quiet and observing restraint is not as easy as we suppose. Whatever was related to the field of 'sadhana', by the grace of God, was possible or easy enough to be kept a secret and done in privacy. Therefore, even though Hemantbhai and I had been together since 1926, still it was only in 1938, that the idea of my spiritual life (bent of mind) came to be clearly known to him in Karachi. Only once in 1931, when we were together in the Bodal Ashram, while I was taking classes in a room inside, on account of some mysterious connectivity and my remembrance of It (God), I had lost all awareness about my bodily presence. The boys had rushed out to call Hemantbhai sitting on the verandah; he came in and saw my strange condition. Even then I had just told him that I had occasionally had such strange experiences, (I had been subject to such feelings occasionally only), in such a manner as to preclude his further curiosity. Moreover, he had also been witness to my sitting in prayer and meditation late after midnight (about 2.00 am) near the wall outside or under a '*rayan*' tree. He had wondered as to how I could sit like that keeping awake at night after a whole day's strenuous labour and physical activity as such, and again resume the same routine the next day. How could I command so much physical strength? Once the residential doctor Nagar Saheb of Borsad public dispensary had told

Hemantbhai about my similar condition (loss of bodily awareness) arising during my singing of 'bhajans' (devotional songs). He had often seen me weeping continuously with tears of love and devotion flowing in a stream. He had been so informed by the doctor also. But I (this soul) had never wished for such things to be known. Thus I observed silence for years purposefully.

Then why am I writing about such incidents? The constant course of spiritual development does not remain stagnant but flows consistently forward after reaching certain stages of adequate merit duly obtained. It does not remain at the same stage as ever. Formally for this soul (Mota) the 'sadhana' (development) achieved through observance of silence and secrecy was appropriate for the time being only, but now, by the grace of God, it has risen noticeably to a level, where the whole stage of life has been changed. In the same body it inhabits, a new life is born. (Apparently the body is not changed, but a new being had come to live in it). Therefore, for the purpose of this soul's (Mota's) spiritual development, it is deemed right and proper to become manifest (self-expressed) before the dear ones whom God had made so dear. (It is considered appropriate to reveal such truths before those whom God has made it possible for me to meet.)

In 1931, Hemantbhai and I had stayed and served together in the Bodal Harijan Ashram; before that time when I was in Nadiad, one brother (co-worker) had tried to poison my ears against Hemantbhai. He had also complained frequently against Hemantbhai. Had I been

so prejudiced against him, I could not have worked harmoniously with him at all. (Our relations could have been spoilt or strained). But by the grace of God, I had been able, by that time, to cultivate a state of equanimity and impartiality, (to listen sympathetically to everyone or ‘give everyone thy ear’, and yet not allow one’s heart to be dissuaded or swayed negatively against anyone) so that no such negative impressions could arise in me. “To listen to everyone and still remain aloof from such impressions” is not as easy as it is to speak. Hence, there is much merit in not listening to any disparaging remarks or negative facts about anyone.

Between us (Hemantbhai and me) what a harmonious relationship of love had existed in Bodal! Even Harivadanbhai and Parikshitbhai were amazed to see it. They even said that we continued to live together happily like a husband and wife! As a result, our friends used to call us humorously by the names of “*Gulab*” (rose) and “*Kusum*” (a flower)! Once while Hemantbhai was in Surat, an open postcard was sent to him jocularly addressing him as “Dear Gulab” and signed as “Yours Kusum”. This incident is still remembered by their family members.*

After my release from imprisonment in 1932, I went to Pujya Thakkarbapa, who was then in Mumbai, to pay my respects to him. He ordered me not to go to jail after that, but to work for the Harijan Sevak Sangh. My father also gave his assent. He advised me that Thakkarbapa was right. His own advice was also the same. I obeyed

* ‘Jivan Sanshodhan’ p. 271

it. I was appointed as a secretary. The ashram administration work was now mine. The current of my feelings for 'Sadhana' was at a low ebb, had gone mild, as a result of supervision of all the institutions belonging to the Association (circle), and a constructive sense of new responsibilities arisen in my heart. When the conflict arose, I was inspired by the grace of God, to remain constant in my true feelings. Thereafter all that type of work became subsidiary.

It often happens that we have an inner understanding which cannot be adequately expressed. But it leads towards some new understanding, new experience and new strength. It is my direct firsthand experience that our love or sense of reverence (good respect) felt alive and strongly for the Sadguru, deep at heart, never fails to provide us with inspiration.*

While Shri Hemantbhai Nilkanth was living with me in Karachi, he had often seen me sink into the state of trance-like devotion-induced excitement during the day. Such states were induced as a result of seeing some beautiful sight; reading something good, full of noble feeling, natural simplicity, and some beautiful devotional song. On encountering such eventualities occasionally, the trance-like mood of excitement was felt in myriad ways and lasted till long. Such condition (of mind and heart) had remained with me for about three years. (It was a natural experience).

A kind of consistency (continuity) and natural ease lack of effort are also produced during the ongoing

* 'Jivan Sanshodhan' p. 303

process of such moods of pious excitement. Thereafter, its effortlessness remains alive for all time! Then there is no necessity of repetition of the stimuli or moods producing such a trance-like state.

By the grace of God, we need not claim any feats of intellectual cleverness. Even formerly also we gave it no weight or importance. Hemantbhai is an old companion and witness. He knows that I (this soul) was known as semi-literate (or educated only up to the primary level of two-three standards). Dear one Nandubhai once exclaimed: “Oh, ho”, while accidentally observing me typing a letter (working on the typewriter) in the office of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. “Does he know so much English? Can he type also!?” He had exclaimed. In fact, I (this soul) still deserve to be called an idiot as before. ‘He’ has not changed. And he (I) deserves to be the target of abusive language which need not be obstructed/objected or opposed to.*

I have been so targeted by a number of dear ones (swajans). Many of them have scorned, slighted and looked down upon me. Some of them have even tried to demote or degrade me, some others have greatly opposed me, and still some others have thought very differently about me, or believed in things otherwise. Though all the noble qualities for a spiritually advanced state had been cultivated carefully on right occasions, nobody has taken note of it or considered as important. And yet my good feeling of love for anyone of them has never declined. I have been ever ready and very alert to

* ‘Jivan Sanshodhan’ p. 138

be use to them when necessary, by the grace of God. Some such individual has used the most derogatory language for me. I have endured it all with love. By the Grace of God, I have always continued loving all such people. That is His supreme blessing on us. (This soul) I have always struggled and worked hard to repay even the slightest obligation or debt incurred by me, if anyone has ever been so kind and generous to me, by the grace of God. (This soul) I have never asked anyone to do what I myself have not done in life.*

I have been fortunate enough by the grace of God, to be permitted to spend nights in places full of dangers and lonely; where nobody is ever allowed. How can I describe my experience gained during stay in such places? And how can one ever rightly understand them without direct experience? The higher and higher we rise, from peak to peak, in the phases or levels of spiritual development ('sadhana', quest), the lonelier and lonelier we come to feel, in a sense. It does not mean that we cannot mix with all the people. This type of mood of detachment (non-contact) is unique. Its joy increases. In Bhuj (Kutch) in those days it was necessary to obtain permission from the state office to spend a night, because of the great danger from ferocious wildlife on the hill. I got the permission and spent one night. The memory of that fateful night spent in an elated mood is printed permanently on my mind. Very often has my heart been filled with sweet, delightful and loving memories (remembrance) of that holy night.

* 'Jivan Sanshodhan' p. 226

(Great joy of love has welled up in my heart). I was deeply grieved at heart that I had not been able to remain present in the service of my (this body's) spiritual mother at the time she breathed her last. But what was the remedy? God gave me the solace (consolation) (to alleviate my grief) at the time when I was sleeping in the open courtyard of the temple on that hill, at dead of night. My mother 'appeared' in truth before my eyes. (I could see her in reality). I enjoyed sleeping with my head on her lap and also talking to her. But as soon as I turned on my side, she disappeared. It was not an experience of dreaming or a trance. I had seen and felt her physical presence in reality, before my eyes, in my full consciousness. No one is going to believe in such a fact. Just in a similar manner, at Balaram, near Palanpur, by the grace of God, I had been able to spend a night full of unique, wonderful experiences.*

I had been striving to understand, by the grace of God, a variety of emotional agitations caused by one's ego. The result of such a studied and conscious endeavour was that I experience the virtues of equanimity, impartiality, calm of mind, judicious discrimination, cheerful disposition and tolerance, etc. arise in me automatically or without effort. Thus with the help of awareness of knowledge-based devotion and the efforts made towards achieving their objective, virtues (qualities) come to be cultivated spontaneously. This soul (I) never practiced striving to cultivate the virtues solely (in isolation), and never found it easy too.

* 'Jivan Darshan' pp. 159-160

There was no such conscious awareness of it also at the time. But such virtues came to be cultivated as a result of constant and continuous study (striving) based on the appropriate efforts of knowledge-based devotion and on getting that experience, a unique joy was experienced, which further led to increased righteous or appropriate kind of self confidence.

Just as for trading or business one needs capital, its art or skill, discrimination, knowledge, experience, etc., so also to develop one's sense of spiritual development, one needs capital in the form of power or strength. How to bring such a capital in the beginning? (How to raise it initially?) This problem had baffled me very much. Just as when all other required items for trade or business are available, but only capital or funds are not available, and even the right source or contacts are not there, then however strongly the person might have been planning his business moves, he cannot implement them at all. Such a condition this soul (I) was in! But my Sadguru had commanded and assured me (assuring ordered) not to give in to despair or helplessness. I was determined to implant that order (translate it into appropriate action) at any cost, as a sacrifice in its right spirit. Such was my sincere understanding (conviction at heart) by the grace of God. Hence I could emerge from my state of despair. I could then firmly hold in my heart the feeling of Sadguru, and very poignantly and pathetically pray from my heart, with heart all the time. I used to keep all my attention fixed in that solution and act wisely in accordance to it The solution of the problem then

emerged to me (this soul) as naturally as the bamboo shoots out from the earth (plantation).

That made me (this soul) convinced that “O Soul (Mota), your irrepressible yearning for self-development, firm faith to achieve it, inherent urge to continue making the right efforts, valour, patience, unlimited and such other virtues are remarkably indeed very powerful.*

When knotty problems arose, or complications were experienced on the path of spiritual development, when they pained me and an intense restless condition prevailed asking for solutions, and even my sincerest prayers from heart with heart did not succeed, I (this soul) used to conduct a close search of inquiry, or self examination into the various facets of mind, soul consciousness, intellect and ego. There must be something wrong somewhere, (some corrosion); or it might also be that all those mental activities (sense instruments) were not fully involved in the mood of prayer to produce the right concentration or single-mindedness. On such deep analysis, by the grace of God, I could continue striving to achieve the required degree of concentration in the mood of prayer, feeling of God. That produced deep in my heart, the right mood of prayer. Thereafter, I even relinquished or gave up the desire to achieve results through prayers. That desire was also inappropriate. We have to continue doing our assigned or allotted duties rightly and perfectly well, and in doing so, if we remain totally absorbed by the grace of God, then He is also going to do His part of the work

* 'Jivan Pokar' p. 127

surely. Such self-confidence and convictions based on knowledge had already been born in me (this soul).*

While striving to achieve such single-mindedness and concentration in the mood of prayer, if mind, intellect or reasoning created any hurdles, I told them that once I had decided to surrender my heart (*'jigar'*), the arguments were to no avail (all reasoning would be in vain) and whenever the sentiment at heart declined or grew weaker, I lovingly addressed it and replied, "To die at its Holy feet, become ashes, is a sign of love."

It would be the best for me-such was my feeling strong at heart- that the goal I hoped to reach must remain constant in my view, right before my eyes, at all hours of the day. That feeling has been expressed in 'Tuj Charane' (At Thy Lotus Feet), by the grace of Cod. It contains that mood of prayer and also where and by what different means it can be achieved. It also relates the fact (proven) about what kind of life it is or can be that is settled in higher consciousness, is still developing and has reached the stage of God's grace, or had been blessed with it. In the end, there is a prayer or request regarding what I wish to beg from Him. That prayer had been the result of such a blessed state (grace of God) that made it possible for me to retain and keep the vision of my goal before me all the time.

Besides, that prayer had made one great achievement of my life also possible. I had often dreamed about the Himalayas during my childhood. I had frequently felt inspired to be able to go there. Not only that but even

* 'Jivan Pokar' pp. 113-114

during my years of quest, I had the same feeling very often. Guru Maharaj produced and inspired me with the good feeling that I publish the prayer “Tuj Charane” (At Thy Lotus Feet) and travel to the Himalaya from the amount gained thereby. I required a small sum for that purpose in 1923, but it was difficult for me to get. My first spiritual mother had provided me with the required amount to print it. No sales campaign was conducted. Yet, by the grace of God, I could obtain upto Rs. 437/- which made my pilgrimage to the Himalayas possible.*

Such power (spiritual strength) would not have become possible in my life unless the continuous urge, or endless yearning for spiritual development, the Quest, was also born with it. In order to get more power (derive new strength), we have to continue using out inherent resources of power. With increased understanding of its use, (the more wisely we use it), we derive new strength from it and more merit too. Therefore, if we learn to make the right use of true feeling and strengthen it by constant practice, then we can achieve something or gain from it. I am not talking to you about things which cannot be verified in one way or another. I have not descended from any cave in the Himalayas. I have only been telling you all about the things already experienced, by the grace of God, the way I have actually lived in the world, the way I have been able to conduct myself in society. I am asking you to do the same.**

* 'Jivan Pokar' pp. 131-182

* 'Jivan Pokar' p. 306

Such prayers must be said with intense feeling. Daily during the course of 'Sadhana' (Quest), a variety of prayers were said to strengthen the mood of the moment. And the humming of such prayers reverberated in the regions of my memory, strengthening the prayer mood. By the grace of God, a constant vigilant study and practice of that mood at heart retained for long, so that it went deep inside the heart and turned into a force sustaining the entire existence. The base (body) became deeply coloured (imbued) with that feeling. Of course, this includes repetition or carries its own revision with itself. The repetitive transformation of life is inevitable and indispensable, if one aims at giving a concrete form to any such feeling, or if one desires its manifestation or embodiment in real life. Such a revision is the heart of study. From such repetitive revision of life, new energy and power of consciousness are born with revision or regeneration, since the true feeling of heart also accompanies such a regeneration. Feeling creates regeneration. And because of such regeneration, every repetitive revision is of a unique type. Each time something new is born or re-created. Each type comes out with a new kind of form. The regeneration process is constant and also ever-changing. For many years, devotional songs had come to be composed about such a feeling of regeneration, or repetitive revision. At least two or four such songs or prayers were composed everyday to help strengthen the feeling experienced during prayerful devotion. (They were meant to add power to the soul).

The notes (books) containing such songs/prayers could fill at least three or four big cloth-bags (satchets, *'thelis'*). Side by side, those were the days of non-violent agitation of the years 1930-'32. I participated in it, receiving rewards of *'lathimar'*, imprisonment, fines, etc. In that era of non-cooperation, no fines were to be paid and even if! were forced to pay, I could not afford it. Four to five times, my house in Nadiad had been raided by the police and everything taken away. My bags containing note-books of those prayers and devotional songs were also taken away or swept away. Nothing has been heard about them since then. They are lost forever! But even then, ! had felt no pain or pleasure, no regrets at all, because I had experienced their constructive objective being fulfilled, the aim realized.

This reminds me of another incident. I once happened to go to Sarkhej to listen to devotional songs with emphasis on love (like Radha-Krishna relationship), at the house of the poet Sagar (The sea). Before the song session we had long discourses related to spiritual matters. We had touched the profoundest theme of *'sadhana'* (Quest) also. Thereafter I recited the songs. He told me, "You have the pure unattached love in your heart, and it is of a sublime nature. I have been deeply delighted with the knowledge of the facts regarding the innermost secrets of *sadhana* as here narrated by you. But allow me to tell you with love and affection, that people are likely to miss the noble and sublime content of these songs, instead they will misinterpret and only

feed their own worldly instincts (derive their base feeling). Therefore, throw away all these creations into the pond nearby”.

So saying, without a moment's delay, we consigned all my papers to the mercy of the pond. Sagar had also been stunned and speechless. Now only a little (of my prayers) belonging to that old period of my quest has been saved.*

By the grace of God, (this soul) I had come to learn some subtle methods (devices) of sadhana by means of (through the medium of) dreams. Shri Sadguru had revealed some secrets to this soul (me). It is a solid fact of my life, truly experienced. Other souls might perhaps not accept the truth in essence, of such facts, which is credible or understandable. This soul (I), came to learn through the medium of dreams, acute knowledge of many types of subtle flaws (deficiencies, drawbacks, vices) of human nature lying deep inside one's being (or consciousness). Such knowledge had dawned by itself from within. Some other faults or flaws of our nature ('prakriti') committed subconsciously, came to be understood through dreams. The art of conducting one's self politely in practical life among people (society), (or modest behaviour in social contact) was also inculcated (taught) by Shri Sadguru in me (this soul). But Shri Sadguru practiced and performed a certain variety of subtle methods (ceremonies), etc. on my person (on the 'base' of this soul) during and through the medium of dreams (through dreams within dreams).

* 'Jivan Sanshodhan' p. 342

I (this soul) came to possess through him (my Sadguru) the knowledge of vividness, direct pointedness and the concrete reality of such facts. Therefore, I have always felt at heart, the self confidence manifested in reality, that my Sadguru had always been (remained) alive, in flesh and blood, guiding me, inspiring me, wherever I have been, he has also been with me there, everywhere (at all the time of my life). All this is not a result of a derailed mind. Many people are likely to believe this to be the result of frenzy or mental derangement. They will not be at fault at all to think like that. Experience teaches one whatever one can. We do not claim at all that all the above facts related here must be accepted by all. It is not that whatever we hold to be the truth, must also be the truth for all others.*

On the suggestion of Pujya Shri Balayogiji, I had approached one Mahatma in 1924. At his abode (premises) there was nothing of what we call '*moral*'- or all was not like that. Any type of people would come to him and behaved as they liked. Quarrels also occurred. Violence would occur and theft also (there were cases of beating people and stealing). But in spite of seeing it all, I had never felt any kind of disgust or scorn, nor did I ignore it too, or showed any disregard. But I had not been able to understand it all. Now I can realize. I had been aware of his (Mahatma's) greatness and hence I did not have to think otherwise. And yet I had asked myself: 'Even ,in the presence of such great souls, why is everything so topsy-turvy or like hodge-podge (not

* 'Jivan Pokar' p. 108

clean)?!’ But later on I came to understand it. Just as rivers, big or small, all in the end meet the sea, similarly people of various types go to such great souls to seek their own ends.*

(This soul) I have never belied or betrayed the word (order) of my Sadguru. Shri Balayogi had kindly come to Nadiad to initiate and facilitate my entry into the spiritual (this) path. He said that he had come to obey order of Shri Dhuniwala Dada, who was my real guru. I was instructed by Shri Balayogi to go to Shri Dhuniwala Dada and receive his blessings. I was required to make the right, appropriate preparations for the purpose. I did not at that time understand the full significance of the words “right, appropriate preparations” (I was to be ready for initiation and further study, etc.). I had applied for seven to eight days of leave, to the secretary. When I told about it to Shri Balayogiji, he was highly disappointed and told me that it was not the right type of preparation (on my part). He further asked: “If you are ordered to stay there for a longer period? You have to be duly prepared for such. Be prepared at heart for such a preparation in all enthusiasm. Keep pondering over its possibility also with devotion.”

Now I did not have enough time. My mother was in Vadodara. By the grace of God, the mother whom I addressed as ‘my mother’ in ‘*Manane*’ (To the Mind), had become my (this soul’s) real mother (spiritual or godmother). She had truly inspired my spirit (this soul),

* ‘Jivan Pokar’ p. 15

so I went to Vadodara. I got my own mother (who had given me birth) to be somehow persuaded by my spiritual mother, to give me her blessings for the trip. On returning to Nadiad, I wired Parikshitlal at Navsari to come back soon. I gave up all my charge of office to him. He tried to dissuade me from such an act of madness-leaving my mother, a widowed sister-in-law, her two little sons, two younger brothers, etc. without any support. We had no capital to help them sustain. It was indeed very, very difficult, if not impossible, for this soul (me) in those days, to get myself ready in a special way, so suddenly too, and with all enthusiasm! But what must be done had to be done- no way! It cannot brook any change or delay, as it was predestined. Such being my duty too, I (this soul) kept on vigilantly reminding me, that ! must do it at all cost, with God's grace, in true feeling.

Thereafter I (this soul) went to Sai-Kheda village, where Shri Dada lived in glory. He had gracefully ordered me to stay where I was. I returned to Nadiad. Shri Parikshitbhai lovingly re-instated me in my service of the ashram and thus I resumed my duty, thanks to him.

Whoever was enrolled as a member of that institution, had to take a three years vow of service, which included the best of service to be rendered to Harijans, following constant contemplation and meditation in their interests. My Guru Maharaj suggested to me that I get relieved from membership, but continue to serve in that field. Hence I sent in my resignation from membership and as administrator. I was persuaded to

continue my membership but I refused to do so. I (this soul) felt a strong bond of love and good feeling for all workers of the institution. Meetings of the body were held at my house in Nadiad. Whenever Pujya Thakkarbapa visited Nadiad, he used to stay at our small two-room house. That I could receive his blessing is a matter of great honour and good fortune for me as a result of God's great grace! While we are working, if the blessings and good feeling of such other souls, also active in the field, is also manifestly alive, then our work is sure to be very easy.*

As I felt and experienced the nearness of my 'guru maharaj' (guiding godly soul) with me (on many occasions) in life, I also felt with it growing in me, my deep longing for spiritual development. Whenever my mind went astray or outside my control, I surely felt and experienced his nearness, as if physically scolding or warning me. His nearness so felt, inspired and led me on, on the path, creating sympathy and warmth of love in my heart. I remained convinced about his constant support and of the required help or aid coming to me too. Such a strong conviction kept ruling my heart. It is a different story altogether about the warmth and support received from his nearness.**

Meaning of words '*Para*' and '*Apara*' given below: '*Para*' means removed, at a distance, away, etc. There are four stages of speech: '*para*', '*pashyanti*', '*madhyama*' and '*vaikhari*'. The first is the highest or

* 'Jivan Sopan' p. 131

** 'Jivan Pokar' pp. 182-185

This is a farmer's common language, as used here by Shri Mota.

best stage. It also means higher or superior. Its opposite is 'apara'. It comes second. 'Apara' means inferior or lower. Pujya Mota here talks about his 'apara prakruti'- which means his own lower nature or base instincts. He narrates here, how he was aware of them and was constantly striving to weed them out, or remove forever. It means cutting at the roots, as in farming, weeding out of unwanted plant growth, etc. He also uses Gujarati word-'*nindaman*'. 'Nindan' is weeds plucked up and thrown away. '*Nindavun*' is to pluck up the weeds in a field, or to weed out, remove them with roots and all. '*Nindaman*' also means wages paid for plucking up the weeds in a field to throw away, or weeding charges.

During the period of 'sadhana' of this soul (Mota), the pressure of lower tendencies or base (animal) instincts was not inconsiderable. I was on a constant look-out (vigilant, alert) for them, by the grace of God, and continued to remain engrossed in the mood of prayer, devotion. Specimens of prayer (composed by me) for that purpose are contained in (my books) '*Hriday Pokar*' and '*Keshav Charane Kamale*' ('Call of the Heart' and 'At the Lotus Feet of Keshav'-meaning Sadguru Swami Keshavanandji alias Dhuniwala Dada). The base instincts'. pertaining to one's low, worldly nature have to be sought and plucked out. What is meant by plucking up? Not only that they must be condemned, but that they must also be uprooted and removed for ever. When do we do this? When the farmer realizes or sees that much that is not good or wanted has also grown along with what is good or required in his field. The bad is very harmful to the good. If not removed from the

field, it will not allow the good to grow. (The required produce will suffer or be reduced to nil). Hence the farmer weeds out all that is unwanted in his field. He does not let it grow. This is known as '*nindaman*' or 'weeding out'. This activity of weeding out is to be done continuously and vigilantly by the seeker ('*sadhak*') soul.*

My Shri Sadguru Maharaj, had assigned me the duty of '*bhangi*' (sweeper), removing the human waste (excrement). Nobody in Nadiad would allow me to do such work. The local municipal authorities, well aware of my status, would not assign or allot such work to me. So I wrote to Shri Parikshitbhai, secretary, Harijan Sevak Sangh, in Navsari to provide me with such a service, and he duly arranged it for me too. But when I approached Shri Guru Maharaj for his permission and blessings he did not let me proceed (to Navsari). He said that there was no need for me to do it then as I had already shown my willingness. It was enough that I was duly prepared or ready for such service. And yet, I used to clean the latrines, removing the excrement and urine, etc. of all those souls, who had initially opted for staying in the silence rooms, to observe silence in solitude (staying alone and silently).

The occasions we encounter in life are meant to teach us something. But our mind and intellect are so fine and clever that they obstruct our such learning with the right awareness (or wisely and consciously). Any

* Extra : A Short Note '*Apara Prakruti*' p.
'Jivan Sopan' p. 163

such occasion that we encountered or any such experience we underwent had something to teach us-impart knowledge-(why did it do so! What was its purpose?). Such knowledge normally occurs during the process to the concerned soul. (It is done naturally and spontaneously also). If it be so, then only we may understand and believe that the condition of the soul to mature spiritually is ripe enough. He (she) will not need or take more time to learn.*

By the grace of God, I have done a lot of manual work (physical labour) at the shop of one Sheth (a rich businessman). How much work it was! Heaps of toil and labour! What's the use of describing it now? The body may break down or succumb, but if the mind is with the dear Lord (*Prabhu*), one goes on deriving strength and new courage to face it all! Even solid help also becomes available. In the last two or three days even the Sheth's wife came to my help. There was a lot of competition between us! **

By the grace of God, I can recall the history of all such events when God had come to my help at all such typical times during the growth of this soul (Mota). I can vividly and completely recall all such different stages and eventful times during my spiritual growth, '*sadhana*' (quest), by the grace of God. If I were to narrate its history, I am sure that it will no doubt provide interesting and thrilling material to readers with such interests! But I have no orders (from my Sadguru) to write about that

* 'Jivan Sopan' p. 233

** 'Jivan Sopan' p. 324

history, until and unless it is felt as truly experienced and established in consciousness, by at least one of those dear souls who have met me on their own. #I have never felt it urgent or necessary to write the history of my '*sadhana*' in spiritual development to express myself through letter-writing also has become possible only, by the grace of God, in relation to such souls who join me in such quest for the same purpose. ¹It seems to me that the time is not yet ripe for me to write about my life or the period spent in '*sadhana*' (quest). I do not find among the people who will totally trust and behave its significance, whose minds and hearts have grown to accept in essence, something I may tell or write.²

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'Jivan Sopan' p. 172

¹ 'Jivan Darshan' p. 214

² 'Jivan Sopan' p. 219

Note : Some of the occult and mystic secrets of Pujya Mota's spiritual history (quest), have been revealed and narrated or only hinted at, in Shri Mota's recently published books like 'Jignasa', 'Shraddha', 'Nimitta', 'Krupa', 'Karma-Upasana', 'Shri Sadguru', 'Swartha', 'Moha', 'Prerna', etc. An interested inquisitive student (seeker), will be able to relish a tinge or touch of Shri Mota's mystic utterances or speech of these valuable books, 'Jignasa', 'Nimitta', 'Krupa', 'Shri Sadguru', 'Swarth' etc. are now available.

6. 'Matrubhakti'- Devotion to Mother

1. O Mother! How much have I remembered you today! All the sisters tied a '*Rakhi*' (sacred thread is tied on wrist of brother by his sister for his protection) on my wrist! Then I could visualize your true feeling of love! Though the children may be 'wandering anywhere, the mother always keeps her hand of love moving on their heads. How much unique is the love in her heart! There's no limit to her love for her children. A mother is a mother, she is the creator of the world. She is omnipresent. The children may and often do forget their mother, but the mother always keeps her children close to her heart. This saying is quite true. The world would be without its life (force), consciousness, vigour (efficiency) and interest (the sweet feeling), if there were no mother in it. I begin to understand the mystery (secret, essence) of this statement now. The feeling of love overflowing from a mother's heart, and the sweetness far sweeter than honey, flowing from her heart can fill with tenderness, love and sympathy any heart (mind) which has gone dry or been hardened up. There is divine nectar in a mother's heart, which when she moves her hand on a child's person, makes it dynamic or full of life. A mother may sometimes even frown at a child, but in her heart is the feeling of benefit or blessings to be bestowed. She has to play the game of fitting merit

against merit (virtues, noble qualities), in order to inculcate the same virtues in her children’s hearts. The creative power of the mother had also often been the source of catalyzing ‘sublimating’) the inner inspirations of many souls towards self-realisation, the feeling of oneness with the Universe.

The joy of sleeping unreservedly and fearlessly in a mother’s lap is all unique. Even today, O Mother (‘Ma’), I come to you running from a distance, calling ‘Ba’, ‘Ba’, with love. At each of my call to my mother, I am so overpowered with overflowing emotion (of being one with God in her), that sometimes I jump with joy and do even closely embrace you! Quite often early in the morning, after spending a night in the ‘open, in a solitary, uninhabited place, when I came into your bed in the house and slept with you, O Mother, I felt such an intense joy which always made me experience an increase in my heart’s true feelings (‘bhava’ for God). But every time it so happened, you would curse me with loving endearments (bad words). You would call me ‘*nakhodiya*’, ‘*uchchhediya*’, ‘*mara radya*’!* etc. (words not meant to convey their literal meaning but just like expletives, vernacular slang in Charotari Gujarati as veil as in general Gujarati)**

“You have now grown up! Are you not ashamed to sleep with me? You have grown big enough like a buffalo’s young male! You have no such nice awareness

* ‘Let there be no progeny born to you’, ‘Let there be no wealth in your family’, ‘My bad child’, ‘a weeping child’, etc.

** Shri Mota’s mother used such words out of love for him. They are commonly used as words of endearment, not to be taken seriously.

yet! Are you a kid or an infant, toddler-like?” And yet I tried to keep her more and more in my close embrace, overpowered with inspired feeling, which made her cry more and more admonishing me! The mother’s true feelings of love in life, has to be enjoyed to sublimate our instincts. The Mother is an incarnation of Joy! She is Kalyan (‘Deliverance) incarnate! But along with these she is also in the forms of Chandika and Kalika. If we can give a concrete shape to this divine love of Mother with true devotion and love, we can easily take long strides on the path of spiritual progress, we can accelerate our process of sublimation in life, which is not possible even with tremendous efforts in the Quest, Sadhana. Given the power of a mother’s love, our spiritual process in life is fast accelerated. Having gone beyond (leaving one after the other) certain stages of ‘sadhana’ (Quest), after 1939 in my life, I have come to grasp fully the true significance of a mother’s love, in its true nature, by her own grace! Mother is Mother. Her true feeling (‘bhava’) is double-edged. She will help you rise in your efforts depending on the way you use it.

Mother truly helps us independently also (without joining in our own efforts), but that becomes possible only when we have been totally dissolved in devotion to her with love in a spirit of selfless worship (our ego must be fully dissolved in our love for her). The feeling of a mother’s love is not a figment of imagination or mere sentiment. ‘She’ (God) is there, manifested, in full form, directly before our eyes. It is my own experience that if we keep our natural mother fully contented and

happy, in all dedication to the Mother divine, and that too only with a view to activating our true feeling in all awareness, and keeping it alert, then the contentment and happiness given to our real mother shall surely keep our heart's true feeling ever alive (not dry).

2. I, being the eldest among all existing members of the family, was more responsible. With God's grace, I have taken all the possible care, in proportion to our financial condition at that time, in making my own younger brothers as well as the children of my elder brother educated. But I have not been able to make my mother and others fully contented and happy in life. I am well aware of this fact. She would be really happy and fully contented only if I build a house (of my own, collect good wealth and give it to her as our family capital and spend enough to her liking, on getting the children well-settled (married) in life and on giving big dinner parties to all our caste fellows etc. on several occasions in my life, when such caste obligations (formal give and take) had to be fulfilled, I have done nothing. My mother felt hurt sentimentally as if our family reputation (social status) were at stake. (We did not add to it). For all such reasons my mother was very unhappy and disappointed in me. She used to complain about it to many persons in the Gandhi Ashram-against me. She complained even to Shri Godadia Maharaj. But by the grace of God, I had traveled far enough from the circle of such gross instincts of my mother. (I had left her earthly expectations).

3. By the grace of God, my awareness to my ideals in life had already been awakened. But before it, my mother and elder brother had already settled (agreed about) my betrothal. They believed that my consent was unnecessary or not necessary at all. I had clearly told both of them that, I had, by the grace of God, a faint idea about my own gradual fulfillment in life. I had the sole yearning to make it concrete, at any cost, no sacrifice would be spared. And therefore, the idea of my engagement would not fit into my scheme (dream). And yet they had turned a deaf ear to my request and the whole idea (fact) came to be forgotten. I personally had fully forgotten it. No idea arose at all in my mind in its context. When in 1926, the matter was revived and my mother considered my marriage to be, she consulted me and I declined repeatedly. Poor mother was perplexed (a little annoyed). She was terribly upset with me when she was consistently pressurized in this m told me plainly that in raising me (my bringing-up by her) had done all sorts of menial labour like grinding, crushing, etc. and brought me up through very hard times. Now I was disobeying her (such a mother's) ardent wish. How would I obey my Guru Maharaj's wish in future? There had been many true worshippers (devotees) of God in former times, most of them had been married and not "acting" like me. They had been all unlike me. She said that she knew that I was worshipping God, praying to Him; that I was not sleeping inside the house; even during my illness or bodily sickness I used to sleep outside the village, far away, in strange places, etc. but

we (the family) have to lead our normal lives in this world and you have got to care for your other brothers too. If you refuse to get married we would lose our social reputation and prestige, etc. what will happen to your brothers? You must marry.

The anguish and lamentation of my mother was justified, as I felt it. I was deeply touched and hurt by the volley of her words, particularly, "If you are not able to keep the word of the mother who engaged herself in all the menial work of grinding and crushing, etc., how will you be able to keep the word of your guru?" These words penetrated my heart deeply like an arrow and I soon agreed to get married. (I consented, accepted her word).

Even though, I had by heart expressed my willingness to get married, yet there had not been a slightest change in my programme for spiritual development, the realization of my life's aim. My mind had not been the least affected by this change (I had not wavered at all or grown weak at heart). The only thought I had was if at all my marriage was to take place, as fixed; let it come as it will, on its own accord (not pushed by me). It will be a matter of knowledge and experience for me as to how far I could bend mentally, how far sustain myself etc. and survive. If my determination for the heart's ideal is firm, how can I desist from fighting it? Life will be truly ennobled and enriched from the results of that war giving rise to valour, adventure, new luster (brilliance), etc. the desire or inquisitiveness to give a concrete shape to life's aim is like a fire. By the grace of God, it had been possible to keep that fire alive!

Thus my marriage was arranged (fixed). My heart was telling to my heart, “Child, now is the true test of your true feeling”. (You will realize its value and true worth). As I left my home in Nadiad, to proceed for the ceremony (marriage), I could experience in my heart the burning flame of my ideals burning bright and the tide of feeling also truly rising in me. When on the point of losing my outward consciousness (aware of bodily existence), I could continue striving to sing my prayers in all awareness, to keep it alive, and I offered prayers and chanted his name repeatedly also. I was sitting in the ‘chori’, a special square in which the wedding ceremony is conducted by the priests or ‘gor’ maharaj-‘titled brahmins’. I was able to notice the errors in the verses utter by the ‘gor’ maharaj, the ceremony experts! Then there was no chance or energy left in me to continue singing ‘bhajans’, as I continued to sink in my consciousness, losing self-control. It was seemingly very odd. My mother would not only disapprove of it, but also feel that I was depriving her of her dignity!

I was fast losing my general awareness in the fear that my mother could feel greatly shocked (by my odd behaviour) and I could not resort to ‘bhajan’ singing etc. to prevent it too. And as a result I was so transformed emotionally that I lost all self-control. It could have lasted about an hour or so. I came to experience strongly and directly at that moment (incident), how strong and powerful must be the true feeling or bent of mind or mood, to fight, at the very instant, the right time of marriage, the wedding hour! Hence by the grace of God, my (this

soul) mind was relieved from all anxiety. When the true inquisitiveness for life's ideals is inflamed like a volcano, it finds its own way, by any means! That was also experienced, by God's grace! The lady (woman who was married to Mota) died in about five months after marriage.

4. Once, while I was in the Sabarmati Ashram, I suffered from dysentery (blood passing out with stool) and so for treatment and rest I went to Karachi. After complete recovery and on returning to the Ashram, I felt very much at heart that I should discontinue with such work. It would be the best for me, if I could serve the people who met me on their own, in a different way, that is try to sublimate their minds, even to a little extent, with the grace of God, and make them aspire for higher goals, etc. I had desired to resign from the work of the Harijan Sevak Sangh on grounds of sentiment (true feeling).

My elder brother's son Shanti had found a job and he was now capable enough to support himself as well as his mother. My mother could live with my younger brother, Mulajibhai or with Somabhai. I told her about everything I proposed to do. She told them that we were not able to do even a little charity like offering a few (1/4 lb.) food grains to birds (that is, our financial - monetary condition was very poor) and yet, what great battles was I going to win by giving up even a little job? (she was totally against my decision).*

*in memory of such words of his mother, Shri Mota has raised a special open shelter for birds to pick up food grains, in the Hari:Om Ashram at Nadiad with the help of a donor, where everyday at least ten lbs. of food grains (jowar, bajri, etc.) is offered to birds, with the help of donors.

Thus, as she was displeased, I waited for a few days (2-4 days) more, and again tried to persuade her. She told me that I must pay her at least five to six rupees each month. I made due arrangements for that also. But she made me agree to a special condition. It was that when she was too sick to live longer, or when she was on her death-bed, I must be present at the time before her death. I accepted it lovingly and added that I would like it very much to serve her lovingly at such a time of her life and that it was my duty too. I shall surly be back with her as soon as I receive such news.

Therefore, I retired from service of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. It is not that such a long consistent service in the same field, for so many years, has not left its mark in my life. (It has definitely played its role in my life). It did not affect the people much, apparently. Nobody seemed to feel the loss because of my leaving the service. I had worked in full harmony and accord with everyone and all, with the good feeling and value of dignity of labour. I used to stay away from others. I used to go to meet my mother at least once in a period of about two to four months. Mother had gone to stay with my brother Mulajibhai in Nadiad. Besides, I was expected to go to Benaras Hindu University, with two listen. I was there, for about a month or a month and I half when I received a letter from Mulajibhai from Nadiad, stating that my mother was seriously ill at Nadiad. So I wired to Karachi to inform the father of the two sisters who had been in my charge and lived with me, in my care, about the condition of my mother in

Nadiad. He replied by wire that I could go to Nadiad, leaving somebody else in my place, to take care of the two sisters.

The Hindu University had a rule that if a lady student stayed independently (outside hostels), she must be in the care of one of her guardians. How could I leave these two youthful girls in the custody of anyone else (a stranger)? In this context, that “anyone else” could mean some known and familiar person. How could I find out such a familiar person in Benaras? In fact, the girl’s father ought to have come to Benaras, but may be, he could not manage it. I was facing a difficult dilemma, a very complicated situation: which one should I choose? The immediate duty of the task assigned to me (which is also one’s real duty) and the other duty arising out of changed circumstances? Both these duties were equally pressing for me. (They were both obligatory and I had no escape). On the one hand was my promise given to my mother and her serious condition demanding my presence with her; on the other hand was the care I was supposed to take of the two girls, their study and stay, etc. it was but natural that I must go to meet my mother on her deathbed, as promised. But then who would stay with the two girls? I could not leave them alone in Benaras and go to Nadiad. There was no alternative to my going to meet my mother also. She needed my presence at her deathbed.

When I felt that Nadiad was out of question and I could not go there as I had to stay in Benaras only, I had no other course or remedy open to me than praying

to God. I sat in silence in our house secretly, and called out to God: “O God, what a strange predicament I have been in! I have been caught between my dual duties, O God! I can see no way as to how to be with my mother in her sickness. What can I do ? I must keep my promise given to her and I am by all means ready to do so too, but how can I go there?”

I continued saying my prayers repeatedly. I had given up eating and such other bodily activities. I simply went on calling for His help. “I have given my mother the promise, which I cannot keep, I cannot keep. Not that I am insincere, but my circumstances are unfavourable as such”. I was so much pained at heart because of it that I thought of killing myself for my unconscionable failure. Like that brother in Balaram doing ‘kamalpuja’, (sacrificing one’s head as an offering to God) I must also do the same for failing to keep my word.

In spite of my agonizing grief and utter helplessness, I could not make myself do it. (There was no strong motive to commit suicide) I repeatedly cried out to God, “O Lord, O Merciful Almighty! What a strange predicament! I can neither leave this place nor go there (Nadiad). But I must keep my word. Thou must save my honour! Thou must help me keep my word! O God! My poor mother had asked of me nothing else at all! All that she had wished was my presence before her, at the time of her death. What in fact did I have to give her? O God, I have been brought to such a helpless condition, that I cannot even keep my word to do even this much for her!

Now only Thou must help and save my honour (dignity) to survive!”

My mother must be truly lamenting at such a time, yearning for my presence, deeply grieved. She must be in her heart full/ convinced that Chunio would certainly arrive (at home) what a pity and how unfortunate on my part that my mother’s little remaining trust in me would also be lost, what a breach of trust! “O God! This is a great ordeal indeed! At such a juncture none else-no other soul on earth can help me to keep my word with her.” “O my dear Lord, Saviour of the poor, show me Thy grace! I have no other claim on Thee. I have no right to enforce. Even the subtle relationship of devotion and love with Thee has not yet been so much alive in me, that I can expect Thy help in my work. So many of Thy true saintly devotees, who have graced (honoured) this earth, I am not even a particle of dust of the dust that has been made holy by the touch of their feet. (I am not worth anything.) Then how can I make such demands at all, on what worthiness, from Thee? But at this unbearable hour of crisis in my life, without Thy sole shelter, I have no other resource or remedy, poor as I am! O God! O Father! Thou alone art the Creator and Destroyer! How can I go or fly to Nadiad, fettered here as I am, with my hands tied! My heart is truly with my mother at this moment. But how can I take my gross body to be present before her eyes ? My oath of heart, sincerest promise, is to be present before physically as I am! My yearning (strong desire) to keep my word as given to her is also burning fiercely like a volcano fire”.

“By Thy grace, O God, I have already experienced during the different stages (levels) of ‘Sadhana’ (Quest), that one’s true feeling! gets manifested in reality. Therefore, it is my utmost prayer to Thee, to give concrete shape (physical form) to my intense desire to be present before my mother. I have never prayed to Thee for a single gross demand during my ‘Sadhana’ period. I had been continuously praying to Thee again and again, to remove the barriers, difficulties and obstacles in my path during my ‘sadhana’. O God! Thou has listened to my prayers and helped me every time by Thy grace! I can never forget the obligation of Thy grace! In this odd, unsteady and irreparable condition of mine, there is none other than Thee, who alone can help! I am fully aware that Thy grace has potency beyond compare in its power to resolve and make everything possible. Thou art alone are the potency and power of all my determination and resolve! In Thee, O Lord, everything exists. Thou alone can give a concrete shape to my desire to be present physically before my mother. Lord, Saviour of the poor, My Dear! Do look at me, a poor soul! Help preserve my dignity and honour! I do not wish to gratify myself by remaining present there (Nadiad). All I want is that my mother must be satisfied at heart, by my physical presence. She must feel that Chunio has arrived and kept his word. At the time of her death, she must at least realize or experience a kind of contentment at heart that I am hers, that is all-my only motive why I pray to Thee, my Lord!”

The intensity of this yearning of my heart was so acute and overpowering that it can be perhaps compared with the yearning of Gopi on separation from Shri Krishna. I used to continuously call for His help all the time. As a result of that yearning, a strong, sad feeling of miserable helplessness, earnest appeal was born, which further induced prayer after prayer in the same sorrowful tone to the Lord! All this was happening in the heart by itself. At such a perilous juncture, I had no other support or solace than God alone. There was no one who could appreciate my heart's feeling and show even an ounce of sympathy or fellow feeling. I was not even in need of such a solace or sympathy also. My greatest solace was God alone, the thousand-eyed, with a thousand hands! Thus about three or more days were passed in intense weeping, appealing mood of prayer-earnest prayers from the depth of a dripping heart-when all at once an electric lamp that had been burning suddenly went off. That made me realize, all at once, that my mother's soul had left her body and that she had passed away. I could not weep at all. Even at such an hour, my heart was fully engrossed in prayers to God alone. Thus, by the grace of God, I came to know the time of my mother's death, while I was in Benares, just there!

Then I received a wire from my brother Mulaji in Nadiad that my mother had expired. It was followed by a letter, in which he had written that a short while before dying, my mother had called out loudly to Mulaji, drawing his attention to me, "O Muliya, see our Chunio

has arrived!” Then my brother had told my mother that I was in Benares (Kashi) and that I could not be there with her at that time. Then my mother had replied, “Look, he is here. He has put his head near my feet, he is moving his hand over my body. Look, he is just here”. When I read those words in the letter, I realized that God had indeed come to my help in time-He had answered my prayers in reality and preserved my dignity. I was so overjoyed at the idea of my being so enabled to have kept my word (unknowingly), that the excitement and ecstasy I experienced then cannot be compared with even the joy of conquering crores of universes. God is so very powerful, really omnipotent and now He is on my side. He is truly helping me. He is ever ready to come to my help. Such a strong and manifestly alive experience I underwent as a result of His grace, and since then, my life has become truly blessed indeed. I experience His bliss and beatitude! The value of this experience of my life is not at all insignificant, but immense!

It has been a great experience which transcends all the gunas (qualities) and dualities. It is the rarest of all rare events of my life. It shows to me His supremacy, omnipotence, what He actually did for me, through His great power, what cannot really happen on this earth, what is absolutely incredible, but true, as a result of His grace, which my dear Lord made truly possible for me. Such is His supreme significance for me!

7. Shri Sadguru

How much do I remember now, again and again, all that my Guru Maharaj, who was my life-giver, life-inspirer, light of my life and like the soul of my life and most revered, said at the time of my initiation and entry into the path of spirituality? I did not fully understand its true value then, but I did appreciate its importance. I was convinced about its inevitability, and hence, (by his own grace,) I could heartily benefit from his help and advice. The seriousness of that voice, selfless noble love, selfless assertion, his soul (pure soul) playing within that voice, all that becomes manifested as at present (time) before my heart even today. I offer my '*pranams*' (prostrations, salutations) from the depth of my heart with true feeling to that loving, lifelike, auspicious, noble, lovely and compassionate and majestic, mystic incarnation of Love!

मम हृदयं ते अस्तु ।
 मम चित्तं चितने न्वेहि ॥
 मम व्रते हृदयं ते दधामि ।
 मम वाचमेकमना जुषस्व ॥

Translation : "Let your heart be (reside) in my heart! Continue to search for, explore, and follow my soul with the help of your soul (or consciousness). I bear and carry your heart in the avowed purpose (motive) of my existence. In other words, I may continue to keep within

my consciousness the being (true feeling) of your hearty consciousness; that is, I bear and continue to carry in my life such consciousness, being or true feeling.”

“Keep your mind focused and concentrated solely in my speech and relish it with joy.”

I had the rare good fortune to hear these holy verses, spoken in his own voice, by the great savant, eminent man of culture and learning, Shri Anand Shankarbai at (Gujarat) Vidyapeeth. The elated mood of sublimity which I came to experience then, is still alive before my inward eye.

The above verses contain the quintessence of Quest, ‘*sadhana*’ or spiritual investigation (search of God). By His grace, I had been constantly striving to unite my ignorant, poor and insignificant heart with His Holy, noble heart. I strove to follow his sublime consciousness, as far as I could, by intuition, by purifying my own consciousness.

I could somehow keep my own true heart’s feeling, entirely sustained by and within his own avowed existence, in character-and could also keep my own efforts sustained in listening to his speech with my focused mind, fully concentrated, delightfully attuned, consistently, undisrupted, by His grace ! Whatever I could come to learn from anyone, I could to that extent become attached and stay in tune by my attitude and way of life (conduct). Such was my Guru’s Grace.*

By the grace of God, to pursue this path (spirituality), there had not been the slightest desire or

* ‘Jivan Pathey’ pp. 6-8

inquisitiveness on my part in my early youth (at the time of adolescence). I had no such yearning at all. But as petrol comes out of the earth, because it lies hidden and stored under the earth, I had a strong inclination or crazy bent of mind to serve the nation, and that inclination or craze was turned by my Guru Maharaj to the path of spiritual quest. My real Guru was Shri Keshvanandji, Dhuniwala Dadaji, (who always kept a fire alive in front of him.) But I had heard Shri Keshvanandji himself say to me, that he was also one of the same category (incarnate consciousness) as Shri Saibaba, (sparks of the same fire!) My initiator into the spiritual search was Shri Bala Yogi. I remember to have run to meet him at Kumbh Mela.*

I have full faith, by the grace of God, that my Sadguru Maharaj is ever alive and competent. He has caught my hand with love. I have never kept his picture (photograph) with me. Although, I have always been able to invoke his full form and presence before my eyes, through sincere prayer, and true feelings of heart by the grace of God. (I see his concrete form). And I have also been able to (awaken) visualize his form in my heart and receive his help and inspiration. Shri Sadguru's spiritual support (sustenance) derived through loving devotion and devotion-cum-knowledge (not blind faith), and the consequent power and true feelings are altogether a different story (matter), belonging to alien regions, non-material sphere.**

* 'Jivan Darshan' p. 392

** 'Jivan Darshan' pp. 216-220

From Ellisbridge (in Ahmedabad), on way to the Town Hall, on the right hand side, near the beginning of the bridge is a small place where *sadhus* live. There, many years ago, a *sadhu*, born in Bengal, had come to live. He had called me ‘this soul) from Nadiad. I had been to him, having obtained four days leave from work. All of the four days he had forced me to eat so much as I cannot describe. The total weight of the food must be at least ten seersi (-lbs.) I am still understating, At the end of every hour, sometimes after only half an hour, plates full of delicious dishes of different varieties were brought in and we were ordered to eat it all up. At time I even felt my throat choking and not a single morsel could have been added or taken in, and yet when ordered to eat, we had to eat it all. This continued to happen throughout the day. But nothing wrong happened to my body. Passing of stool in the morning, only once a day, was also regular. This was a great fact of actual experience. (It cannot be denied.)

At that time no curiosity regarding Bhakti (devotion) or God had been awakened in me. I was contented with my work of the Nadiad school and the way I lived. Once Nanubhai Kantharia came to me and said, “O Bhagat! There is a *sadhu* living on the bank of the Sabarmati in Ahmedabad, who remembers you ! Daily, at least five or ten times a day he calls out loudly, naming you, ‘Call Chunilal from Nadiad over here.’ He seems to be in high spirits, in a very elated mood!” I replied that I had nothing to do with a *sadhu* at all. In those days I regarded *sadhus* as an economic burden upon society. So, I paid

little attention to Nanubhai's message. But after a few days, I felt a strong desire in me to go to Ahmedabad and meet that sadhu. It was as if he were pulling me towards himself. So I took the necessary leave and went to Ahmedabad. He was known as Balayogi, apparently a very exultant man! While bathing in the river, he would continue jumping like an elephant in water. He kept me with him for seven to eight days. He showed me such proofs (evidence) of his prowess, that I came to hold him in high esteem. I could not understand why I remained for so many days under his charm, so fascinated, instead of only about three days. He told me that my guru had sent him (Balyogiji) to initiate me into the Sadhana path. I did not then understand anything about initiation etc. I prayed to him in my heart requesting him to come to Nadiad, so that I could benefit from it in whatever way it was possible. Thus saying, I returned to Nadiad.

I was expected to go to attend an executive meeting of Antyaj Seva Mandal at Mirakhedi (Dist. Panchmahal, Taluka Dahod). I had a fast train ticket for Dahod to go by a morning train. Suddenly on entry, I noticed Shri Sadguru sitting here. He was sitting silently in a corner outside the platform. I returned to him, immediately on sight, and with all love and devotion, I prostrated myself before him, and was very happy. He ordered me to return the railway ticket to the authorities. I did it very joyfully and also wired to Dahod about my inability to attend the Mirakhedi meeting. I prayed to him (Sadguru) to go with me to my home. He came. How exultantly he continued jumping in my home! He would dance, running to and

fro, all over. There was a small upper storey/level in our home. I escorted him there to let him rest. But he at once told me that he had come to me to initiate me into sadhana ? We will need a big house for it.

I was astonished and replied, Bapaji'! I am a poor man. I don't know here any eminent persons who would give me a big house." The Sadguru was quite angry and was about to beat me. I got a little away from him to escape being beaten. He called me a donkey, and said that I had no sense in me. I was just an idiot, etc. He must have spoken so much to me like that. But he reiterated the need for a big house.

O God ! you are asking also about a lonely solitary place, while we have no such facility at all. Before I could utter those words, in my own mind, he flared up again and added that a big house, in a solitary place, and also near a water reservoir was needed. I was instructed to go and search for it and return to him at once on its availability.

I had no idea at all as to how to obtain such a house. It was then time for me to go to my work. I prayed to the Sadguru for it and got his permission. I put him in charge of my mother (requesting her to look after him very properly) and set out for my school work near Marida Bhagol (Outskirts).

On my way (to school) I used to pass through Vahorvad everyday. As we had all stayed together in the Vidyapeeth, as a result of good impressions received there, a feeling for Hindu-Muslim unity (amity) had also risen in me. Inspired by such a feeling, I used to offer

Islamic *salam* (salute) to a reputed gentleman known as Kasam Saheb staying in the Vahorvad (a street where Vohras live), everyday on my way up and down. I said “Assalam Alayakum” regularly to him and he also responded appropriately.

That was my unbroken rule. But since I had been mentally preoccupied today with the idea of “a big buildings, lonely surroundings and a water reservoir (pond) nearby” I overlooked the Kasam Miyan Saheb standing in the verandah of his house, and went ahead about twenty steps. I soon remembered out of my daily habit that I had not said my usual “Salam” and so returned to the spot. I approached Kasam Miyan saheb and begged his forgiveness as I had made a mistake. He said, “What is bothering your today ? (“What is weighing on your mind?”) I said, “An Oliya Saheb, (a Sadguru) has come to grace my house today.” He replied that it was a matter of great good fortune on my part. But I said that it was not enough. The Oliya Saheb was demanding something that was just beyond my reach. Then Kasam Miyan Saheb insisted on my giving him all details. I told him a whole story about the Sadguru.

He at once replied, “O Bhagat! Why are you worried at all? We have a big bungalow in a lonely place on way to Dabhan (from Nadiad). There is Rama Talavdi (pond) nearby. I’m giving it to you now for your use. Here’s the key. Keep your Oliya (priest) in that bungalow.” I knew about that house. I had stayed there for a while as it was used as a Harijan Ashram during the time of Indulalbai. How can I now express my joy on receiving such news ?

I felt like running back home and prostrating myself before my Guru Maharaj at once. But I was strongly aware of my duty at that hour, and so instead of being swept away in the current of such a sentiment, I continued on my way to school, the duty on hand. Returning home after work, I fell at his feet, overpowered with feeling, and narrated the entire episode. I went with him to the (destined) house, where we stayed and he initiated me into Sadhana there.

The impact of this incident has been so strong in my life that as its result a strong feeling had been awakened in me which had always saved me from breakdowns during my 'sadhana' period. That he came to my home in Nadiad, is a strong, living and vivid proof of his infinite grace on me. I have never forgotten the strong power of such a natural grace on his part.

Shri Balayogiji Maharaj, by his grace, might have stayed with me in Nadiad, for about two months, more or less. He graciously visited me about thrice. The first time he stayed in Nadiad, he told me that he had been instructed by Dhuniwala Dada in Saikheda and at his behest he had come to initiate me (Mota) sadhana. He then told me to go to Saikheda for Dada's blessing and return. I went there fully prepared. I had resigned from the *Sangh* already, as I yearned to relieve myself from all local responsibilities, (I had burned all my boats, so to say). I went to Saikheda and put up in an inn (a 'dharmashala'). I took my bath, etc. in a room, and went to Guru Maharaj and bowed down before him. I was unaware that others were afraid of him and ran away

from him. As I put my head at his feet, the people there cried out, warning me, “O fool, get away ! Get away! Dada will break your head.” But nothing such happened to me.

I used to sit in front of his seat, about five to seven feet away. Dada used to utter abuses irrelevantly much of the time. No clear meaning could be interpreted from his speech or utterances. The abuses he used to utter were all unspeakable. (Our ears could be infected thereby.) I felt contempt and thought of returning home at once, leaving that spot. But immediately another thought stuck me. It was that this Dadaji was the guru of Shri Balayogiji Maharaj, who had kindly come to Nadiad, whose ‘bhava-leela’ was truly experienced by me so often, and who had by his own grace initiated me into sadhana. How great he must be ! There must be some solid reason or mystery (secret) behind all that he was now doing with me, his speaking, behavior, etc. all must have had some hidden meaning, but how could I judge or know it at all ?

As I had been so thinking, (he spoke out) I heard him speak. All his utterances continued a number of expletives (abuses unspeakable words), and he even used to beat people at times. I heard his abuses silently, though no one could think that he was speaking to me. (He showered his abuses generously, but not specifically addressing me.) He told me that I should observe the expressions on the faces of people (the crowd) standing in front of him, while he was speaking, and later, approaching the specific individual, I should ask him/

her everything in detail. This was addressed to me because at that particular time the same type of question was crossing my own mind.

After this incident, I used to observe the crowd present before him everyday. I used to keenly observe the changes in expression on their faces all the time. I used to meet about five to seven such (select) persons everyday. Then I came to learn that things had actually happened in the lives of those people the way Dadaji was speaking about, (apparently irrelevantly), and that he was also uttering the exact words or just like the bad words used by those people among themselves.

As he had been narrating or uttering the incidents related to so many lives (people in the crowd), how could one find in them any consistent meaning or significant relevance ? Each of them perhaps had a different story, some good, some bad. Dadaji used to speak about each one in accordance. An outsider who is impartial, might think that his (Dadaji's) speech was irrelevant, pointless, obscene, absurd and indecent also. It could be beyond one's grasp or easy understanding because of the abuses and also because he used to beat people at times. Some Hindi newspaper often contained news, stories or reports against him. My friend Chunilal Vyas regularly bought that paper and gave me to read it too. He never forgot to send me clipping from the paper, containing matter condemning or opposed to my Guru Maharaj. It is not always probable that news report-regarding such persons reveal the truth about their lives. But how can others obtain the power of understanding

secrets and experiencing the mystery, which I could easily grasp by the guru's grace ?

Right from the day next to the day of my arrival there, Dada used to speak continuously about the princely family and their relations with the British government. While he was thus speaking, I could see that there was no one in the crowd who was related to those people. Dada was exposing all types of manners and customs etc., which were being used by the princely folk to please and gratiate the foreigners (rules). He used to vividly describe in detail all the dirty tricks used by them, (the princes). He must have thus spoken for about an hour when the retinue arrived. Two or three horse riders were in the vanguard, followed by a car and some more horse riders, who were also followed by the police. The prince alighted from his car and offered respectfully with his salutations, falling at the Dada's feet, two silver plates, one full of silver coins and the other containing gold coins, etc. He bowed down and placed the silver plates at Dada's lotus feet. But the Dada kicked off both those plates so strongly, that they fell too far away from him. The coins were scattered here and there. The police and the prince's retinue cordoned the place off at once, and collected all the coins (gold and silver Dadaji spat on it.

He angrily asked the Prince, "Why have you come here?" I am here, using very sober language, but the actual words used by Dadaji are not worth repeating here (unprintable language). He scolded the Prince and others harshly, and even exposed all their routine deeds. Others

might not have understood it all, as only I could. Dadaji told the Prince that his father (the local king) would be dethroned and that he (the prince) shall ascend to the throne. I later came to find through inquiries that the then King of Indore, might have been involved in a number of conspiracies, etc. Currently, at the time of our meeting, there was a court trial running against him, known as the “Bavala Murder Case”. Dada had been speaking about it all quite long before the prince (future King of Indore) arrived there, in (my) Mota’s presence. I had known the facts about it through personal inquiry. Thus I came to realize and be convinced of the intuitive, the divine powers of Dadaji from this incident. So long as I stayed there, with Dadaji. I could deduce or conclude about at least six or seven such incidents daily. I was doing it all only in order to make my intellect fully grasp and be affected by the divine cognitive powers of my ‘Guru Maharaj’.

Many kinds of people (from different walks of life) used to visit that place. They used to come frequently for the fulfillment of their vows, oaths, odd self-made assurances or promises to be realized with God’s grace, myriad hopes and wishes to be , fulfilled, etc. Courtesans and speculators also came. *Sadhus*, *sanyasins*, learned folk and ‘*pundits*’ and even diseased people also came. When I went there for the first time, I managed to meet all of the visitors suffering from some diseases. It seemed to me that about thirty percent of them could be considered as cured. On the 10th or 12th day of my stay there, Dadaji got a coconut as gift from someone.

He flung it straight away at me with force. It hurt me on my forehead and a big round swelling (from clotted blood) was the result. He then ordered me to go back home-return to Nadiad. I should continue my 'sadhana' in Nadiad itself. I was also advised to keep praying to him (Dadaji), and stick to the duties (work) which had fallen to my lot.

From there (Saikheda) I came to Vadodara. My acquaintance (swajan) Shri Bhagawat Prasad Pandya was admitted as a T. B. patient in the Duffrin Hospital. He had formerly been in service with Shri Thakkar Bapa for a long time. He had been afflicted with T.B. of the testicles. Shri Thakkar Bapa had got him admitted for treatment at the Duffrin Hospital. I told him the whole story of the Dadaji's 'durbar' (public meeting). Some of the patients can be cured. I knew from calculation the percentage of such recoveries and I told him about it in detail. How come even you can't be one of such cured cases ? I also told him about his chances of being cured there by the grace of God !

He expressed his willingness to go there, provided I could pay for his journey to and fro. At that time, I did not have the required amount with me. I replied that I would surely pay the full amount, only if he were not cured. After his stay with Dadaji, he was cured within a short span of time.

He had written a letter to Harijan Ashram, Navsari, stating that all his belongings including the cash, if any, should be distributed among the people there, and nothing should be spared for him. When Shri

Thakkarbapa came to know of it, he did not allow it to be implemented. He had persuaded that, when his eldest son got to reach maturity, all the money/amount accumulated in his (father's) name must be handed over to the son. This was conveyed to Parikshitalal. Shri Bhagwat Prasad Pandya lived for good with Dadaji and had even abandoned putting on clothes (accepted 'digambara' state). He used to listen carefully or manage to jot down, if possible, when ever Dadaji spoke anything regarding me (Mota). Dadaji used to recite each and every word of prayer uttered by me at the Nadiad cemetery. He showed me even a 'bhajan' written (copied) by him which was composed by me, when I visited him later. He showed me two such prayers (copied by him)

Eleven lines beginning with "prabhu, sharn-charan man Rakhore pavale lagun ... ending with "a jo mare tarvun re... pavale lagun")

Lord, Give me the shelter at your feet, I bow down to you and fall at your feet.

Darling, dear Lord, penetrating our hearts. You are Lord of my lotus-heart,

O Matchless lover, immortal of repute,.... I fall at your feet...

*Knowing you as the Protector of suppliants,
I have revealed my heart's secrets to you.*

And still my mind is vainly arrogant,

I fall at your feet...

Shedding off all that is base in it,

and reconciling with the good, O Girdhari,

Give me a seat at your feet and make me attuned, in harmony, O Lord.... Dear Lord, O Beloved, I lack the proper means, I have only flowers of love of my heart to offer to you.

I scatter them daily at your feet composing new prayers to please...

I fall at your feet, O Lord..."

What can a child like me do, what force have I other than the act of crying, weeping, calling for you ?

I wish to swim across and reach you on its strength, my prayers said with tears, O Lord, I fall at your feet.

*Such a crisis overtook my life that even prayers, or any other means or methods proved of no avail. Nothing could help me. I used to continue weeping night after night. I called out loudly singing prayers. I used to call out loudly asking for God's help, while standing in a pond near a cemetery. Chanting of God's name continued like a flowing river, the river Ganga. Whatever other solid remedies I knew of, to avoid the crisis, I continued using again and again. Until that time I had not been able to master the subtle art of invoking Shri Sadguru's presence in my heart, I, therefore, felt like meeting him in person and seek the solution of the problems encountered during the period of sadhana My heart yearned intensely to find him out. 'Sadhus' home is the Kumbh-mela. It is like a married woman's parental home. The 'kumbh-mela' then was due to be held in Haridwar. I reached there with great difficulty, and went on searching for him, crying and calling out his name

* Once (before AD 1928) 'Jivan Sanshodhan', p. 171

loudly, for four days continuously, everywhere, without sleep. At last when I met him, he was quite near. I lay my head at his lotus feet and so remained quiet for a long time. It was only an intense awareness on my part, to be relieved from misery, by the grace of God, with the help of continuous prayers from my heart to the heart. I must have lay there in the prayerful mood for about three quarters of an hour, when he asked me to wake up. I told him that I had been searching for him for the last four days, and that I had failed to perceive despite his proximity.

“I was seeing (aware of) you, but until you come to see me, it’s all useless.”

“O father! you ought to have called me! Did you not feel pity for me while this lad (I) was searching for (my) (his) guru, going without food and drink, and losing even consciousness! (forgetting even his identity)!”

“It’s not my duty to call you. It’s your duty to call me. Until you yourself see or find me, it’s all vain to keep calling.”

I was then unable to grasp its subtle significance. I lacked the wisdom and understanding necessary to probe so deep. But I accepted the bare statement out of my good feeling, regard and faith in him. With the passing of time, I could make out its hidden meaning and underlying significance. He gracefully granted me the secret of getting relieved from the ailment troubling me, the subtle art and the proper method of doing its *sadhana* for which I had approached him. It was such a *sadhana* as required readiness even to die, but I was fully

determined to act accordingly and had total trust in the words (advice) of the Sadguru. And that enabled me to take the adventurous plunge. And in the same way, on many other occasions as well, this soul (I) has received Shri Sadguru's help while being deeply engrossed in my worldly state, or "jivadasha", or utter worldliness.

As I happened to receive my initiation into Sadhana by the grace of God, in Nadiad, another similar incident also happened there. Once while I was calling out for students at the Marida Bhagol premises (vasa), one Harijanbhai informed me, "Chunibhai, an utterly naked man has been lying in the field behind our pond. He does not move at all." I could guess, by the grace of God, that either a mad man or 'an avadhoot (one who has fully renounced the world) alone could have the guts to remain in such a condition. So thinking, I delegated tasks and responsibilities to other teachers, came back home, took my bath, put on clean clothes, also cleaned a big jug carefully myself, filled it with milk, about two *seers* quantity, and went to the spot where the naked man had been lying uncured for. He was still in the same condition as before. I sat down near the spot and started saying prayers, remembering God's name, chanting it repeatedly etc. After about a couple of hours or less, the gentleman stirred a little. Slowly he turned himself to one side, but not towards me. He remained in the same condition for a long time. Again after about a quarter of an hour, he turned towards me and opened his eyes. I could guess at once that he was not a mad man. So, I concluded that he must have been a noble soul who had

reached the status of an 'avadhoot', So thinking, I came to feel within me a strong emotion rising. I began to consider it my great good luck that I had been blessed with his sight. "O God, give me grace. Keep infusing new power and dynamism in my efforts on the path of 'Sadhana', and fill my heart with the strength of good feeling, to enable me to continue on the path consistently." It had become quite natural and easy for me to keep praying from the depth of my heart, sincerely, continuously, at that period of my life. Since I had been lost in my prayerful mood and was being powerfully drawn in the current, I had lost all my sense of the time.

It must have been about six in the evening, when I came to be aware. He ordered me to take him to some Muslim's house. I could see that he was speaking Marathi. I was very much surprised about his wish to go to a Muslim's house. Further, how could I make it possible also ? It was quite improper and contrary to common sense too, to take somebody in a totally naked condition to someone's house. But I (this soul) had been habituated to heartily agree to carry out the odd orders of a person of this type, true to their nature. A habit formed as a result of the belief in Hindu-Muslim unity during my days at the Vidyapeeth, of saluting and greeting Muslim brethren with "Assalam Alaykum" came to my help then. I had been so saluting and greeting with 'Assalam Alaykum' a Unani Hakim Saheb, known as 'Vayada (Odd) Hakim' living in the locality on way to Marida Bhagol (outskirts of Nadiad), and he too used to return my salam with true feeling. This kind

of particular, lively, greeting relationship had existed between us for quite a long time. We were not much on speaking terms or rarely exchanged words between us. We seldom talked, if ever. From the 'Bapaji' (the naked fakir), I went straight to the Unani Hakim Saheb's house. Luckily, he was present there, I told him about the arrival of the Oliya in a field, behind the pond used by cobblers for tanning leather, etc. He wants to stay at a Musalman's house and that I come to his house from him directly. I further requested him to be kind enough to permit the Oliya to stay at an upper storey of his house. If he could, I would be obliged to serve the Oliya in every possible manner and be ready to obey his orders. I further assured him (the Hakim) that on no account, would he have any cause for complaint from our side.

He kindly agreed to allow the Fakir to stay in his house. I then informed him that the Oliya Fakir was totally naked. I would bring him in a horse-and-carriage with full curtains drawn. I would surely pray and try to persuade him to wear a piece of hemp-cloth around his private parts and would manage it in fact. Kindly give me such a piece of cloth for that purpose. He was truly stunned and became speechless to hear it. I even felt that he was a little uneasy. It was clear-to me that he had little or no interest in keeping a man in such a condition in his house. (He was not at all keen about being host to such an Oliya)

I told him (the Hakim) that I could arrange to keep the Oliya in my house. I could do so very lovingly too. Another alternative for the Oliya would be the thickets

behind the Santram Maharaj Mandir (in Nadiad). But since the Oliya had himself expressed his desire to stay at a Musalman's house, I was helpless in that matter. And hence I have come here to pray to you. I will manage to cover up the parts of his body with a piece of hemp-cloth in any way and carry him up to the upper storey in your house. I will, with my own hands clean the urine, excrement, etc. of the Oliya, if he declines to do any thing like that out of the house. He seems to be such an abandoned soul, that I have prepared myself in all the devotion, to do such work of his, all by myself. Such people are quite crazy. We cannot understand anything at all about there speech, behaviour, etc.

With these words of mine, the expressions on the Hakim's face came to be changed. He said to me, "Bhagat, you sing your devotional songs ('bhajans') daily on your way up and down and even say your prayers to Khuda (God) too. I have seen your doing it all sincerely, for a long time. So I concede to your request on your insistence. But you will be responsible to see to it that, I am not put to any difficulty on this account and that I may not be forced to ask the one whom you call an Oliya, to quit my house.

I accepted full responsibility with love. But before doing so, I had an inkling or a kind of forethought, that the task at hand was not at all easy. A man of this type (Oliya) may not agree to quit the house all of a sudden. He may even stick to the place and assert that he shall never quit. In case it so happens, I will be facing a disastrous situation. I had a flash in my mind, of such a

negative thought. But I was determined to obey his words with all love and devotion. I must be prepared to face any eventuality, whatever, if it ever arises. God will be gracious to show me a way out of such situation. With such ideas in my mind, I gave my full consent to the Hakim's preconditions. First, I went to the upper floor, and told the Hakim Saheb to remove or take away whatever articles of furniture were there in it, before our arrival. I even agreed to wait there for half an hour and do it all myself, in the way he instructed me. But he refused and said that he would himself manage to get it all done.

I felt relieved, and very gladly took a horse and carriage to the spot where the Oliya Fakir was sleeping. He saw the horse and carriage and at once stood up. I had fully drawn the curtains in the carriage down. The owner of the horse-carriage also was quite surprised to see a man in a totally naked condition. Having made him sit in the carriage, I prayed to him with folded hands and managed to keep the piece of hemp-cloth covering the particular parts of his body, with my own hands. He had kept completely quiet, so I took it as his silent consent. Thus, in a strange procession we approached the Hakim Saheb's house. He was standing outside his house, waiting for us. The Oliya's body was robust and heavy enough to carry. He was requested by me to alight swiftly from the carriage and climb up the stairs quickly. Worldly people might dislike and not tolerate such a behavior at all, and even the Hakim Saheb's reputation might suffer to some extent on this account. The Oliya

swiftly alighted from the carriage and quickly climbed up the stairs to the upper floor!

I requested and prayed to him, to wait kindly until I returned with an earthen pot filled with water, a couple of earthen bowls, a kind of improvised cushion for him to sit on, and something to eat ('prasad' procured from begging or from one's own house, prepared to please God).

Please sit quietly until I return, I prayed again. As a precaution, in addition to the articles mentioned above, I had brought a broom too. I cleaned the whole room slowly and carefully, avoiding any dust to settle on or near him. I laid out the cushion for him and other piece of cloth to sit on. But he did not use any of them. I also, on my part did not insist on it. I got a flat earthen bowl from Hakim Saheb's house and filled it with sand or clay. I got a few bricks also. I then arranged all these in such a way that he could sit and relieve himself if necessary. (It would serve as his latrine.)

He had been watching all this game (meant for him) on my part. Neither of us used to speak to each other at all during that time. I then washed my hands clean and put before him the 'prasad' (food for him to eat.) At that time I had nothing better to offer to him than 'bajri rotlo' (millets cake), 'shak' (vegetables), and milk: He ate it all with love - the milk, vegetables, etc. - and besides, even picked up some bits of the 'rotla' fallen on the ground and ate that too. I thought he might need to wash his hands and face, etc., but he did nothing of the kind. So I damped (wetted) a bit of the corner of the towel with water, and cleaned his hands and face.

At night I thought about his bed to sleep in. He spoke much Marathi and also a little 'broken' Hindi at times. But I could not understand his speech. I dared not even ask him about anything. As for myself, I could do without a bed or mattress, by practice. I told him somehow, about getting a carpet or some kind of bed for him. But he did not reply at all. So I put off the idea of the bed, went very near to him and begun gently massaging his legs with my hands, after praying. Thus, I was emboldened enough to get an opportunity to serve him. But it was allowed on the first day only and then I was ordered to go to sleep. I slept. The next morning I offered him a 'datan' (piece of twig or branch of a tree, used in rural India as a toothbrush).

He just threw it away. I prayed to him to wash his face, etc. putting before him a big bowl and a jug full of water. But he did nothing of the kind. I took food for him to eat twice a day. He used to eat, but did not use the facilities improvised for his urination, etc. He used to (pass his urine) defecate just anywhere in the premises on the upper floor. I lovingly cleaned the dirty places and even cleaned those parts of his body with my own hands. During my absence he had so defecated about three-four times, and he had not cleaned those parts at all. On my return, I had to do it all myself. I had covered the spot with cow-dung and clay etc. to make up for the hygiene etc. I even managed to throw the waste matter (excrement) into a dust-bin put up by the municipality at a distance. After that, for about three or four days perhaps, he had totally abstained from the act of passing urine or stools, etc.

We rarely talked with each other. I used to spend all my time in prayers, chanting of God's name and 'sadhana', etc. I could continue to remain in the same prayerful mood, alive and conscious as it was, when he had first opened his eyes in the field before me, by the grace of God ! After a couple of days, it seemed as if he was ready to leave the place, so I got a horse-and-cart for him and I took him to Uttarsanda, as it so happened. At a considerable distance from the village (town), I got the carriage to halt, bowed down before him, with folded hands and requested him to step down. I paid the carriage-keeper and ran after the Oliya as he was walking very fast. I came up to him. After walking a little distance with him, he told me to go with him.

I prayed to him and respectfully replied, "The duties that have been assigned to me, the environment and the circumstances in which I am now, to remain true to them in all sincerity and love of God, and to act with the best my ability, is my first duty or manifest religion as I understand it. How you kindly grant me the favour, as charity, of enabling me to accelerate my progress in 'sadhana', I can come with you." He did not respond at once, but later agreed and said that I could certainly go there. Then I said, I had three conditions to be met or requirements to be fulfilled. Unless these were granted, I could not go to the directed place: One, he must concede and condescend to make my aim or purpose of 'sadhana' to be fulfilled; two, I must constantly see only him in my vision, and my feeling for him alone must continuously rise in my heart; three, I must get unexpectedly, without

any effort on my parts, from any unknown source, the full amount of fare to be paid for my journey to and from the place wherever it to be ! Then he walked away and asked me to turn back (return home).

Returning to town, I first went to the Hakim Saheb's house, rearranged all the household articles, belongings, etc., setting them back as before, properly, and I thanked him profusely also. Hakim Saheb said to me, "He is a very big Oliya (Fakir, man of God). He is staying in Sakori, and his name is: Upasani Maharaj. He had come here secretly from Sakori. Bhagat, you got a rare opportunity to serve him. You are indeed very fortunate. He feels great love for you." I then told the Hakim Saheb that he (Upasani Maharaj) had expressed his willingness to take me along with him to Sakori. I also added that I had laid down three conditions in a mood of prayer and request. I told about it all to Hakim Saheb, who replied that it was not a proper act on my part. Had I just accompanied the Fakir when he asked me, it would have been a great benefit for me. But I felt no regrets whatsoever.

Then a lot of time elapsed. I had never felt like that before. I carefully thought and examined my mind about it. Glimpses of him rose again and again in my mind, (saw him inwardly repeatedly); I also remembered my three requests or conditions put before him. I made up

* The agitating fight for Bardoli Satyagraha had begun. I had got my name enlisted, as volunteers who were ready to go when required. The very day I received the written order to proceed to Bardoli, I suddenly got a glimpse of Upasani Maharaj (in vision) and felt like going to him (to Sakori), It was just unexpected.

** 'Jivandarshna' p. 353.

my mind and made a firm decision that I had to go, only when I received the full amount of railway fare both ways, i.e. up and down, without any effort on my part. I also decided that, on that very day, if I happened to receive the full amount, I must go to Sakori and not to Bardoli.

I used to pass daily by Marida Bhagol Vaishnav Haveli. For the last few days, I had been singing loudly in a prayerful mood, on the way, addressing only myself, a devotional song composed by Dayarambhai, “Vaishnav Nathi Thayo Tun Re” (“You have not yet become a Vaishnav”) “Shid Guman man Ghume?” (“Why do you still move about with pride or vanity?”)

The line of that song, “Vaishnav Nathi Thayo Tun Re. 'Shid Guman man Ghume” came to be repeated daily while I was in the vicinity of the Vaishnav Haveli, both on my way up and down. I was not singing it with a view to making anyone particular person hear it. (I had no one in my mind, while singing that special line.) Once a Vaishnav gentleman got very much irritated and angry on hearing those words. He even slapped me on my face. I told him that I was not singing the line addressing to him, I said I was singing for my personal improvement and development, and in a mood of prayer only. But the gentleman (brother) felt it insulting to him, as if I was addressing him, and consequently had got very angry.

Now, after that everyday, my heart yearned to go to Sakori, and visions of Shrimad Upasani Maharaj crossed my mind very frequently too. As I was passing by the Vaishnav Haveli, singing the song loudly as usual,

another gentleman approached me and put an exact amount (Rs. 45/- only in my hand. I was greatly surprised and asked, “Brother, what is this money for and why are you giving it to me ?” He said, “Daily you are singing this bhajan on your way up and down. I have been observing you practicing this, for quite a long time. Moreover, daily at night from Kakarpad side I see you going to Santram Bhagol also, and I have many times heard you sing such bhajans loudly also. You have been always singing such ‘bhajans’ songs in praise of God. Hence I have come to feel a special kind of love for you. The idea had frequently crossed my mind for the last many days that I must give you something. (I have often felt like offering you some money) But only today, I felt a strong desire to give you this amount. It is selected at random. I had been waiting for you, on the lobby opposite to this place. As soon as I heard you sing “Vaishnav nathi Thayo Tun Re,” I came here at once. Kindly accept this little amount and oblige me.” Then I thought, how wonderful such things are! The same bhajan when sung, before, had got me a slap as a reward; and now here is another gentleman who gives me Rs. 45/-. This, then confirms my going to Sakori. I, at once posted a leave application in the mail box and set out in the train to Sakori.

On reaching there, I put my baggage in a place, got a good bath, and went to Maharaj Shri and paid respects. He ordered me to sit near a big wooden cage, in which he himself used to sit. I sat there and began my ‘sadhana’- study very sincerely, without any break.

About five to six hours passed like that. Then I felt like going for a short natural call (to ease myself, pass out urine). I tried to get up from the place, but I just could not do so. I thought my legs had developed cramps, or become so still or rigid as a result of my having been sitting there for over five-six hours. I tried to move my legs, or shake them. They were alright in the movement. I could bend them at the knees also. I did not feel that they were stiff or rigid at all. And yet, how was it, that I could not manage to get up ? It was great puzzle. I even tried to move with the help of my hands, in the same sitting posture. But that was all in vain. Thus, spent about two and a half hours more like that, simply because mentally I had been in the state of continuous prayer to strengthen my 'sadhana' skills.

Again as I grew conscious of myself, the need for urination also got stronger. Now it was unavoidable almost. But how could I do it there. It was a very annoying experience and also very embarrassing too. I tried once again, very consciously to remain in the mood of prayer, continuing my 'sadhana'. Hardly half an hour could be spent in my meditative mood, when the spell broke and I woke up. Now my desire to answer the call of nature got stronger, beyond my control. Still as I tried to concentrate and continue with my prayers, meditation, chanting of Cod's name, etc. I came to realize inwardly, like a spiritual revelation, that it was all because of the artistry (improvisation) of Upasani Maharaj. (He had controlled my movements with his mystic power.) Otherwise, my legs had not been stiff at all, There must

be some special purpose behind (that act), his creating such a condition of mine, on the part of Guru Maharaj.

As soon as I realized it, all my reluctance about urinating there disappeared, and I did it just like that on the very spot. Urine flowed profusely, unlimited also ! People sitting there began to curse me and shower abuses on me. Then, even my act of defecation also occurred just there and there. Passing of urine as well as stools occurred so very frequently at the same place, and in abundance. My clothes were dirtied all over. The four-foot space I had occupied had turned into a veritable pit full of urine and excrement. For about five days at a stretch, I had to do without any type of food or water to drink. And still the quantity of stools and urine passed out was just unthinkable, beyond measure ! It appeared as if it was a big bed made out of stools on that spot.

People there had continued beating me. They said that I, ('sala', a word of abuse, meaning "brother-in-law") was ambitious of becoming 'baba' (Upasani). They even threatened to throw me out bodily from that place. Some of them had even tried to implement the idea, but the adventure of putting their legs in the bed of excrement was not possible for them. Some people had been throwing stones or brickbats at my body from a safe distance. Upasani Maharaj used to enjoy witnessing the whole game. (Upasani Maharaj used to enjoy witnessing the whole game.) But he remained watching as a perfect observer only. (A non-attached witness). A girl of about 13 or 14 years was continuously trying to persuade those people not to beat or hurl stones at me.

She was trying to save me also. (This sister was none other than Mother Godavari herself. I had come to realize that fact much later.)

In spite of such continuous beating as I suffered, There was not even a moment's breach or lapse in the continuity of my sadhana efforts to control my mind and the instincts, etc. in the state of 'Samadhi'. On the one hand there was a continuous How of the sacred Ganga capable of removing of one's sins in the form of my consistent prayers and the sublime state of the mind. But it was often broken too, or intermittent in a way. On the other side, the activity of passing of urine and stools was also continuous, and uncontrollable. As a witness I had the three-fold, unified and consistent experience of being stabilized centrally very much alive and in force all the time. (It was a unique, inexplicable experience of three things happening concurrently and harmoniously, keeping me alert and vigilant.)

It was a rare experience or a strange condition in which five days were passed as if in one moment only. Upasani Maharaj ordered warm water for me and gave me to drink. That program continued for two or three days. The state of my body remained as before. Passing out of urine and stools also continued to be in large quantities. Then MaharajShri gave me a piece of a very dry loaf. By the grace of God that enabled me to survive for about eleven days, in the same condition. Then I suddenly felt that I could get up and walking to walk. I got up at once and walking much for from the place, removed the dirty clothes covered with excrement, etc.

and cleaned my body very well. But how I did it and where, etc. I cannot remember at all.

Then I covered myself with a tiny lion-cloth (a small piece to cover the pips and front portion-genitals) I got an iron bowl (container for san, etc.) a shovel from somewhere and cleaned the entire area near Shri Upasani Maharaj's wooden cage, almost all of it, in a very dazed or half conscious condition of mind, After cleaning the whole spot with the shovel, I cleaned it again with my hands, and with a piece of dump cloth and water, Then I went to the market to buy a bottle of sandal wood oil and sprayed the scented oil amply on the whole spot. Having completed it all, I approached Upasani Maharaj and begged for his kind permission to let me return to Nadiad, but he did not speak. After half an hour or so he gave me the permission (assent) and said, "Now, this condition of yours will last for ever."

I had no knowledge of awareness whatsoever of the subtle, profound methods of 'Sadhana', the spiritual quest. I kept my mind full concentrated and filled with the idea or image of my Guru Maharaj. The first time I had gone to my Guru Maharaj I had heard him repeatedly saying, "I am Saibaba, I am Tajuddin Baba, I am Upasani Maharaj, I am the Swami of Akkalkot." He used to utter many such names and then affirm, "I am all of those." I could not understand it at that time and it also seemed to be a self-contradiction, (a logical fallacy, error in reasoning). How could it be possible at all ? It challenged and surpassed my power of understanding. After my arrival in Sakori, I was blessed

with the real, life-like, directly observed, eye-to-eye, manifested vision of my Sadguru in the person (body) of Upasani Maharaj. I could even feel in his presence the vivid manifested embodiment of my strong, surging feeling of love and devotion towards my Sadguru.

Guru Maharaj said that he was Saibaba, Upasani Baba, Tajuddin Baba, etc. I came to experience the creative appropriateness of his words. I returned to Nadiad and resumed my work.*

But this soul (I) could not brook even the slightest slackness of sluggishness in my feeling for sadhana. (No lethargy was tolerable.) I used to pray repeatedly to my Sadguru. In case our heart is rightly inclined (bent) towards prayer with loving and awareness our Sadguru is bound to respond. He surely responds, how he does it so, I narrate her with love and an open heart. I like solitude and the beauty of nature. During my work in Nadiad, whenever I got holidays, I used to go to the southern embankment of the Shedhi river along with my students. I could spend my time there in solitude, in 'upasana' (meditation-discourse, worship) in prayer and for progress in spiritual quest by the grace of God. I used to spend my nights together in the furtherance of my quest. Some people have seen me sitting under a berry tree (*Mimusops hexandra*) in the Bodal ashram. During the 1932 period of struggle, (movement), I was required to be in Navasari ashram, there it was not possible for me to seek out a solitary place. Therefore, with the consent of my students, we decided to go to a place now

* 'Jivan Darshan' pp. 341-360

known as Supa Gurukul, near which is a little forest, not far. We put all our baggage and belongings in a small bullock cart (a small two wheel open contrivance used as a carrier). We walked down to our destination in the company of students, enjoying our time, and camped on the sandy bank of the river. Students collected firewood from places nearby. We had put a bonfire near our camp at night. Younger students would do the watchmen duty till 10:30 p.m. and elder ones after that hour keeping alert, patrolling the camp.

I used to stay near the campfire, sometimes in prayer, or in meditation, or at other times in other 'Sadhana' activities. The intense mood of silent prayers, said sincerely continuously and heartily from the depth of my heart had become accomplished fact by that time. After midnight once, near the campfire, I saw the vision of my Sadguru, in reality. My heart, full of devotion, naturally bent towards him, spontaneously surrendered itself. My chanting of God's (his) name was also going on non-stop at the same time, consistently. But it often slowed down, which I did not like at all. (It even pained me when the pace declined.) By the grace of God I had come to directly realize at that time that my mind and intellect had not yet melted in spite of my continuous efforts in the quest. (My condition had not yet become soft or mellow.)

One whose mind and intellect cannot or believe in such an experience of God's grace, might say, "How can it be after He attains the state of being in the five elements ? It is only your feeling of deep love and

devotion for him that has manifested itself in this form.” Thus my own mind and intellect came to be reconciled. But on attaining it, Shri Sadguru said, “O fool ! I have assumed this gross (body) form directly before your eyes, in reality, to come to warn you and to ripen that condition of your mind which recognizes your true duty in life and by the grace of God, to strengthen your efforts in the direction of achieving that goal of spiritual development. God has placed you in the right condition (of body and mind) to enable you to achieve your goal. The soul (individual) who becomes through conscious love and devotion sincerely a devotee of God, by heart, in the heart, his total welfare and well-being becomes God’s responsibility an onerous duty, by His grace. This welfare and well-being are not one type only. There may be many meanings applicable to these terms.

Each phase of one’s life—each period of development or growth is meant for cultivating this true feeling of ‘Sadhana’ and the individual (soul) whose ‘Sadhana’ remains consistently continuous is sustained all appropriately, for his (such a soul) God gracefully accepts such a one as His own, and continues to manage each and every activity responsibly, (mechanically like running an organization.) you should become carefree. God is surely going to manage everything for you throughout your life by His grace. So be fully assured. (“Trust in Him totally forever.”) And he further added, “Even after I disappear from here, in case your mind and intellect are subjected to some doubt, then take it from me as I tell you this—that I have become manifested here just like a dead body in fact lying near here.”

Such a holy vision was seen by me repeatedly. To verify it all, right at the time, I examined myself thoroughly to see that I was in my full awareness and not unconscious; and that whatever I had been able to see or experience (as a vision) was also quite real, (and not an illusion). This experience lasted for a few minutes only. But the impact it left on me (this soul) was something that could not have been achieved even after years of endeavour (so many births (rebirths) take together). It had been achieved by this holy vision. At that instant one's mind and intellect would just fail to accept it all as real. It would not be acceptable even by love and devotion. It would only argue : "This is impossible." I would just remon strate, protest or take it as an exceptional, telling my mind and intellect, that I had witnessed it all with my own eyes, heard his holiness's words with my ears. It gave a true ring in my heart. (I was convinced about its truthfulness). (My heart also agrees with it.) He had himself said that just as a dead body was lying nearby, he had manifested himself to me in the gross body form. Then my mind and, intellect would argue: Where was the dead body ? I replied to my mind and intellect, that His holiness had not simply spoken it all, but he had also drawn a circle with the help of his right toe (the right foot toe). (He had drawn a circle with his toe in the sand.) for how many hours these students have been playing in this sand ? So it could be seen clearly if the circle had been drawn by his holiness only recently, or fresh. Otherwise, it was likely to be brushed off, rubbed away, obliterated. (His

holiness had drawn the circle in such a spot where the students had been playing all different types of games for along time.)”

All such conflicts were puzzling my mind and intellect. So just then I called two grown-up students who had been patrolling the place, and asked them if they could find a big circle drawn in the sand around the camp-fire. When they searched for it with the help of a lighted torch, they could find a fresh circle drawn there. (It was as if a fresh circle had been drawn around the camp-fire.) Then also my mind and intellect argued : “But where is a corps (dead body) lying about here ? Then I asked the grown-up students to collect there and dig a circular pit around the spot. Although my heart was convinced that there must have been a corps lying there, but my mind and intellect needed to be convinced by a real proof or widens by the grace of God! (It would be an amicable compromise) It is very necessary that one’s true feeling gets strength and loving support from all other instruments of one’s heart and mind. The students dug about four feet deep on the land. Water came out, but no corpse could be seen. My mind and intellect again argued: “See, where is a corpse near here ?” yet my heart’s conviction led me on to ask the boys to dig deeper still. Under about one foot of water layer a dead body of a dove (pigeon) was found. It was all dry in spite of having been under water. This solid direct evidence was enough to make my mind and intellect be reconciled.

Two incidents which had occurred in Karachi, by grace of Cod, also prove how I obeyed my Sadguru Maharaj's orders with devotion and love. During my stay there I used to go out for a walk everyday to some place. Once I happened to go very far along the sea-coast. While walking I received an order from Shri Sadguru Maharaj to walk into the sea. Physically he had not been present there, but he had manifested himself in my heart and commanded me to do so. This is not an act of delusion, nor of madness. As soon as I received the order, I implemented (obeyed) it at once, out of enthusiasm of devotion and love. Until the sea-water touched my face I had continued to walk with only the live and strong feeling of prayer to the lotus feet of Shri Sadguru moving me on, what must have happened thereafter I do not know. My body had been lying on the coast, thrown out by the waves, too far from the bungalow in Karachi. My clothes had been damp and wet. But when I woke up they were not so full of water, so I thought I must have been lying in an unconscious state for a considerable time on the spot! On recovering consciousness. I began to walk back homewards and reached the bungalow Seeing my clothes so wet, everyone had showered questions on me.

The fact about the other incident is that formerly I used to observe the Roja fasts during Ramajan month. I had observed them in Karachi too. On the day of Id thousands of Muslims (brethren) gather together on the Idgah 'maidan' (an open square or field) to offer 'namaj' prayers collectively. I was very eager to go there too.

Everyone warned me not to go there in my Hindu dress of a 'dhoti', kurta', and a cap, lest the Muslims might feel enraged and even do me some harm. They expressed their grave anxiety on that score and even tried to dissuade me. But I was determined to go, so I took a car and reached the spot. Thousands of Muslims (brethren) had collected there to offer 'namaj'. I too imitated the way they all used to bend down (kneel), get up and kneel again. I prayed from the depth of my heart. When the prayers ended, they (Muslims) began to disperse, I suddenly had a glimpse (vision) of my Sadguru. I fell at his feet, overpowered with emotion. He patted me on my back, put his hand on my head and ordered that I should remove all my clothes and go back home in naked condition !

There and then I realized that it was my great ordeal. The crucial hour had arrived. If I missed the opportunity, it was like missing the most critical moment. It was the right moment for me to prove that I obeyed the order with love and devotion. It was the invaluable opportune event for me, given by God, to liberate myself from my identification with my body, its complexities and the sense of shame or embarrassment attached with it. If I were to remove my clothes on the spot and had them over to driver Bhimjibhai, he might not let me do that. He might physically lift and put me in the car and take it to the bungalow. In those days sometimes Shri Kalyanpur, a resident of Malbar, used to come to our bungalow (in Karachi) and he was to some extent inclined towards the path of spirituality; so I ordered the

car to be driven to Shri Kalyanpur's house, thinking that he would be able to appreciate such an act of obedience (to Guru's orders) on my part. Then I told Bhimjibhai to tell Bapu and others that I was at Kalyanpur's house and return at leisure. They need not worry or wait for me but finish their meals.

I climbed up the ladder to Shri Kalyanpur's house. I conveyed to him that the day had dawned for me when I could be the most blessed and fortunate in a way. I had received the order from Maheboob (the lord Beloved) and I wished to act accordingly with love and devotion. He too was startled and refused to allow me to act as I wished "No. No. Not here. Not here !" I pacified him and suggested him to come down on the road and said that at a little distance from his house I would remove all my clothes and give them to him. He might then take them all on his bicycle and go Clifton's bungalow, and tell Bapu (Parsadbhai) and others about my true condition in detail. No one should fear about anything at all. I would go about all the places and reach home at last. Only I could not be sure about the exact time of reaching.

Then I removed all my clothes and handed them over to brother Kalyanpur. As soon as I removed them I began to experience a strange condition of excitement of body and mind. Every part of my body was under a strange influence of emotional upsurge and exultation and it was so strong and powerful that I felt as if my feet did not touch the ground. I felt as if I had been flying high up in the sky. In a few moments I lost even such

consciousness (awareness of being in the air) and though the body continued to function normally, a strange kind of awareness deep in my heart by the heart was affecting me. In such a state of (lost awareness) I do not remember now by what big roads of Karachi I must have passed, etc. Only on one spot a Gora (White) sergeant had tried to stop me. I faintly remember it. Then I had called out too loudly at him and he had responded : “Saibaba, Id Mubarak !” and saluted me. That is all that I can recall about my bodily being and that also soon vanished.

When I came near the Governor’s bungalow, I saw Shri Sadguru standing there. He gave me a close embrace and showered his love on me. He patted me on the back. All that I can clearly remember still. He also gave me an amount of rupees five to end my Roja fasts. Then again I soon lost all my consciousness and continued walking. I do not know where I went. Only when I was at a distance of about 200 feet from the house (Cliffon’s bungalow) from the sea-side, I regained my consciousness, (was aware of my nudity,) and had called out loudly for my clothes to be given to me.

All such incidents of my life, When I obeyed my Sadguru’s orders with love and devotion, are very strange and astonishing. (or even shocking sometimes). They are unbelievable for the common man. (To our common sense, they are incredible.)

My Sadguru had been greatly pleased and satisfied with me by such obedience on my part. The solid, direct evidence or proof of it is the two big baskets he gave me. One of the baskets contained a variety of fruit and

dry fruits, etc. Generally on Sundays we never went out. But on one Sunday I thought of visiting the vegetable market in Karachi where I normally bought my vegetables. Nanibahen jocularly told me that my Saibaba must have been calling me there. So saying she did not allow me to go to the city on that day. I kept constantly remembering Shri Sadguru the whole day. The next day I went to the vegetable market by car after leaving all the people at the office of the Scindia Steam Navigation company. My purse with money in it was forgotten at the office itself. Daily I used to buy vegetables from one particular shop only. So the vegetable vendor gave me all the things I needed. As I was getting out of the Gate, I saw Shri Sadguru Maharaj standing there. I closely embraced him. He also showered his love and kissed me and said “How much did I wait for you yesterday ? I had brought two baskets as a gift for you, which at last I gave over to others, in your name, as Kherat. Now these two big baskets which I have been pleased to bring for you, you must take with you as gifts.”

The car could not contain the big baskets, so I had to hire a labourer to carry them home. On that very day Bapu had told me, “Invite your Guru Maharaj to tea at our house. We will respectfully bid him farewell.” But I had no knowledge at all about his whereabouts, etc. at that time I had never even felt like asking him about such things. Bapu then asked me to enter into a state of meditation and resolve (with a strong will) to think of him. “Then you will automatically realize everything

about the Sadguru. You will then know where he is at present, then go to fetch him.”

By the grace of God I had been long accustomed to the practice of obeying given instructions (accepting orders). I soon began to enter into meditation and on achieving identification with the object of meditation and at the critical moment of being on the verge of the body losing its consciousness, it had become possible for me to realize at heart the idea of the Sadguru’s whereabouts (the resolve entering the stream of consciousness) by his grace. I was able to see him, by His grace, walking alone the sea-shore, far from Karachi city. He was in motion. I then respectfully and cordially conveyed my invitation to him to come to tea at our house. He heard me and said, “O, you want me to drink tea ! look, here I am drinking tea !” and so saying he began to drink tea. That sight also had been part of the vision I had as a result of my meditation.

* * *

8. Realization

The idea of renunciation or ‘Sannyas’ had never crossed my mind both during and even after my period of ‘Sadhana’ or quest. From the beginning, my motto in life was acceptance of life as it is. It was my aim. In an advanced stage of my quest. (‘Sadhana’), When I had reached the ‘ajapajapa’ level (that is being able to chant God’s name internally, unconsciously and continuously, without outwardly moving one’s lips or uttering the word(s);) then my ears could clearly hear the chanting or recitation of God’s name going on automatically, internally. Such a situation of “ajapājapa” came to prevail in me only after the incident of the serpent bite, i.e. mostly after 1928. Silencing the mind, making it perfectly calm became possible only about 1930. I could sleep very little in those days. Years have been passed keeping visit through out the night for days together. During the day I used to work for over twelve hours in the office of Gujarat Harijan Sevak Sangh. It was (and is) possible only on account of predominant strong feelings. (The activity was spontaneous.). It does not harm the body or any of its internal organs. The liberated state begins only after one achieves perfect control over one’s sense of hunger, thirst, the need to answer calls of nature, and other desires, etc. All this becomes really possible (in fact) as a result of strong feelings, or the force of feelings. All the natural

demands of one's mind soul (breathing activity), and the entire remaining necessities of the body become calm and are easily controlled.

I got the experience of realization of silence (total internal calm and control) in 1930. The realization of Duality had occurred in 1934, followed, five years later, in 1934, of Non-Duality. Since then, my liberated state ('Jivanmukta') has prevailed. (It has been so till today, the time of writing.)

I was fortunate (blessed) to see Lord Krishna in his manifested form (incarnation of the Supreme Being) twice or thrice. That Krishna did not have his flute with him. He was not in any gross human form, not of the elements which compose the human body. However, it was the vision ('darshan', seeing with one's eyes) of infinite beauty and infinite light in the physical embodiment of Krishna. Everything was beautiful. Beauty and Beauty alone. It was an indescribable vision. The form (embodiment) was so enchanting and fascinating, alluring and enticing one's heart, that no comparison is at all possible. It cannot be imagined. It was a live vision of crystal-like, from opening out, soft and transparent, and blue in colour. But it was not steady. It was playfully moving about, drawing near to one moment and soon appearing to be withdrawing, moving away; or at times it also appeared like entering one's being, and even touching the various internal sense organs of one's body and subtly affecting those organs, (influencing their activity invisibly), Sometimes it appeared as if it was carrying out internal repairs; it

could be experienced as setting itself in the centre between the eye-brows and inside at the top of the head, as well as in the heart itself. The entire (body) base seemed to be bathed in full red-hot brilliant light. A kind of self experiencing condition of consciousness (in which the Subject could also become its own object) was also being experienced, and in some moments the same experience assume an enlarged or widened form. The vision of Shri Krishna was absolutely unworldly, wonderful, romantic (thrilling), fascinating, sweet and loving, tender and delicate - it was all beyond the power of words! It seemed as if my entire body had become weightless and rather hanging or suspended in the air (above ground). I have been experiencing its long-lasting impact throughout my body and its sense-organs in a permanent form till today. And then its consequent condition has become a permanent part of me by the grace of God.

Not that after this experience (divine) there were no impediments encountered of the subtle, subtler and the subtlest kinds and of the regions of divinity. But they could be removed also with the help of grace divine. After this auspicious experience of His graciousness and divinity as felt within, an indescribable change or total transformation at the centre of being was experienced in the base (body), and that too, there after, became a permanent, brilliant emanation from within.

Ever since that rare and divine experience of realization (vision of God), its fascinating, ecstatic supreme consciousness, alive and ever-alert, has been

flowing continuously and ceaselessly in my life and being. Its consistency remains unbroken and unassailable and the sense of awareness of its attractiveness gets also gradually so strong and stronger, arising from within, that it enables us to achieve the sublime feeling or state being ennobled effortlessly, the same kind of feeling which at the time of the first realization (vision of Krishna) was centrally focused and creatively concentrated in One. The same feeling achieves its crescendo in being concentrated and focused, and thereafter the same feeling obtains wings to fly into the expanse (ever-widening). And that feeling which then rises in intensity at the sight of natural beauty, becomes the cause of spontaneous awakening into 'bhava-samadhi' (being one with the Supreme reality -loss of awareness of physical existence) which is a blissful state of beatitude. The beauty of nature, a lovely beautiful sight, the scene of a river flowing murmuringly a tree coming into bloom, getting new leaves, the sight of a healthy, bonny child, or a similar sight of gross physical beauty, some speech containing truthful feelings, or some appealing devotional song, etc. all such stimuli may create at once the above-mentioned state of intense feeling which results in the 'bhava-samadhi' or state of blissful beatitude. It gives the 'sadhak', the soul experiencing that state of bliss, a rare benefit, an experience of blessedness. Its effect also continues for a long duration in one's daily routine and one's normal acts of worldly duty in a live and dynamic form. (Its lasting effect is felt in one's daily life getting dynamic.)

From Kanpur I arrived in Kashi on the 13th of March 1939 (13-3-'39). While returning to Kanpur I paid my respects to Pujya Gandhiji at the Prayag (Allahabad) Railway station. Then my pain began. On the 23-3-'39 the pain was most intense. It had become unbearable, though my mind had not become unstable or badly affected. Depression had not yet set in, but the pain was so intense that my normal jocular behavior of light banter or loud laughter, was absent. And yet all my regular activities could be conducted with the grace of God. We had to make arrangements for our accommodation, had to meet many people. Other arrangements had also to be made. While doing it all, I felt as if it was being done by the outer (surface) layer of my consciousness, I did not think then about what might happen (to me) at night, although I had many experiences of such pain increasing at night. This pain gradually increased to the extent of making me cry out. I had the negative feeling of 'sinking' in my soul (losing vitality almost to the last) My outer layer of consciousness was felt to be inadequate to the needs, but my inner consciousness had been awakened to a very intense level. My sister (daughter of late Shri Narsinha Rao Divetia), (foot note) had the information about my condition to be changed after 29-3-39, according to Baba... Whom I had met in Karachi. She was slightly upset and not in bed, while I went to sleep without worries.

About ten minutes to (before) 1.00 a.m. (night) cries were heard of "Hari:Om" twice in front of our bungalow. They were addressed to me (meant for me), as I

immediately understood it. I also replied similarly, crying “Hari:Om” The man who had cried he came to me. He was completely naked. He had matted, entangled hair on his head. As I stepped down, I came to know that he wanted me to go with him somewhere at mid-night. I wrote a note to my sister and put it upstairs so that she might not feel any anxiety on my account. She had been awakened in my absence and was worrying on not finding me there. But such happenings were very common in Karachi and so she trusted that everything would be all night in time. Moreover, as she knew that something was to happen on the 29-3-/39, so she was free from worries.

The man (brother) informed me that I was expected to go from Mani Karnika Ghat’s side to the opposite bank of the river Ganga, where my Guru Maharaj was staying, as ordered by him to fetch me. I was also expected to stay there with Guru Maharaj. I said, “I can come with you tonight, but I must return here next morning. It’s my duty to stay here with these sisters. So doing anything else, neglecting this duty, would be alien or contrary to my current duty, even though so doing might be advantageous to me. () Doing anything other than one’s duty is full of dangers. So if I am required at night only, I can come.” But the man refused to accept it. Moreover, he clearly told me not to do the meditation as it was indicated by Baba in Karachi. “If You do it, you will be hit by calamities. Moreover, before beginning to do that kind of meditation, arrangements must have been made to take the most intensive care of

you. During such a time some mother or sister most loving and devoted to you must be under the charge of some such one, otherwise, come with us to our *Guruji* we will take two sisters for the time being, and hence I could go with his only after a couple of months or so. He refused it out right, and said “ I must go at once or leave it.” I also clearly refused to it. I did not think at all about Karachi,... about the secret lore given to me by Baba, and about the experiment I was going to try, also this brother (who had come to fetch me) and how he came to know about it in Kashi, or about all the unfavorable or disastrous consequences of my experiment anticipated. I went back upstairs with an easy mind, to allow things to take their own course, with regard to the experiment and settle down. I sat down to conduct the experiment as it had been shown to me by the Baba in Karachi.

I had only just begun with the said experiment when I came to experience a total focusing and concentration of consciousness. I began to experience clearly the definiteness and separateness of the body, mind and all of the sense organs from one another. In a little while I was struck by the awareness of hot streams flowing in the middle part of my head and its burning sensation spread all over inside the body, which being unbreakable made me almost unconscious and I even suffered a fall. I felt as if my tongue had been nearly scorched. It was felt as if the portion of the body under my belly up to the bottom had been fully burned. The whole body had become red-hot. (like under the scorching sun or a fire.)

The sister was just unaware of it. She had to go to answer a call of nature unexpectedly by the grace of God. Seeing me as lying unconscious, she gave me some sort of treatment, too. There was a music teacher from Karachi with us. She could not understand things like this. The sister took great care while treating me. After a while I felt a little relieved. Its effect lasted for two days.

I could not understand the meaning (significance) of all this. No other stray thoughts also occurred to me. Only a consistent single strong feeling had been prevailing. (It remain unbroken.) It was like the flow of the Gangaji (the holy river), consistent and non-stop. Only single aim, the sole aim only, was possibly sustained by the grace of God. Feelings of joy and oneness with the being surged about like waves and ripple of the ocean in every nerve of my body in an unspeakable manner!*

The experience of 'advaita; (non-duality) realization (being one with the cosmos - all the elements of the universe seen as one entity) had occurred during the night of Ramanavami (Lord Rama's birthday), the 29th of March, A.D. 1939 in Kashi (Benares, U.P.). It was as if the dazzling light of innumerable suns (billions at a time) enveloping from all around entered my body, giving me the experience of 'mahasamadhi' (almost death-like trance, union with the Supreme Reality), on waking up from which I found the genitals as well as part around them burnt seriously, for which I received treatment from Dr. Balakrishna Amarji Pathak (Saheb),

* 'Jivan Sanshodhan' pp. 3-4-5

Deal, Ayurvedic College, Benares University. From the movement of that experience my liberated condition began. “I am Omnipresent” (I am present everywhere.) Such a true feeling of super-consciousness (awareness) began developing in me in every manner and is still existing.

The experience which I had then was of ‘Saguna’, manifested form, with qualities (Sattva, Rajas, Tamas, etc.), from such a state it was like a *Hanuman* jump (quantum jump) to the new experience of ‘Nirguna’, (unmanifested, formless-Reality experienced as inhabiting and energizing, every atom, all elements of the entire Cosmos). Such consciousness came to be completely and permanently established within my being (body base) and my concentration remaining ever alive in it, focused for ever finally, and its expansion or increase was also being experienced. It cannot be described as a kind of feeling only. It was my consistent and continuous experience that such a feeling, in spite of being continuous and uniform and existing in all might probably be different in a sense. It can be said that the property of identification or feeling of intimate identity, oneness with all, as part of consciousness, began to emerge gradually thereafter.

In 1942 I came straight from Trichi to Mumbai for this work. As Pujya Thakkarbapa happened to be in Mumbai at the time, I went to meet him. I requested him to write a note of recommendation, an appeal for fund collection. He said, “You are not a member or secretary of the Sangh at present, you are not a teacher. Moreover,

you have resigned (retired) from the Sangh. So how can I legally write a letter of recommendation for you ? Legitimately, you cannot be permitted to collect such funds. But as I do trust you, you can do such work, but keep in touch with me. Keep writing frequently/’ Shri Dahyabhai Nayak and Shri Ambalal Vyas of the Bhil Seva Mandal, were then with Pujya Thakkarbapa, who had completed the collection work for the Bhil Seva Mandal from Mumbai in three days. Bahi (Shri) Nayak said to me, “You cannot, by yourself, possibly do such collection work in Mumbai without the help of influential people. This work is not so easy as we believe it to be. Collecting amounts without proper connections is not easy.”

“Have I undertaken this work in our own (personal) interest? I have worked for the Harijan Sangh for 19 years. It has supported me (this body) as my source of income. The same Sangh has also made it convenient and possible for me to work in the interest of God, (to serve God’s people). It is my duty to help that organization in the hour of its need (facing financial constraints), and , therefore, with the aim of worship and devotion to God,

• After 1939 Shri Mota fully retired from the Harijan Sevak Sangh and all other activities. Shri Mota stayed with devotees or at the house of acquaintances, *swajan* (followers), and provided direct guidance in their duties related with ‘Sadhana’ (spiritual development quest). A very important incident occurred in his life in 1942. Shri Nandlal Shah pursuing his ‘Sadhana’, lived in solitude about ten miles away from Trichi. Shri Mota had meet Shri Nandubhai on the last day of July of 1942, but most of the leaders all over India were arrested on 9th August 1942. At that time Shri Mota, by intuition, heard the order of his heart that the students and workers of Harijan Sevak Sangh were put to great difficulties on account of scarcity of funds, and that it was his duty to collect funds for such workers and students. Shri Mota interpreted this voice of his conscience as an order from his Guru Maharaj.

the confirmed feeling and conviction to serve God and others, I have undertaken this task (duty).

Pujya Thakkarbapa did not write for me the letter of recommendation. And yet I was moving about in Mumbai. I approached the donor, Shri Shah, of our organization, and apprised him of all the facts of the year 1942. The chief leaders are all in prison, and there is no one who can lead the Sangh. Money is badly needed for the upkeep of children in the Ashram.” He replied, “The circumstances are just right. I am ready to held. But I do not know you. Is there any assurance that your are not a scoundrel ? (involved in a proud) ?” So I just laughed at it heartily. He asked me why I was doing so. I said, “The words you have used to describe (flatter) me now convince me that my work will be done very well.”

Soon thereafter caught a train to Poona and met Shri Thakkarbapa. He asked me, in a light tone, about how much amount I had collected. I told him about the collected amount as well as about Mr. Shah. Pujya Bapa

* Others moved about disguised as Pathans. Shri Mota saw them all and recognized them. They often thought that Chunibhai would recognize them and perhaps call them by names, so they would put their finger upon their mouth to indicate (suggest) to him to keep quiet. Those dressed in *khadi* were often examined or detained and even beaten at times. Shri Mota used to wear a *khadi* dress, keep Harijan Sevak Sangh report and receipt books in a satchel (bag) and would move about to collect funds. He was caught by the police about five or six times, physically examined and detained because they thought that Shri Mota was collecting funds the Congress party. In those days people were harassed and harmed in a city like Mumbai. Once the police accused Shri Mota of collecting funds for Congress in the name of (under the pretext of) Harijan Sevak Sangh.

He was detained in the Police Lock-up at Marbawadi opposite Sikkanagar in Mumbai, and even heavily beaten and molested there for two days and a night without giving him any food or water. Shri Mota put up his case of actual harassment before a newly appointed Police Inspector and also told him about Shri Thakkar Bapa. The P.I. ordered for Shri Mota to be released.

was surprised and said, “Oh, did he call you a scoundrel? He immediately took out his letter pad and wrote a fine letter of recommendation in my favour. The next day, armed with the letter, I met Shri Shah. I told him also all about how I had obtained that letter from Pujya Thakkarbapa in Poona. I added that when society would offer amounts in charity only after being convinced (about the collector’s sincerity or honesty, etc.) no scoundrels would be able to cheat people in such matters. I also both thanked and congratulated him.

Those were very hard times (days) in Mumbai. No one “with a white cap or a *kahdi kurta* could be easily seen or met. Most of the workers were in disguise or had changed their dress-styles. Some of them were dressed in suits (coats and trousers) and even wore ties.

Once I had been to Shri Jivanlal Motichand Alumini-umwala’s house to collect funds. There was seated (present) (among others) one who is reputed as very learned man of letters in Gujarati and who has spent many years as a close associate of Pujya Gandhiji (living with him). He could have probably been involved in the underground activities of the freedom struggle, because his remaining open (outside) and accessible might have led to his arrest at the hands of the government. I apprised Shri Jivanlalbhai of all the aspects of the prevalent situation and assured him that I was doing the work (collecting funds) by the grace of God, with the pure religious motive only. Daily expenses of traveling in Mumbai by bus or train amounted to Rs. 15/- (fifteen only). I had undertaken the work without any

remuneration, just in the spirit of pleasing God. When I finished this, the learned elderly gentleman present there told me that there was no room (scope) for any other activity. The attention of everyone in India must remain focused and centered on only one activity. “Why are you doing this ?” He continued his speech in excitement for about half an hour. I listened to him quietly, in an amused manner, up to the end, by the grace of God. After the speech was over, I requested Shri Jivanlalbhai again telling him that in those days of extreme hardship the children living in the *ashrams* were in great need of help. The task at hand for which one is chosen and to which one is committed is surely the best and noblest for one. He gave me a cheque for.....amount. I thanked him and left the place. Later I wrote a poem (as given under) addressed to the elderly learned gentleman and sent it to him and Harshadabahen.

* * *

Shri Mota got the letter of recommendation written by Pujya Thakkar Bapa published in “Janma Bhumi.” In those days Shri Mota’s friend Shri Karsandas Manek (well-known Gujarati poet) was working with the “Janma Bhumi” press. Shri Mota kept on his possession the certificate given by Pujya Thakkar Bapa until he continued collection funds for the Harajan Sevak Sangh. That saved him from harassment at the hands of the police. In those days Pujya Thakkar Bapa was highly respected even by the government.

POEM

“The Playthings of Power” or “Toys in the hands of God”.

- (1) He is trained, who in his life Welcomes pain joyfully,
He is trained, who embarks upon A life of sacrifice
to others, He is trained, who devotes his life
To the true feeling of love, He is trained, who treats his
life Destined as a gift of God.” “He is trained, who
upholds in
- (2) Life, great ideals, noble aims, He is trained, who
lets his life Be guided for fulfillments of such aims.
He is trained, Who lives only for life’s ennobling
aims, He is trained, who pours his being of constant
true feeling in all his acts.” “For such training do
all of us in life
- (3) Receive right opportunities, But at some blessed
hour one may Become aware of such purpose or
aim, And yet, a man drawing in self interest loses
that chance, And how miserably, living in the rut,
Pulls on his mundane existence!
- (4) Some people who believe in service to others, Do
just become victims of love and hate, (cultivate
likes, dislikes), Remaining unaware themselves,
how can they know ? ‘Those whose aim or
ambition is pure at heart, And are aware of the
essential aim, The noble significance of one’s own
life, Are fit to serve, can serve.”
- (5) “He alone is the true servant of society Who daily
examines his own mind, And watchfully observes,
all the time, What different thoughts possess his

mind, And yet no purpose will be served If only
observation continues He will be trained, who, like
a hero, Bravely fights with his own self !

- (6) “Service is never self centered, Single aimed,
isolated or monotonous, Even in service there are
various characteristics : Like the field, the direction,
etc. True service is what uplifts one’ life And makes
it multi-faceted not thwarted It does not stifle, or
make life one-sided.”
- (7) “The service that is rendered to others is alone true
service; How much of it is directed to gain, Or self-
improvement, is never seen, not examined. Those
who are devoted to truth alone in life, in whatever
way, Should first scrutinize all aspects Of truth as
lived in their own life.”
- (8) Those who are devoted to service in life for the
sake of service alone, Never desire anything else
for themselves They just ask for service alone, And
if their service does not lead Towards their own all-
sided development, they must search for And find
out any types of drawbacks Or defects in that kind
of service.”
- (9) “How many have I seen, such souls, Devoted to
service, who do believe That others who also serve
are all Intellectually misguided or deluded, Except
themselves, who also think that what they are doing
themselves is only right, and whatever others do is
far from truth or deficient.”
- (10) “Those who believe that their duty in life is to make
lives sublime, (or that true duty leads towards
-

sublimity and have sacrificed all their assets in such service), and those who act in the true spirit in any or whatever field of service they prefer (are chosen for), they also serve the world in their own way.”

- (11) “We are all mere pitiable playthings in the hands of the Almighty, the Supreme Power that, in or mysterious way, makes all objects and play here upon this earth, all those who are though considered most commonplace or ordinary in the world have achieved somewhat or even a little or that Divine Power!

Having read that poem of mine, he replied to me as under:

Mumbai, Dt. 20-12-1942 (Dec. 20,1942)

Dear Brother,

I received your poem, and am very much pleased to read it. Karma (duty) itself is yoga, and it alone is the elixir of life. Service is a ladder, Karma is the ingredients or offerings (*prasada*) to God. ‘Samagri’ for Vaishnava devotees, is food offered to God or things used in worship or ‘pooja’, etc. Here ‘Karma’ is used for all life’s activity, which is intended to be an offering to God. It is rendered very succinctly in a Sanskrit verse (It means : Whatever I do with the help of my body, speech, mind, sense organs, intellect of spirit as well as by natural inclinations, towards others, I dedicate (offer) it all to Narayana (Lord Vishnu).”

I agree with you in the sentiment expressed by you that man is moulded or trained by his constant duty and continuous service. I gave voice (vent to my feelings

before you from the depth of my heart for the sole purpose of telling you that when every (true) sincere man fully dedicated himself (upto the last ounce of energy) to the work assigned to him, or chosen by him, he has no scope or time left at all to do anything else, to divert or to distract himself etc. And yet there may be vast variety of tasks (duties) chosen by each one. Whether a man's choice is made appropriately or legitimately or not is not to be considered by others. He should himself be responsible for it. Quote:

“Trunadapi.....Taroriv Sahishnuta II”

Social servants who have the humility or meekness to be able to lie under a blade of dry grass, and who are also hard enough like trees to tolerate (shocks) are an ornament to society, I wish you success in your work.

Sd. Sevak...

I was pleased to receive such a letter from him. It is a matter of high regard for moral values and a lesson in morality also that he accepted the truth of the matter and also demonstrated his humility coupled with true food feeling. No one can appreciate without experience, how subtle is the discretion of duty.' (how sensitive are the duty-bound!)

* * *

Pujya Motabhai (Shri Vadibhai Bhogilal Shah) had written independently, and enthusiastically to Pujya Mama (Shri Gopaldas Mehta) in Trichi that good funds should be collected from the Zaveri Bazaar for the sake of the Sangh. (Harijan Sevak Sangh). When he came to Mumbai I rang him up and said That I had no desire to

cause him any trouble (on that account) as the remaining amount could be hopefully collected. I met him at his firm's office that evening. He told me that the time was favourable enough to collect funds easily. In case I wanted more money he could accompany me to a few addresses. I said, "If he did not mind, it was a good idea." He took me to about four or five places in the Zaveri Bazaar, but to no avail. There have been days when we had to cover long distances on foot and yet there was no gain at all, but despondence was not the way. (disappointment was out of question). At times people threw brickbats (verbal) at us, but we have to keep pur cool (not to lose temper). Even if people hurt our ego, or sentiments, we at all were not to lose patience or our equipoise at all. We must at all times behave as normal, (unhurt) individuals. Those who are desirous of going through such experiences ought to undertake such work in the spirit of 'Sadhana'. (selfless search for a higher goal). Our powers of endurance and patience might be put to severe tests before reaching the target figure (of funds.) In cases of individuals who lack the firm resolve (determination to achieve a goal) wavering may also result (out of some unnerving experiences.) In Poona Shri Gopaldas Mehta took me to about four or five places where we got nothing at all. So he told me that he was willing to make good the remaining amount (to complete the target figure), but I insistently refused to let him do so.

In Mumbai I met a secretary of an association in connection with the collection of funds. He told me that I should attend a meeting of the members of the society

to be held a day or two later, when the matter could be put before them and in case they were convinced, a list of donors could be roughly made out. You attended that meeting. After the formal routine business of the meeting was over, the secretary introduced me to all the members and requested them to listen to me sympathetically. (He) I conveyed the whole matter with such sincerity that all of them were moved deeply. They all agreed to donate suitable amounts. The list was prepared. The President (Chairman) agreed to pay Rs. 501/- (at the top of the list) and the others also wrote their own respective amounts against their names. After two or three days I went to the President's firm, offered my *pranams* and waited. He offered to pay Rs. One hundred and one only. I was dumbstruck. "Why only 101 instead of 501 ?" I asked him. He replied that if he had not put in the figure of 501, I would not have been able to collect what I could on that day. He argued that by his offer of a large amount, I had been put to advantage. He had mentioned 501 only to make it possible for me to make a sizable collection. He did not really mean to give me that much. I was simply speechless, to hear that argument. It had been my first experience of such a kind.

I gently and politely told him that I would accept only Rs. 501/- and until I received that said amount, I would be sitting there in his firm. Thereafter, I used to go and sit there daily. I would spent all my time there in replying to the letters received by me. Once or twice the Chairman uttered a few angry words also. But

I did not pay him any attention at all. Daily on arrival I would salute him first or offer my *pranams*. He saw that everyday I was spending all my time in his office in writing my letters.

On the seventh day he called me to him and asked, “What are you writing here everyday? How much do you write ?” I told him that I was only replying to the letters received from my friends. I requested him to see, if he liked, the letter! I had written on that (7th) day. He must have wondered as to what I had been writing, and why so much, as he had observed me writing continuously for all the seven days out of curiosity he began to just see some of the letters I had written, and on feeling further interested in my writing, he began to read them too. After going through a number of letters, he said to me, “Oh, you seem to be a knowledgeable person (a man of knowledge!) the way you are writing about the path of ‘Sadhana’ to your friends is really the best It is an important fact to note that you have expressed such noble feelings in such a simple language. You have been waiting here very patiently for all the seven days and daily in the morning as well as in the evening you have offered me your *pranams*. I have uttered a few angry (bitter) words addressed to you. I shall surely remember this experience of your sweet ‘Satyagraha’ in my life. I have been pleased by your gentle, and polite behavior, In addition, my good feelings for you have been strengthened by my seeing your writings in the letters. Please forgive me for the trouble I gave you these seven days. I am indeed very

sorry for the delay and the postponement of your work for these seven days (on my account) I now feel motivated to give you Rs. 501/- as a result of your gentle and polite behaviour. So saying, he gave me Rs. 501/- at last.

I was very glad to receive it, and with tearful prayers I thanked God for it Tears rolled down my eyes. That gift of God's grace was truly an ennobling experience for me. (I felt truly blessed by God's grace) Although the noble business man had attributed the payment of that amount to my gentle and polite behaviour, yet the truth of the mystery lay in God's grace.

An amusing incident occurred during those days. They happened to meet the proprietor of a very big and famous business firm in his office. The visitor's name was written on a slip of paper and handed over to the peon. I (Mota) had to wait from 11:30 am. To 4:00 pm. In the office but was not called inside to meet the proprietor. Patience has its limit and especially so when one has work to do. I just thought for a while. Even if I am driven out of the cabin he refuses to meet me at all, so far so good. But I must get in (enter) without permission. With such a firm resolve. I just rushed inside. I was followed by a clerk and a peon to chase me. "Sir, this man has enter without permission". The proprietor raised his eyebrows, and in a threatening tone, asked me: "Are you a rustic or what" Don't you know

* The amount collected as funds for the Harljan Sevak Sangh in 1942 rose upto Rs. Ten thousand, (Pujya Shri Mota and Shri Nandubhal had got to Colombo to collect funds for the Harljan Sevak Sangh. As a token of their love and regard for the Sangh they returned with a total of Rs. 36 Thousand as funds.)

that you can't enter here without permission. How far have you studied ? "On knowing the truth about my education, he asked me to sit on a chair. Then I politely told him, "Sir, What these fellows say is right. But I have simply undergone finance outside your office from 10:30 am. to 4:00 pm. If you kindly listen to me, I will take only two minutes of your time." He remained quiet while I hurriedly told him and very sincerely all that I wished to convey with emphasis. I conveyed that God had given me discretion and I had his blessings too. I asked for his forgiveness for my rash and improper action which I was obliged to take only after waiting for four to five hours. I had got to see him anyhow. Then he told his peon and clerk that no visitor who wanted to see him (The Proprietor) must be kept waiting for more than half an hour only. That rule had to be enforced carefully. He even asked for my forgiveness as I had been kept waiting there for such a long time. I cannot forget this nobility and gentleness on his part. He also gave me a good amount (by cheque) in favour of the Sangh. Thus sometimes, one is obliged to be impudent with awareness, on purpose, but the qualities needed at such a time are adventure, courage and inspiration.

I was going to Nadiad by Gujarat Mail on 17-1-1943 at night. A bomb exploded in the toilet of the coach. A similar incident had occurred in the second class coach. So the Mail was stopped at Kim station. Clouds of smoke were coming out of the toilet of our coach. I was saying repeatedly to tell people to pull the chain. Someone pulled the chain. The train stopped. Policeman came near our compartment and asked loudly as to who had pulled the

chain. Someone else had pulled the chain because it was not possible for me to do it from where I was sleeping. But I took it upon myself. I told the police that I had heard a big explosion in the toilet. Everyone here has heard it too. The clouds of smoke with the smell of sulphur were coming out of it I was afraid it might lead to a fire which could engulf the entire coach and put many lives to danger or risk of loss of lives. So as a precaution I had pulled that chain to prevent further damage or disaster.

The police saw that I was dressed in Khadi. So they forced me to detain and even threatened that I must not only confess that I had put the bomb in the toilet, but also tell them where I had got it, where it was made, who were the other accomplices involved, etc. Otherwise, I would be made to suffer heavily. No bone of my body would remain intact. After sometime the Mail stopped at Kim station. They repeated the threat that I would be physically examined again. A constable was posted along with me in the coach, and the train started again. As the train stopped at Bharuch, I saw a crowd of policeman. A few police inspectors were standing there. They caught me by hand and forcibly threw me out of the coach. I was taken to a small room in the waiting rooms of the station, and all inquiries took place. I told them everything as it happened, calmly, with full composure. I was threatened too much, but what could I say except What I really know ? I was given even a little thrashing too. Then the Inspector shouted and said, "Give this rogue enough heat. Let him feel too hot. Otherwise he would not confess."

Just at that moment, all of a sudden, I felt like removing all my clothes and I did it instantly, seeing which they were all stunned. I told them that it would be easier for them to beat me without any clothes on. I appealed to them to beat me as much as they liked. So they were angry and said, "Put on your clothes first We'll see what can be done late." The Inspector first asked me about all the details, my name, etc. and ordered me to be detained at Bharuch. I said I had my ticket valid upto Nadiad. No passenger could be driven out of the train (forcibly disembark in the middle of the journey, (before destination). I told them that they could detain me at Nadiad as long as they liked. In those days there was no rule of law prevalent at all, and still they agreed to do as I had requested. Thanks to the Lord for that!

I disembarked at the Nadiad station in the morning, I faced the local police also. They too made all the necessary inquiries, again. I told them everything. They asked me as to where I was going, with whom I was going to stay and how long, etc. I told them that I was going to the house of my younger brother Mulajibhai Bhagat and in the evening I was to go to Gandhi Ashram. Hearing it one policeman suggested that as J was leaving here on the same day, "Why should they enter into all the bother?" (it was unwise to file papers) In the evening I arrived in Ahmedabad again I met the police. (I was confronted.) But I was thankful that they allowed me to proceed straight to the Ashram. The next day a Police official came to Ashram and recorded my statement.

* * *

9. Selfless Action

By God's grace this soul (I) have never experienced any difficulty due to lack of money. How much more it needs love and hearts than money ? Until recently in life where were Hemantbhai, Nandubhai, etc. ? And yet, God has enabled me graciously to pull on my existence (keep my small boat afloat, swimming in the ocean of life.) It is Shri Hari's Grace ! The salary I was receiving voluntarily was very meager indeed I But the members of family to support were for more (than my income to suffice.) Not that I have not experience economic hardship in life. But God has been very gracious to this soul all through this life. Is it a matter of little importance that even as I was alone, unsupported, unknown, I could obtain a large sum of money for the work of the Sangh?*

I have undertaken this work of service as a religious duty, not because of Parikshitalal or Thakkarbapa. I received thrashing (physical beating) while doing this work. I came to suffer from physical injuries. I lost my weight to the tune of 20 lbs. i.e. from 117 lbs. it was reduce to 97 lbs, And yet I had never anticipated or expected any kind of appreciation at all. From this work of social service, I came to

* 'Jivan Manthan' p. 189

learn that a really experienced soul must act dutifully, since rely and whole-heartedly in one's given task in spite of any kind of obstacles or hurdles. He cannot isolate himself from such work. He must grow with time and be mature and mingle with all ! How can those who isolate themselves be called as experienced ? One must come to possess qualities like neutrality and identity (or treating others as one's own) to an incomparable degree !

Then I once went to see Thakkarbapa. He insisted very much on my accepting the post of a secretary. But I bluntly refused. Then he suggested that I must delegate duties to Hemantbhai and supervise everything. I could retire on Parikshitlal's return to office. He also suggested that I accept remuneration (for my work.) But even for that I dearly refused to do it He asked me as to details about the collection of funds (for the sangh) done by me single-handedly-without the help of influential people such large amount also- He was pleased that I could do it so well. The Gujarat Harijan Sevak Sangh was now in a good economic condition for one year to go. Pujya Bapa told me.*

“Even after your resignation from the Sangh I had little hope that you alone could do so much for it I am highly pleased with this work of yours.”** I had written to Pujya Thakkarbapa to allow me to

* 'Jivan Manthan' p. 129

** 'Jivan Manthan' pp. 2-5

help Pujya Dahnubhai of Vadodara who had financed my further education (when I was yours). He told me to give Rs. 30 to 35 per month. Informing about this fact I had showed Pujya Thakkarbapa's letter to Pujya Babu, (an elderly swajan) in Karachi jail.*
 (Self-Sacrifice for the Sake of Others)

* * *

* Shri Mota's objective was to a knowledge his indebtedness to shri Dhanubhai. ("Jivan Manthan" p. 198)

A number of incidents and experience also occurred, which are contrary to one's worldly life, or which are logically inconsistent with one's worldly ways (*Jivdasha*), long after 1939 when Pujya Shri Mota had experience self-realization, or that he was reborn (as a saint not the 'mortal' anymore) This incident has been included here as well as published elsewhere also just to encourage and assist some seeker (*Sadhak*) after Trust (Shreyarthi, yearning for spiritual development). But When some seeker becomes indulgent, solicitous or begging only, weak and indolent, ceasing to put In any personal efforts to reach the goal, and remains passively interested awaiting miracles to happen to help him out, Pujya Mota never approves of such tendencies of people and has expressed his resentment too.

10. Pararthe Atma Bhog

Although, Some of the wonderful incidents which have been mentioned here are indeed quite true, there can be no fixed norms about their recurrence or repetition, etc. no rules can ensure such things do not occur haphazard or without any specific purpose, etc. There ought to be some subtle, inscrutable scheme of causation behind them, some such tradition That links causes with results, or ensures the consequences as following certain unknown causes. But very few blessed souls are or may be in the know of such connections, or logical links. The soul who is blessed with such knowledge and understanding of strange (wonderful) events who accepts this reality also find it easy to reach a higher stage (of sublimity). But, on the contrary, the soul who cannot recognize such noble but rare opportunities for self-development (sublimation of soul), who fail to comprehend and positively accept their hidden significance in all their true worth for such souls it may be surely said that their inner eyes have not yet opened. It is not a matter of trivial importance that such miraculous occurrences come to be directly experienced in one's life. The soul that fails to have such experience in fact thwarts or makes ineffective the causes that lead to the manifestation of God's grace in life. Even though such a person (soul) cannot easily accept such things in reality.*

* 'Jivan Pokar'

I have not been able to forget that lovely morning atmosphere and its effect on me while going from Ahmedabad to Karachi about five months after that blessed Ramnavami night to my self-realization in 1939 ! How many souls had assembled there! With what enthusiasm and true feeling of love ! That is His greatest gift (blessing) endowed on me ! I lay it all at His feet only in all awareness of knowledge and devotion ! What can match the innocent love of so many sisters ? Otherwise, how many Ashram girls considered me to be mad and so much harassed me too on that account, because I used to roam about in the ashram with the shortest possible 'chaddi' (short half pant), deliberately posing to appear as an idiot (dunce), flouting all rules of artificial politeness, or sophisticated superficial manners, even in the solemn serious atmosphere of Gandhi ashram (where silence is observed as a rule) shouting too loudly, and thus causing shocks to some or at least surprise to many, if not disgust, or when insults or humiliation, appearing to be absolutely illiterate to many of them as such ! Even in the civilized atmosphere of the ashram, I used to move about without any hesitation with my hairless head; and even in my rustic or torn clothes while approaching a central bank clerk for money, being rudely refused just on account of my dress and appearance, and then approaching the manager for rustic, and being openly called an ass or addressed as a donkey, without any sign of intelligence on my face; on such a soul, like me, how much love and affection to be showered !*

* 'Jivan Sanshodhan' pp. 15-16

“The soul is blessed that sinks in the ocean of love in life-love that rains from the heavens like the sky splitting above.”

How can such love be gained and
 “It is the result of the dust of His feet,
 the particles of dust under His holy feet,
 This I am now declaring to the world,
 (blowing my loud trumpets), beating on drums,
 so please listen attentively.”

God, the most gracious, has made the course of life and outward appearance of this soul changed most generously. And hence I can see that as I have become His instrument, any dear souls who are willing with me to traverse this path I must lead as a result of His grace. Thus I have become His instrument, the sole purpose, and He is guiding me to make him my sole guide. Then no other element is going to enter into all my duties regarding Him, and done under His guidance alone. Such was has been and still is my firm faith in Him by His Grace.

I now narrate (include) here a true incident of my life which may be termed as miracle resulting form meditation, or a firm resolve taking shape out of the light of meditation.

I had to stay with two sisters In a hired bungalow in the Benares Hindu University. Normally they preferred to wear a few ornaments only (scanty adornment). Once on returning from an outing (casual trip) they gave me all their ornaments for custody. I was foolish enough to put them in my ‘Kurta’ (a loose upper

garment made of cotton), After sometime (a few hours only, same day), I had to accompany the two sisters for “darshan” (holy vision) at the famous Vishvanath Temple of Lord Mahadev. We had to pass through a lot of rush in the unruly crowd-movement inside the temple to reach the sanctum sanatorium and get a glimpse of the Lord, with love and devotion. We also waited to listen to sweet Shehnai music being played in the temple. And then we returned to our rooms.

The next day...we had to go for boating in the river Ganga. One of the sisters asked me to change my clothes, which I did. While transferring things from the pockets of the old upper garment to those of a new one to be worn now, I rummaged through the pockets of the ‘paheran’ (kurta), and found that a pocket had been picked (or cut off) the ornaments had been stolen. I felt the acute anguish as a result of this slur on my part, or lack of care, because I had been trusted and it was only my sole responsibility to take care. I informed the sister concerned about the fact which she brushed off a trivial matter, giving it no importance at all. That was deeply anguished.*

We set out for boating in the holy waters of Mother Ganga, (the great river!) One of the companions of the sisters sang beautiful devotional songs in the boat. I was in a trance while listening to them and came to lose consciousness of my bodily existence. Before that the idea of my anguished state as a result of my failure in

*The sisters were grand-daughters of the famed writer Shri Narasinh Rao Devetia, (man of letters.)

doing my duty well as exemplified in the case of my picked pocket, and who must have done that fact, etc. had flashed in my mind. As I became more engrossed in the state of trance (lost consciousness or self control,) I experienced inner vision which was quite romantic (thrilling) and wonderful too. I saw very clearly and vividly person who had picked my pocket in the very act of doing it in the Vishvanath Temple. At that movement (during vision) I was made to protest “Dear fellow, these ornaments are not mine. Someone has entrusted them’ for safe-keeping. I am a poor man. I cannot even repay or pay compensation for the loss. You will not be able to keep them with you. (you won’t be happy with this possession.) Give them back to me. I reside at a particular place. I have to be for about two or three quarters of an hour at a certain place in the Hindu University during the current examination days.” All this had occurred during my state of trance seeing such a state of mine, speaking in a trance, etc., the younger sister would get much irritated or angry. It was natural that she would not like such things at all. As the boat touched the river bank on our side, the elder sister managed to get me back to my normal state of mind. Thereafter, we returned to our residence in the Hindu University.

The next day we were on the upper floor of the building where the exam, was to be held. The elder sister was in the exam hall. I was standing outside in the verandah with the sister’s friend. Soon we saw a man running almost out of breath, towards our building, and

making signs to call me to him. My attention was drawn by the sister who was with us. the man called out to me loudly and said, “Dear Sir, Kindly come down! I went downstairs and met him. He said, “Please take away these ornaments of yours. I cannot bear any more the fire burning within me and all over my body too. Kindly do something to relieve me from this pain.” My heart was deeply touched with emotion and tears rolled down at this miraculous experience of Cod’s grace. The great sense of relief which I felt on recovering the ornaments cannot be justice to it. Moreover that man fell at my feet and in a pitiful tone, please cure me of this raging fire, the burning sensation all over me.” I said to him, “Brother, this is a trick, (an artful contrivance) caused by my God! How did you come to know that I am the owner of these ornaments ?” He replied “Right since early evening, yesterday I have been experiencing this terrible burning sensation all over my body, which I cannot endure. And all through these unhappy hours I was also able to see very clearly an image of your physical form. It was seen quite often too. I could also come to know about the place your are staying at I could visualize also where you might be in the morning. I had no strength in me to be able to meet you at night. Even now I lack It, but still I have managed somehow to be here. When I set out, I was feeling that I won’t be able to make it. But then I felt new strength in me which has brought me here running all the way, I have not even stopped for breath. So now please cure me of this burning sensation.”

I suddenly told him, “Brother, now you must take an oath. Swear on oath that you would never pick the pocket of anyone who comes for ‘darshan’ (a glimpse) of Lord Vishvanath. If you keep this oath sincerely and not break it, your will surely be cured of this. Swear this oath firmly and resolutely that you will not pick the pocket of any one within the temple premises. Suppose someone poor like me comes there for darshan, and you pick his/her pocket, What will happen to that poor person ? How much trouble and inconvenience the poor person would have to under go ? He replied. “I will prefer to starve to death, but will never pick the pocket of anyone in the temple premises.” felt like trusting him and could believe his words. I prayed to God sincerely form the depth of my heart to relieve him of his pain, and in due course he also experienced that his agony was over. He again fell at my feet and went his way.

By God’s grace I had this kind of experience. It was a spontaneous and direct experience which proved that while losing one’s consciousness in the midst of intense meditation, if some idea, image or act of volition occurs by itself, or if, during some such spontaneous occurrence, we are able to control our volition, then it (that) is sure to acquire a concrete form or become physically embodied.*

In Kanpur we had gone to meet a man who could be considered insane. A gentleman called Rajaram lived in Nava Ganj. He must have been around seventy years of age, (in 1939). He had his own house, but in a weak,

* ‘Jivan Darshan’ pp. 94-99

dilapidated condition. In the front yard there was a small well. He never accumulated anything at all. He would probably go out for walks in the morning or evening. People considered him to be mad. He would salute the Muslims and say, “Sita Rama” to Hindus. People would give him some money sometimes, he would gladly take it or even give it away to others. He would at times prepare his own tea and mix it with curds. He would eat when food was given by someone, but would never bother about anything ! He had what is called “akashvrutti”, or absolute passivity, i.e. living entirely on God’s grace, (like Indian farmers totally dependent on rains). He used to sing devotional songs and verses melodiously. He was a real recluse, ‘Olia’, a man of God. We went to him on the night of 22-9-1939. Both of us were in deep meditation. After the trance was over, we embraced each other very affectionately. During meditation he had bowed down to me. The next day also when we causally met and talked, we embraced each other before parting. When he tried to touch my feet, I just stepped away a little. He was coming out to see me off, upto a distance, but I disallowed the act, when he himself said, “I had bowed down to you yesterday, why don’t you let me do the same today ?” Such unworldly people (Cod’s chosen ones) have their won practices (quite contrary to our traditional ways), Their love is also equally strong. I did have that rare experience of his ‘bhava’, a beatific vision on that day, but “Who can know Gods’ will ?”*

* ‘Jivan Sanshodhan’ p. 168

The ten-year old daughter of an elderly acquaintance of mine was crying profusely. She repeatedly remembered her own mother (who was no mere). Her memory of the mother was so intense and acute that she could not stop sobbing and crying. The craving of the motherless child so deprived was intense and unending. By God's grace I also felt its intensity of craving and it filled my heart with great pity. The child's mother had died about five years ago. And still, by God's grace, words came out of my mouth, "Sister, you will surely see your mother! Look, you shall see her certainly. Now, look!" and in truth she saw her late mother who tried to pacify her to calm down and told us about that fact, a strange feeling arose in my heart which said that if we could also develop such full faith like that child's, since blessed with God's true vision as the girl had of her own mother!*

Eight lines of poetry

Note : Meanings of the word ('tumbadun') used by Shri Mota in line one of the poem of eight lines given under a metrical term, one means a bottle-gourd, or the dried fruit of the plant used as a bowl by mendicants, (unbreakable blackish container of water, used by sadhus, etc.) It also means the skull of a man, alive or dead. The term is also used in contempt for a 'brahmin', upper caste Hindu; lastly, it also means the head of a foolish man. In Gujarati, the idiom. means "not to be dependent Here it may mean to be one's own guru or guide, not to seek help from others. Pujya Mota used the word here in the

* 'Jivan Sanshodhan' p. 231

sense of a metaphor. The 'mind' that is 'dead' or fully controlled can be used to save itself. It is a hollow fruit which floats on water. The sense of 'not sinking' is allegorical. It means the soul is not dead or lost to worldliness, but is alive and *in* spiritual development. It is on the way to one Cod. It can save itself only when it is 'dead' within, hollow inside, devoid of sense of feeling, open as a container to receive God's love.

It is only when the dried fruit of a bottle-guard is totally dead inside, that it becomes capable of keeping itself afloat on water. (It never sinks.) The same may be known about us, that is the power when one is also dead or nearly dead, to help remove someone's disease, automatically. Comes to one. (The ability to save someone from death is miraculously obtained by the soul so 'dead' or committed totally to others.) The 'mahatma', the great soul, is blessed because he has conquered death, has drunk of hemlock very willingly. (Here the term 'mahatma' may also be applicable to Gandhiji). Who had conquered death I one whose love is not exhausted even in embracing death itself such souls are doubly blessed - they are truly above both life and death."

I had kept the above 'writing' (poem of eight lines mentioned above - but translated as prose, with a short note on 'tumbadun' as its start) in a piece of paper. Hasmukhbhai was just going to read it when I pulled it away from him. I had told him then that I would give it to him to read only after the news bulletin on the radio regarding Gandhiji's health was broadcast. Once it was felt as if God had given him (Gandhiji) a new life (saved him from near-death) for our sake, to provide us with

an opportunity. The above poem (eight lines) was written to commemorate that event, an actual event as experienced by me. (Mota).

Similarly, I had come to know much in advance the fact of demise (death) of the body of the poet Laureate Tagore. Hemantbhai and I had been out for a walk in the Khat bazaar. At that time without access to any newspaper reporting that event I had casually told him about the event. There is no special motive of creating any self-esteem or importance of this soul as a knowledge one (Mota). (I don't seek any such publicity at all!) But such possibilities do arise and exist on the path of spiritual advancement as one goes ahead. The above factual events have been recorded here only to corroborate (support) the statement made here.*

Many harmful, (poisonous) bacteria were found to be present in Gandhiji's urine. I had already made it known that such would not be the case in effect on the 24th February 1943 (24-2-'43) well before the news bulletin was broadcast on that day. I had sent with Shri Hasmukhbhai a sample of my own urine to the municipal Dispensary early morning for a report On account of my long affinity with Gandhiji, true feeling of heart with its natural openness (frankness), very deep regard coupled with sweetest love, my long contact with him in actual work for 19 years, leading to deep love of heart, and neutrality coupled identification, it might have brought about such a result.**

* 'Jivan Manthan' p. 347

** 'Jivan Manthan' p. 349

In Kumbhakonam, while I was lying awake casually at night, I experienced (received) a sudden jolt (push) on my body. A mason was working where a wall was being built 400 feet away from the place I was sleeping in. He was doing the plastering work with cement, standing on a box of deodar (soft) wood supported by a small wooden bench. The box gave way under the mason's heavy weight and the fellow fell down with a loud thud. I got up and went there and called out for Nandubhai. Nandubhai was sitting just near he masons at work. I asked whether the man had been hurt seriously or not By God' grace he had not at all been hurt and was soon able to resume his work.

A few days ago four labourers were trying to lift a big trunk of a fallen tree. The trunk was loosen from someone's grip and fell up on one of the labourers at work. It gradually descended from mail's shoulder to his thigh, his knee, then on the shin and finally on the upper side of his heel. He had to be given foment action treatment for about an hour and a half. But by the grace of God he was not Hurt much (injured at all) in spite of the very heavy trunk weighing over twenty maund, (equivalent about 400 Kg.)

Here while such work was going on in the Ashram, some incidents did occur, during which by the grace of God, other souls were saved from hurt or injury by making myself suffer, (inviting or taking on their pain on myself), for the sake of the work. But it is none of our skills. (One need not be so vain !) All that skill, deft artistry must be ascribed to God alone ! *

* * *

11. God's Grace

God's being (presence) is everywhere and eternally manifest even before our eyes. And, by His grace, such experiences (proof or evidence) of His presence have also been made possible by Him in such a short span (time) of (my) life. This manifested vivid presence of his was shown to us by Him (experienced in reality) on our way to Mahi Galteshwar. Hemantbhai and I had planned to spend a day or two in utter solitude somewhere and remain deeply engrossed in meditation. First, we went to Godhra. Nothing had happened until we arrived there. But at night it rained heavily, (it rained cats and dogs, so to say.) Flashes of lighting and even huge trees were shaken by storms.

In the morning, it seemed nearly impossible to go to Mahi Galateshwar. The train departed early morning at 4:30 am. So we had to set out of the ashram (Godhra) latest by 3:30 am. However, by the time we had to leave the ashram, the rain had come to stop, by the grace of God ! And on such a stormy night who would be so bold enough to stir out so early to travel? In the whole compartment of our train we two were the lonely / souls (travellers.) In the solitude Shri Hemantbhai was in close touch with one of my hands, constant and spiritedly alive (dynamic, vibrant, etc.) and I was transported into my unusual trance ('bhavastha')

(entranced in the state of Being). By the grace of God, during that state of trance (I) We could see what effect my company would bring on his disturbed uneven life, what dark forests he would have to traverse (with me), what conflagration would occur in the forests, and how many countless (based on raw animal nature) bats and other forest birds of various kinds would be burnt to ashes and then how we would be able to reach the Temple (our destination-all such scenes flashed vividly before our inner eyes as if like on a cinema screen ! I even told him all about it and the purpose of our going to Mahi Galateshwar was already indirectly achieved before our reaching that place ! But on his special insistence (wish) we disembarked at the *Angadi* station. How could we find the way to Mahi Galateshwar (in the dark) early at 5:00 a.m. as we stepped out of the station ? So we just discussed it between ourselves as to what to do (whether and how to proceed, etc.) Meanwhile, another passenger who might like us have stepped down at the Angadi station, or might have been already there, arrived before us, whatever, came to us and hearing our conversation, told us : “Come, walk with me. I too want to go there ! stormy rain ceasing as we started from the Ashram ! No one else present on the train in our compartment I Only one person present at the Angadi station to guide us on the way without our asking him anything, in all these coincidences do we not see His hand ? Is it not His manifestation in each case ? *

* 'Jivan Sanshodhan' p. 368

We were all going on a pilgrimage to the Himalayas. One sister also set out with us early morning to walk with us, Nandubhai used to take care of all our baggages and then start later, after us. We two would generally start very early. Very often we would be walking in the rain and I would keep chanting my *prayer*, loudly enough to be heard, praying for the rain to stop until we reached our destination. Such things happened quite eventually (not once or twice only) and the rain did stop in answer to prayers.

*While proceeding on the way, the sister suffered from stomach pain. And what severe cramps ! She used to walk a little behind. This soul (I) used to walk ahead. She did not tell me about her cramps. She badly needed fomentation. We had a cook with us. With his help this soul (I) collected enough fire wood to burn. He had a match-stick box. He tried all the sticks to no avail. The stock was exhausted but without kindling the fire. We had no more match-sticks. But we badly needed a fire. We had collected dry grass, etc. also to burn. We had also arranged small chips of sticks to make the fire burn. Then this soul (I) began to blow through my mouth as fast as I could (like the blacksmith's blowing it). I continued for long and at last a *fire* was kindled by the grace of God.**

Our destination was still about two and a half miles away. Sprinkling rains still continued. There is a

* There were nine persons with us. (They had no sufficient articles of equipment required for beds, rugs, etc. My heart was filled with pity for them as they were likely to be exposed to rain. So inspired or alerted by 'Nimitta' as God's instrument (messenger), I used to pray to stop the rains.)

** 'Jivan Pokar' pp. 64-65.

difference between our seasonal rains and the rains falling in the Himalayas. We could continue to walk ahead despite the continuous rains. We could experience the rain falling on our heads all the way.

“Our way of loving everyone is way different and unique”

This soul (I) by the grace of God, is well prepared and even eager to help everyone, out of your heart also you must (show equal eagerness, total readiness your enthusiasm, your courage, boldness and adventurous nature enough to take a plunge and our desire to set aside free yourself your held on beliefs and old habits, standards of measurement etc. then only with the grace of God, this soul (I) can work effectively, otherwise my help can achieve nothing. Don't we always need two hands, palms to clap and make a sound ? Now it is not possible for me to believe and I am not in a position to convince myself that I am capable of loving you and showing you my affection also, as you have written. I do believe what others say, but I do not care for what they say. And yet, my attitude towards those who are stirring on the path is very different and remains so also.

My indifference or leniency in that regard should not be construed as my consent.

My impact or impression will shine out and when a fine self development is seen or experienced as taking place. Then only others will also feel and experience the impact of our changing attitudes, understanding and a new life. Such an experience is more substantial and more effective.

12. Leela Kala

(Leela kala means Game Plan, Artful Artlessness or Programmed Playfulness)

- Shri Mota

As people come gradually to observe our humility, sense of surrender, sympathetic dealings with others and also. Our sense of appreciation of others' sense of duty and their aim or objective behind such action, they will also come under the same kind of experience and this soul's (mine) impact on them will also grow. I often get playful enough to try such strange planks on the seekers to be able to measure or gauge how far their sense of surrender is trained and matured.*

And why do we need to know or grasp whether this soul (I) is a perfect master or not? We are concerned only with the substance (grub) and not with the prattle (useless task or comment, etc.) So long as we are able to achieve our aim even with the help of a God of earth, we should regard it as our greatest *guru*.

Mysticism of the heart owes its existence to the love of this soul (Self). Why should this soul (I) bother about the up-keep of it all ? Nothing as to be left as understood or held in itself, it won't allow anything to arise in us by its grace, fortunately. If it all in our lives that we are able to experience things as a result of our own efforts towards

* 'Jivan Manthan' p. 61

self-sublimation. However high our life's development may reach/ It may touch the best heights, yet if I more, even by error, to as scribe it to myself, It would be base or mean on my part (this soul's). All this is in the form of facts. The fundamental transformation, gradually happening in the lives of all of you, will serve to make clear, the impact of this soul (I) by the grace of God, and it will not fail to affect the lives of those around us.

Enforced by the grace of God, this Soul is essentially impoverished, low and mean, impure. Hence no advocacy In its defence or favour is required. Those who are wise, will come to understand in due course, sooner or later, and I am sure, I trust that a beggar like me will not be shown the door or asked to leave just empty handed.

I do not receive adequate support, sympathy, affection love, sincere feeling, appreciation, faith, trust, inspiration etc., This is my complaint. It is unfortunate (If my misfortune). Yet this soul will never feel discouraged and lose patience also.

By the grace of God, even when this soul's sincere passion (strong yearning) remains unnourished, and receives no response from the person involved, its continuous. How will remain as it is. It never entertains any desire for fruition and it never expects any results also, so it never bothers about its own future or continuity. It will continue to flow spontaneously and will exhaust itself at a proper time. But until that happens it will go on performing its duty without expecting any reward or results, too. Our own benefit lies in its continuous flow only. What is its guarantee ? How can

it be proved ? It can be properly understood only when the heart feels it by itself, not otherwise. However, there are frequent occasions of creating conflicts in the lives of all. Conflicts cause struggles, which may also lead to understanding, if our heart is so inclined.

Some seeker (disciple, 'swajan' might go astray, violate Instructions (advice), etc. and still I would go with him heartily upto the last stage, if I could, even further too, if possible, but how can I ever think of severing our relationship? Supposing that some such seeker might disown me, reject and even throw me away in disgust, yet what else could I do ? I can never act against their interests. We often go astray and misbehave a lot, but does God ever disown us ? Does a mother reject her spoilt son ? But a true mother would never encourage the spoilt son and strengthen his bad behaviour.

By the grace of God, this Soul (Mota)'s work or mission is like that of a physician. Diseases, boils, scars, ulcers, etc. have got to be seen by us. We have to, by the grace of God, Some 'Swajan's (disciples) might even feel that all their plus points are simply ignored by us and only the minus points are taken notice of. But whatever is of merit or positive in their nature is not going to vanish, we have just to take care of their nature only. So that by the grace of God, we could try to improve, and enable them to rise. Such action only can be considered as true service offered to such souls. Thus if we can help them improve their merits and increase them, then only this soul's (Mota) mission can become fruitful.

God has gracefully given us ('sadhus', recluses) such an unpleasant task (mission) that as we point out to the "swajan" (dear ones) their pitfalls or faults, drawbacks, deficiencies, defects, etc.) they begin to dislike us. We are aware of that.

It is our duty to serve the dear ones. We care little whether they like us or not. Our love for them compels us to treat them as such. In case some irregularity or angularity on the part of a 'swajan' (dear one) comes to be pointed out or exposed, it is for their benefit only. Such a feeling with full awareness must arise in their hearts but that it does not so happen is our misfortune.

How can I relinquish my duty ? At times one needs to give vent to anger also. Or at other times it is necessary to give a jolt or produce a severe shock to someone (so that the needful may occur), to produce something positive, by the grace of God, if I am forced to resort to such act, no remorse or regrets need to be experienced or expressed.

I am never despondent about any matter. I leave everything to him (God). Let His will alone prevail. Let it happen as He likes it. I feel no ill-will, anger towards anyone. Our aim is only to establish mutual harmony. All we do is to sound a warning to all who at the end, might feel alienated or isolated to prevent them from feeling such so that they might not later complain as to be not given a chance to try to improve themselves.

"Why did you not warn us in time ? We could have at last attempted to set things right ? We were denied the opportunity."

All those with whom we have, by the grace of God, come into contact, have also, by the grace of God, confessed and revealed, sooner or later the inner most secrets of their lives to this soul (me), people normally do not prefer to reveal such secrets to anyone or everyone. When they do so, open their hearts fully to someone, that passion is truly deserving it and is an extraordinary one.

There are many shops in the market. We see there different types of transaction, bargains, etc. This soul (Mota) has also opened a shop, by the grace of *God*. Transaction takes place in it, but that transaction is for giving up everything it offers only poverty, total indifference to worthy things (fakiri). Unless one chooses such a state (of self-chosen poverty, 'fakiri) one is not advised to enter this shop. 'Fakiri' means, inspite of having everything, to be like one without any attachment or sense of possession, to live a life of devotion and self-knowledge. It is possible to use only an empty container to fill it with something. In case the container is already filled with something else, we will have to first make it empty. Everything in it has to be thrown away.

We are continuously calling for a life of (learning). It is our profession, our confirmed calling.

We are going to continue calling out for Lite's sake. It is, our business, whoever approaches our house in the small locality, any street vendor cries out to sell his goods; it's his business, there's nothing wrong with it. Whoever needs and affords may buy the goods. But can

we find fault with the seller who cries aloud to sell his wares ? Can we express our irritation?

By the grace of God, I for one, do not tolerate such grievances on any one's part. Whenever I happen to tolerate, my sole intention is to be one with the other soul in sympathy. He tolerate who has some axe to grind. I have no axe to grind. My only concern is to see that those whom God has sent to me, who come to me, by the grace of God, do not lose sight of their holy aim, their spiritual goal, and do conduct themselves accordingly, and so behave as to keep it uppermost in their hearts.

The rest of my life, the years that remain for this body to breathe its last, will be spent in trying to bring, even with hard efforts, if necessary, to the path of God, all those who approach me with the same purpose, to learn the secret of the name of God. That atone is now the sole purpose of its (this body's) existence, its sole duty. The rest will depend upon the extent and intensity of the learner's inquisitiveness, and the benefit will be proportionate to that extent. Some people will have to budge as a result of my constant urging and insistent reminding etc. Such is the probable consequence or likelihood of God's grace in this life (mine). If I succeed, even to a little extent, in making someone relive full well the importance of God's name, in making one aware truly about its significance, even in case of a single sold, I will be fully satisfied with such an act. Whoever meeting me with their instinctive dispositions, biological nature, etc. will surely benefit in proportion to their

capacity as far as possible. By the grace of God, this soul (Mota) will simply continue to do its duty namely to lead everyone who meets me towards such a realization (of duty) in a subtle manner. Without their own awareness about it, in their own way. One who has fully liberated himself from all and everything can also remain uniquely attached or involved with everyone by its own choice.

But in our hard time as at present, everyone likes it if we behave agreeably and live as they like or expect us to live. It is understandable that for this soul (Mota) it is not possible to behave continuously in that way. It is not agreeable also. After passing through a series of stages of 'sadhana' (quest), one reaches a peculiar period (stage) when the soul begins to behave dually, with double speak carefully as well as carelessly, or indifferently, now who will like such a dual attitude ? By the grace of God, we no longer need to live in a manner seeking to win someone's approval or disapproval for that matter. By the grace of God our previous existence has already undergone a metamorphosis.

Whosoever may take it as they like; they may observe Him, understand Him or experience Him in their own way. It's all right. But by the grace of God, on our own part, we will not be concerned about winning anyone's prevail or disapproval at all. By His grace I had also taken up to play such a role or a long time, by own understanding. If each and every soul can act and live by one's own free will and choice, in the way they like, why would anyone insist about a particular way of life

for this soul (Mota), to toe their line ? How far is it right also to expect us to do so ? Have I ever gone out of my way * asking anyone to approach me ? Have I invited anyone to come near this soul ? If you have come by your own choice and continue to do so, I may have to keep reminding you of the purpose which brought you to me, to keep you on the right path of pursuing the goal and instruct whenever necessary to prevent you from going astray, to strengthen that purpose. If some people are not prepared to take it right, they had better move away. We will not at all be pleased or displeased with them, by the grace of God. We remain as we are touched Inspired and coloured and in love with Him, by the grace of God. We have nothing to conceal about us. We will prepare to be known, felt or understood and experienced by others as we are. We have no objection at all. But if anyone have such objections, they are free to leave us instantly, and such is our earnest request and humble prayer to them also. It is also our prayer to such souls to consider the kind of shocks, conflicts and upheavals (protests) we ourselves had undergone, and the prayers to God that resulted from such experiences, by the grace of God. It is our earnest request to such souls.*

I carry the conviction, as such a state of self-confidence has arisen in (my) this heart, that if an all-embracing feeling of love towards all is born in our heart and is kept alive for ever, it will enable us to treat everyone in such a way as to do due justice as each of them deserves, by the grace of God.

* 'Jivan Manthan' p. 231, 'Jivan Pokar' p. 152

Hence, by the grace of God this soul (Mota) has remained and still continues to remain calm and confident, unperturbed and indifferent to uncertainty. This kind of state of mind and being remain unaffected by all outside influences. Whenever an occasion arises to say or write something, it no longer behaves or expresses in the manner in which it did so during the period of its quest. Things have changed now. And one has to confess and confirm this fact also. But by the grace of God, with the right awareness, (this soul) it now refuses to believe in such matters as we do. (We do not impose our beliefs on others at all). It is very likely that some of the elders who hold me in high esteem-may be doing so on account of their peculiar understanding about me I have only clarified this matter here.

Even individual can never remain unchanged or always the same as he/she was before, forever, every soul undergoes some change, likewise this soul (Mota) may have also undergone some change, as it is very likely. During its (my) period of investigation (spiritual quest), this soul had been habituated to make a very cruel and critical self-analysis with all objectivity and neutrality in full awareness and alertness. It is easy to understand even today with the help of prayers and *bhajans* composed then. Can one's life remain unaffected by such a prolonged and deliberate self-study? Everyone can experience the characteristics or behavioral qualities of style, etc. formed during one's early days of living a worldly life, even now. Then, how can the effect of this soul's early years of prolonged

study conducted by God's grace be washed away? Can it be obliterated ? or deleted form memory ?

During its period of investigation this soul could observe silence (speechlessness) for long. I did not speak or make any remarks or observations at all. I avoided all discussions, debates, etc. on any issue whatsoever. In him (this soul, Mota) prevailed pure respect with high regards for all elderly persons at all times in total awareness as well. Such a soul (Mota) now states clearly to all those (elderly) persons whenever occasion arises, in appropriate language, at opportune times, through speech or writing as necessary.

It is also understandable that some souls (others) may not approve of that particular type of manifestation on the part of this soul. Some persons even like to believe that this soul (Mota), by his behavior "is now changed". (This is not uttered with appropriate intention) He has now grown arrogant. But those souls who have come into closest acquaintance with this soul (Mota), and who have, by the grace of God, lived with him as life-long companions, and those who have also naturally experienced, by living together, the various aspects of his (Mota's) life, have been able to perceive in reality the quintessence of his "ego" or the sense of pride attached with "I".

One who has served for long years with dear friends, continuously for hours at a stretch, during the tenure (period) of Harijan Sevak Sangh, if such a one has any sense of 'ego' or 'vanity' at all, how can those friends remain unaware of it ? Tills 'ego' is generally

expressed or manifested in many ways or in different forms. If while working together for years together, in daily chores, and without experiencing any kind of clash or conflict of interests, causing no anger or remorse, but working only in co-operation and fellowship, what does it all signify ? We may care the best, whatever they might believe. We have just to live in accordance to God's will, at given times, by the grace of God. If we care to consider what the others might feel about us, at such times, it might only weaken our resolve and sense of purpose, of living appropriately.

We get burnt at heart by the grievances of many of our dear ones, by wrongs done to them in their lives (by others), the heart keeps burning all the while, no doubt. During such states of intensity, if any dear one happens to come across or meet us, even by chance, my (this soul's) anger automatically gets expressed directed to one or more of them, in order to warn or caution them, with a view to awakening them (spiritually). Everyone knows that Mota's anger is "directed towards one particular person only". If on such occasions, the others can also understand their own part in it, to blame, they also, by the grace of God, get awakened at the time.

However, by the grace of God, I have now given up such practice also, on better understanding. Time also continues to change. I readily acknowledge and welcome all such blame on my part, due to some soul's misunderstanding or limited wisdom, caused when I am

obliged to use some method or instrument to serve a particular purpose (as I think fit). We do not stand to lose anything thereby.*

May be, today, you all experience this soul (Mota) as doing nothing (being inactive or passive, apparently), but this soul is now not what It seems to be to you. The wheel in his heart keeps moving all the while. How can I portray or describe to you, by words or lines, how I have attained to this status, by the grace of God ? **

By the grace of God this soul (Mota) has never befriended or espoused cowardice and has never on any account been an escapist I have never minced words while telling the truth to a period of even as long as thirty years, have never even harboured any kind of fear or misgivings in the heart whether the friend will desert me or will be offended by my words, etc. The feeling of love is as delicate as it is hard also. Everyone would easily accept the delicate side of love, and also understand of it; but it is only when the hardness of its nature is accepted with devotion and love, true love is experienced or begotten. By the grace of God, this soul (Mota) is not at all in a position to tolerate or encourage any type of fault or deficiency on the part of any of the swajans (dear ones) who have become associated with this soul (Mota) for the purpose of their spiritual development of course, I may accept such a shortcoming or defect of their nature - but only as a seeker accepts his own fault or deficiency with a wish to correcting it- of amending it towards

* 'Jivan Pokar' p. 173

** 'Jivan Pokar' p. 179

improvement. Thus it is our duty to accept the faults or vices of our dear ones, but only with a view to placing it properly after separating it. The duty of life is not of segregation or disintegration by creating narrow walls. The true object of life is of expansion of its real aims. Mere vocabulary or words of a language can *never* convey the true meaning or hidden significance of the quest for truth. It can be obtained only by righteous living.*

The ideal to be reached cannot be expressed in words: It is only to be experienced)

When people talk about such things in ideal abstract or elevated terms, I listen patiently without making any mental movement, with sympathy. An old acquaintance of my college days once came from 'ashram' to Khumbhkonam for 24 hours only. He went on talking about himself from morning till evening in such high sounding language. He told Nandubhai about me that 'bhagat (Mota)'s value could be world of a difference between my value of three paise and the same value (monetary) of any other normal person. If people prefer to talk in such terms about me, I have no objection at all. I like to listen to such talk. But if any of our 'swajans' or dear ones talks like this, I may provide a feedback, by the grace of God. (He will have to hear my response). **

There is no limit to my joy or to the stupidity of this soul. As I go on loving different individuals, by the grace of God, I also notice their shortcomings or faults. And

* 'Jivan Pokar' p. 373

** 'Jivan Manthan' p. 137

to that purpose, I happen to criticize them. Hence, in a sense, this soul can be compared with a housefly that settles on offal of what use in such company? Only that company is the best which can enable the soul to rise rung after rung, step by step on the stairs, towards self-realization or the experience of God. It is a very rare and difficult occurrence in one's heart to feel the necessity of sublime living, and even more difficult is the occurrence *of* the need for ones self-development with alert awareness at heart with love and devotion to a saint or 'satpurush' granting us refuge; and the most difficult matter is to understand and experience the love of such a 'satpurush'.*

I have never said to any of my dear ones (swajan) that I am a saint. I am just nothing. I have never asked anyone to believe any such things about me (this soul). But if our aim is to develop spiritually and if such be our mind, intellect, consciousness, soul and ego follow the dictates of one from whom we have to learn something, and if we fail to hold such a soul in his esteem with love and devotion, then we are not likely to receive any benefit from such a soul (Guru). I have *never* asked anyone to offer me 'tilak' or worship in any form. Everyone in this world acts mechanically driven by his or her own habits. I too may or may not be forced by any such habit. No one knows about it too. And even of it can be proved on grounds of sentiment it has no meaning.**

* 'Jivan Prakash' p. 29

** 'Jivan Prasang' p. 145

Dear, what will you do with my photograph?. I do not like it. At first I was never ready to get myself photographed. But now I have given up such resistance. Can not make myself visible to you (appear before your eyes) whenever you like? Why is a photograph necessary? Not that I cannot appreciate your love for me, your mind wander it that direction. And even if your mind insists about it, just tell it that the one whose photograph it desires to see, can easily be called before one's minds eye. Is it not? then why do you need a gross object? We should never encourage such gross, objects.*

I too instruct my friends to approach such other inner souls-no outer bodies. When Pujya Shri Anandmayi mother visited Ahmedabad, I had specially sent brother Nandu (to see her), and I had also advised him to go to Pondichery Ashram and such other places as well. One who wants to rise and develop on the path of spiritual progress has got to bow down his head in all awareness and appreciation wherever he encounters virtue or such divine qualities before the being providing such a spiritual experience. It is a matter of joy that you serve only a particular saint, but in addition to that, if by chance, you come across some saint realized soul by the grace of God, and keep yourself engaged in his service, there it nothing wrong, by the grace of God, I don't have to create any chain of followers. (I don't 'shave' anyone.)**

* 'Jivan Prasang' p. 101

** F.N. 'Jivan Purna' p. 52

This body was born on the fourth day after moon (in the second half of Bhadarva (Bhadrapada). I beg for your heart-felt blessings, good wishes on that day from all of you, I request you earnestly to keep your inspiring feelings in this soul on that day and to direct your good wishes towards me. And on that day during all your acts of routine, if you keep this soul's consciousness in your hearts. If you let my consciousness enter into yours), this poor soul shall feel itself blessed.*

We are to meet but not at all in the gross form. But we have to meet in order to develop spiritually, with the awareness and knowledge of the feeling of mind, intellect, consciousness, spirit and ego in control. If we can meet like that, it will be the best remedy.

My condition is that you don't have to believe that this soul has some power or divine touch, you don't have to consider that I am great. This soul is only an ordinary type of man. He need not be worshipped. I don't need that kind of false faith, True faith is born spontaneously out of a burning desire and it is useful only if it creates the wisdom or understanding about spiritual development.

The faith we can have in anyone is just for our own sake only. Without a deep-rooted faith in our hearts, we can never hold steady in the matter of faith, we cannot even enter its territory. Then what about being inspired with faith ? We have faith, nothing will stay as it was, things will change. Therefore, we have to do whatever we can with full consideration and understanding,

* F.N. 'Jivan Pokar' p. 88

consciously, I have stated in 'Manane' somewhere, that there's no trouble if one suffers setbacks while pursuing one's own ideas, because if the soul happens to be in the state of a seeker, in on-going quest, he will surely learn and his eyes will be opened, but we have to keep in our mind the warning that we are not being led like the blind by the ideas of others.

I fail to understand why people fear me. I have never uttered anything with a loud voice. But there is no such rule that I will not do so in future. The feeling of 'inspiring' others or sending such sentiments to their hearts is because of accumulated impressions of experience of diverse types resulting in awareness and understanding.

It is true that love itself implies some feeling of fear. But the feeling of fear must be removed from one's mind. Then only can one become feeling, candid or outspoken. There must be so many things stored inside which need to be pressed. Whatever is at the centre of my heart and it is so much indeed, but it cannot be automatically expressed. It is expressed only when some appointed, pre-destined occasion (instrument) arises. One Kind of devotee prays to God when the 'occasion' (cause) ('nimitta') arises, and the other type remains perpetually in the state of prayer (Love of God), though there may or may not be any occasion or cause. You should never experience any kind of hesitation or reluctance in putting before me in its true form whatever feeling or emotion occurs in your heart, even if the feeling is of a very admirable or even the most

abominable kind, albeit, when you take upon yourselves to open up so much, you will feel very fight at heart, with all the burden gone you will then get the completely fulfilling experience of a true *swajan* whom you have met.

What should I write regarding me, this soul (Mota) is not continuously loved, (by people) ? And it is wise not to cling to any soul, however great He might be considered, unless one is convinced fully at heart that a heartfelt respectful attraction is felt towards him and that by him our life's sublimest ambitions are going to be fulfilled. The ashram shelter or refuge of a noble soul is meant to be an instrument towards achieving sublimation of one's life. God alone (Shri Hari) is the best and the noblest of all.

One might notice a number of faults or vices caused by *prakriti* or nature in this soul (Mota) of which enumeration is meaningless (absurd), so why should one blow one's own trumpet? (Why should I write about myself ?) I must leave it to one's own understanding and to enough experience and that too what it suffers in one's heart as added experience enriching understanding I for myself have never invited anyone to contact me.

I need not say anything as to whether people sincerely love me or feel strong emotional attachment to me. You may tell me (directly), "Mota, I fail to feel continuous love (affection) for you. There are ups and downs (tide and ebb). I was never used to asking or inviting people to come to me, to continue our contact etc. Nor do I myself ever initiate such a situation.

I do not refuse to meet whosoever approaches me on their own initiative. In case some may wish to increase or decrease the intensity of relationship, I do not bother (I let it take its own course). There are no such ups and downs (tide or ebb) in regard to individuals whose hearts one love abides by the grace of God. People may hold such views by looking only from the outside. For those who have cultivated a subtle insight (inner eye) and have their hearts awakened (to love), such heartfelt love never remains hidden from them. We do not want to test I deliberately as to whether your feeling (emotion) is genuine or otherwise, because it is not part of our culture to do so. Our culture only enjoins us to mix with everyone, not to be separated; and to mix also in such a way that leaves out nothing In all aspects.*

I do not believe in receiving anything gratis or as free of charge. We have got to pay for everything. In life or in our practical worldly dealings, etc., nothing is obtained free of charge. Our fame or reputation will depend on your true life's conduct We will be glorified by your true love;. If your behaviour does not match the state of your true feeling and its awareness, it will be a death-like experience for both you and me. Therefore, kindly take pity on this poor soul (Mota) I never fear about losing my fame or reputation. But it Is my intense desire, strongly felt, longing, that your reputation and prestige must go up and continue to rise. If a loss of glory occurs in your case, I would feel more deeply grieved than even by death. It means that death itself

* 'Jivan Sopan' p. 61

would cause me no grief at all. I can embrace death with love. It is my sincerest heartfelt prayer to you to live in a way to ensure that I must never be let down (hold my head in shame) because of you.*

I have still to take a let from you. Only a small beginning is just made. I pray to you to go on giving me all-all including 'sin' and merit (pap and punya) belonging to the living self the worldly soul, as it is. All in the form of thought, instinct, feeling, emotion, affection, distortion (evil idea), attachment, falseness, anger, pride, egoistic vanity, etc. etc. Whenever that occurs, at that very instant, please go on giving with awareness coupled with knowledge and devotion.**

Some advanced mystics, who do not know 'Yoga' hold under their spell some people who consciously surrender and act according to the order or dictates of the mystics, masters of consciousness, and also enable the people to become aware of their own hidden holy impulses, culture-values, which come to rise and remain alert. If at such a juncture some intensely awakened seeker seizes the opportunity to desire its fullest benefit, remains alert and aware be sure he succeeds in benefiting deeply at heart."***)

By the grace of God, (I) this soul never does anything haphazard or without a given aim. Only the impressions carried forward from the past in your consciousness were made vivid and clearly visible to you in their real form during your silence-sessions by means

* 'Jivan Sopan' p. 115

** 'Jivan Sopan' p. 137

*** 'Karma Gatha' p. 137

of some shuttle, specialized technique or device. The lines quoted in the above verses can also clearly complain that this Soul (Mota), by the grace of God, possesses the knowledge of such a technique, and likewise again by the grace of God. It has demonstrated the said technique. How much to benefit from It is left to each individual's discretion. By the grace of God what this Soul (Mota) had proved has been demonstrated in fact (OR- What had been promised is well executed) It is not our concern at all as to how to live, be or become, etc., But by the grace of God, it is necessary to bring to light from the depth of one's heart to one's being appropriately what was intensely experienced within by raising it to the core of one's being. It was possible only by the grace of God, and certainly It can never be done by any method or technique.

Once in an 'ashram' (hermitage) (sacred spot), this Soul (Mota) has truly experienced that the information (contamination) Occurring in someone else's body had to be absorbed in to (Mota's) my own body. Moreover, whatever the other souls had been suffering of ailing from, I could tell my people. (They came to know about others' suffering or ailments from me-Mota) Whatever this soul had to endure or suffer physically was also on account of other souls only-and that was also proved in many ways.

This statement of fact has been conclusively derived from various personal experiences which proved that this soul (Mota) is not to subject to negative (corrupt)

influences. The fact has also been repeating corrected by currents passing through each atom or cell of this Soul's body.*

I have always been desiring that those who have come to me (seeking help), (my swajans or dear ones) will never find themselves without work regarding their life's goal.

Nandubhai and others are aware of this fact. They may never find time or a moment's rest, while one task is nearing completion, another is already wait for their attention. I top like such things to happen again and again. An idle mind is the devil's workshop. Instead, it is preferable to be tired or get exhausted while performing one's tasks-work is in itself a manifestation of the Divine sacrifice- Offering to God Narayana. (The Lord manifests as a symbolic sacrifice.) It is my own experience also that if we continue doing our duty and leave its fruit to God, (desiring no personal benefit, merit or fame etc.) (if we do it only to please God alone), we never feel the fatigue or exhaustion at all.

What can 'Mota' do, (will he prefer to die or be no more) if one fails to continue one's prayerful experiment sincerely and spiritedly, by even obliterating one's ego, melting totally in the heart's feeling strengthened by true devotion to and for knowledge of him ? Instead I do feel annoyed or irritated when I hear about such occurrences. I need only such dear ones who at each moment of their

* 'Jivan Sopan' p. 348

Shri Mota has delineated the secret of this mysterious technique in his preface to 'Jivan Sopan'.

lives are willing to give up or surrender every thing, entire life and in such surrendering they experience true devotion pure love from the depth of heart. I do not like to listen to anyone's mourning lamentation or complaints). Such mourning only serves to make cowards of, men. The Soul (spirit can be determined in any circumstances to be brave and valiant Even if it might be defeated, yet it always remains constantly concentrated on the desire to win, to carve victory out of the defeating circumstances and continues its efforts to win only. The Soul that leaves to stand upright and correct and experiences at heart the fact of God's helping hand assisting him, never becomes lonely and can also rest assured and be at peace even in the midst of bombardment and deadly onslaught from enemies. This Soul (Mota) cannot claim any such gross experiences, but has truly experienced most devastating interval attacks.*

* * *

A letter to Lata (a small girl)

Dearest,

Do you understand what it means when I say that I remember you ? If not, do ask your sister, a creeper needs some support to grow up. It cannot ascend without support.

No creeper can afford to stay alone, nor would it like to /stay alone, it cannot survive without support. I do desire very much to see you and to shower my love. But I am only a rustic. You would not like to see my

* 'Jivan Sopan' pp. 282-284

appearance (face) at all. I am afraid you might even feel scared of my unseemly looks with a just grown beard unshaved and a big turban on my head, comparable to a piece of earthen plate. Do continue chanting God's name everyday. The sister wont find fault with it, and even if she does so why should you feel offended by a mother's angry words? My mother used to even beat me very much and still I loved my mother truly. There is no one so dear as one's mother. "Mother is Mother, all others are like winds in the wilderness"- is a proverb. Do remember sister on my behalf, (convey my affection) to her feeling. Here I can see many Latas, but you aren't that.:" *

This Soul (Mota) does not desire empty worship; It only means death to living. I just want to eat and partake of everything from all of you. By the grace of God. The digesting power within me can cope up with everything! But who will believe and agree with it? **

You have your undisputed right to tell me whatever crosses your mind regarding me (this soul). You also have the right to scold me, rebuke me, make me touch my ears, crosswise, with both my hands, if ever I go wrong or if this soul commits any error. God has given me enough courage and valour (venturesome nature) to be able to admit my errors. I have always deeply, felt that I must truly live in tune with the sentiment that binds me with various people. My Guru's grace has taught me that much I cannot deal with them in any other way. Such an

* 'Jivan Mandan' p. 157

In those days Mota used to get his shave once a week.

** 'Jivan Mandan' p. 227

attitude to life has been confirmed within me by His grace and it has been also so strengthened in me so far. And, therefore, God has enabled me to be not only very unpleasant with my dear ones at times but also to say bitter words beyond their imagination in proportion to their behaviour. I have never tried to keep anyone pleased without reason or just for nothing, nor have I missed or let go any timely situation to pass without giving a piece of my mind harsh comments by the grace of God !

This soul has been consistently manoeuvring, trying to upset or displease all people whenever necessary, by various means, by the grace of God. I have always been busy controlling all people for one reason or another as often as the occasion demands. In such cases, if you think I am crossing the limits of propriety or if things happen as they should not, I earnestly pray to you to pardon me with all generosity of heart, to consider my acts as pardonable. The only cause of such fermentation or excitement on past is my yearning towards all souls, this soul's love for them all. If everyone thinks and looks at it all from my point of view, it will be my soul's great good fortune. I will surely take it so.*

This soul has no special (divine) power to know about any other soul. It lacks the art of seeing through people's minds and grasping their thoughts (unexpressed). If any souls (people) who have been in contact with me happen to think to that effect, it is their good feeling towards this soul (Mota). It is only kind of them to think so.

* 'Jivan Pravesh' pp. 155-156

At times it may happen that some soul becomes aggressive or antagonistic towards me, and on such occasions if God manages to play some pranks or tricks in order to improve the manners of that particular person (soul), God alone knows.....

This soul (Mota) is just like an ass. It bears and carries loads or burden and it also suffers beating on the same account. Burden again not of any ordinary nature! Why should the loader think or bother whether the burden could be carried or not ? If the ass halts or pauses on the way even for breathing space, it surely gets the beating. Such occasions of beating or thrashing we often undergo some people might hit us in the face, (in our presence) some others without speaking. Some might hit without touching, dumbly, some might express their anger openly. Some might express only annoyance or irritation and some might even blame or accuse us of undeserved offences, etc. Some others might even shower on us 'awards', various so-called compliments, etc. And, hence, we are not inclined to accept or agree with any such things.

We must only confirm, verify and certify after adequate experimentation only, whatever has been proved or considered as acceptable. And, whatever has been so thoroughly experienced and is in fact as it has been truly experienced, then there is no question of retreat or withdrawal from it at all. That is indeed called true experience.*

* 'Jivan Sopan' p. 289

There is nothing one can claim as benefit or advantage from this soul (Mota). It is not our practice to invite anyone or ask people to come to us. Nor can we refuse to meet anyone who approaches us on their own. (This soul is accessible to all souls). Instead of coming over here to meet me, some souls are eager and desirous of inviting me to visit their own place, and that too agreeably occurs on all-out of natural sincere heartfelt desire or sentiment. It is rather spontaneous). There are no rules or regulations (oath or pledge) as to where to go and/or where not to go. Some people might even grumble or complain as to why we visit particular places or people and not particular others (their own). Such people are better advised kindly not to see us. One more prayer from me is : “No one should ever expect anything from us or expect us to do anything for them.” This soul is like an ass. We never promise any hidden treasures.

There exists among us (in our society, country) a popular belief, based on pure ignorance, that if ever a saint visits our premises, it surely results in bringing untold riches. Therefore, instead of Indulging in such vain efforts, it is far better to engage oneself into his day-to-day service, his tasks (mission), or to act according to his precepts. It is more beneficial to do what he asks us to do... And still, however, if anyone is desirous of inviting me to his place, they are required to be ready and willing to give us something or other in the spirit of surrender or sacrifice.*

* Preface to 'Jivan Manthan'

Nothing whatsoever regarding me (Mota) is to be believed in or accepted as pure imagination without experience or pure conviction. But it can be accepted only if it is supported by solid evidence strong enough to convince your heart. Acceptance here means no withdrawal or backtracking at all, later on. Hence no belief should be caused by emotional excitement This is my request repeated frequently.

We have nothing to stake as our claim regarding ourselves. But we are also not inclined to explain or convince others in all so many different ways. We do not bother at all. We do not predict or predetermine as to what we write, how we live, how to behave, etc. All this cannot be said and done. And there is no fixed address or pre-laid plan about me. Hence, some persons might, be or by chance, are likely to think favourably or unfavourably about me, (They may doubt my credentials, or show disregard.) On such occasions, doubts do occupy one's mind, it might shake and render unstable our very base belief or foundation. Such things do happen. But then to go out of my way to convince people and enter into disputes, etc. itself is absolutely improper on my part and disagreeable to me.

How I should walk, behave, and write or speak is entirely my own business. I am writing this just as a warning to those who fail to understand well this soul's association with consciousness, or to those whose condition of mind and understanding may be inclined to guess or believe something, before they proceed. Generally, it does not happen that I do not explain or

help one's understanding, but there is no standard regulation as to how I must behave.*

By the grace of God and also of my Guru Maharaj, this soul's life's quest (mission) has been successful and there to evidence to prove it too. It is also true, a solid fact, that In spite of our family's abject poverty and compulsive consequent physical suffering, hardships, harassment, etc. my entire life has been spent in social service, by the grace of God. This soul has been endowed with just enough amount of faith to put its trust in the spirit (soul), in spite of its being based on the nature of worldliness, whatever amount of factual evidence could be obtained has been obtained, and that much as stated here, can be experienced leading to full assurance or clear conviction. Unless and until faith, absence of restlessness, love and devotion and a deep longing for spiritual development are born in the hearts of all dear ones who have come to me for such development, this soul finds it impossible to enter into the hearts of all dear ones to work and to influence their minds, consciousness, soul and intellect, ego, etc. in order to help them achieve their goal.

Therefore, this soul stands in front of you all as a supplicant, a beggar with an empty bag for your offerings, waiting at you door-step, still I am not getting what I from anyone. I continue calling out for your charity (help). I am confident that my God is right And, hence, I continue to live trusting His love.

* 'Jivan Manthan' pp. 78-79

Those dear ones whose hearts are attached to me, by His grace, seeking their spiritual development, will not be able to detach themselves from me even after crores of rebirths. (None of them even in their future births, will be able to escape my helpful influence.)

No one can claim any expertise in matters of business craft without getting fully involved, absorbed in the art of business. Likewise, in our field of spiritual development also, once a soul is enamoured and engaged in rapturous longing, and there after being transited, stage after stage, from various fronts of lighting, one after the other it (the Soul) gets transformed, and the power of identifying and understanding (those stages) is generated automatically in it. Even in normal practices (in life) we cannot completely identify and judge thoroughly a man who is clever, smart, well-groomed, practical and efficient, or worldly-wise and successful. How can we hope to identify or judge one who is spiritually awakened and advanced ? Therefore, in stead of trying to judge or bothering about understanding such a soul, (one should better love such a soul as directly as one can and go on loving dispassionately and devotedly, never cease to love. Also it is best in one's interest to accept as much of what he says as we can without doubting, but considering that there must be some substance or element of truth, in what he says, with living trustful! faith and devotion whole heartedly believing in what he conveys to us. If you do so, you are never going to lose your millions. There will be no devastating earthquake caused by your devotion, trust

and faith in such a Soul. And in such an acceptance there must be no hope to gain, no calculation or misunderstanding to profit thereby, or doing it just in order to please MOTA, etc. It must be purely with a view to achieving one's own spiritual development, nothing else at all. May be, at times, some of the precepts, dictates, etc. become unacceptable. No problem, even then ! He only claims (Desires) from ail his dear ones co-operation, devotion, loving acceptance, welcoming co-existence, co-operative trust, etc., Only such a spirit can bring out harmonious oneness, mutual togetherness. If such a loving attachment is present, we become strongly united, mutually Inseparable, holding fast In togetherness and oneness. I find such attachment as yet absent in our dear ones. Not a single soul can claim to be so lovingly attached. The path towards spiritual development needs some unavoidable, unequirocal conditions to be fulfilled whole-heartly with loving, devoted awareness. Such is the great instrument on this path !

This is an appeal from the heart of the heart, to the heart. (MOTA). I cordially appeal to all my dear Souls!

This is my sincerest, most earnest, truest appeal from the depth of my heart, with love, to the depth of heart of my dear ones.

I simply want to meet and mix with all dear ones, enjoining their love in worship of God, by His grace/ in as many ways as I can!

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Some other books of Pujya Shri Mota, translated into English by Prof. H. G. Chhikniwala and published by us are:

- (1) The state of the Human Soul During and After Death (2nd Reprint)
- (2) Spiritual Science (3rd edition)
- (3) 'Shri Sadguru'
(co-edited with Dr. Navadia)
- (4) 'Nimitta' (The Instrument)
- (5) 'Jignasa' (Inquisitiveness)
- (6) 'Swartha' (Self-Interest)
- (7) 'Krupa' (Grace)
- (8) 'Vidhi-Vidhan' (edited)
- (9) 'Shraddha' (Faith)
- (10) Prasadi, ed. by Shri Rami

Other translations of books of spiritual or religious interest by Prof. H. G. Chhikniwala are :

- (1) 'The Flame of Friendship' (by Prabha Merchant on Ms. Vimala Tai)
- (2) 'The Saviour of the Sheltered' (on Shri Rang Avadhoot of Nareshwar)
- (3) 'Portrait of Soul Incarnate' on Shri Dada Bhagawan. Published from Surat.
- (4) 'Ma Anandmayee' by Shri Kartikeya Bhatt

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