



Centeredness

Dear friends,

Spiritual practice aims at a state of equilibrium at least akin to the “balance” that existed before creation. What do we mean by “balance?” At the physical level, an object is balanced when its center of gravity is supported. If that center loses its support, the system’s equilibrium is lost. In life, retaining equilibrium means keeping our focus on our center. But what is our center?

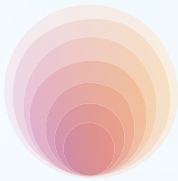
The physical body (*sthoola sharira*) has a center of gravity, but it is not the center of our total being. The physical body is, after all, a covering that facilitates our existence in the physical world. More essential to our total being are the inner subtle bodies (*sookshma sharira*), which primarily are mind (*manas*), intellect (*buddhi*), and ego (*ahankara*). Together, these three subtle bodies exist within a fourth subtle body, which is consciousness (*chit*). The subtle bodies are instruments of the soul (*atman* or *purusha*). It is the soul that is our true center.

Having a center does not automatically make us centered. Centeredness is present to the extent that our consciousness is settled on the center. Focusing on the center is the consciousness equivalent of supporting a physical object’s point of balance. It is the source of personal equilibrium.

If a boulder balancing on the face of a cliff somehow loses its centeredness, it may fall and crumble. When our focus becomes diverted from our center and skews instead toward less essential levels of

existence, we too become unstable. We then become vulnerable. In such moments, our weaknesses reveal themselves and we backslide.

Anything in life can divert our attention from our spiritual center. The most blatant culprits are desires, but even our rightful duties can divert and destabilize us if we allow them to. A normal life, with its numerous responsibilities, is like a planet orbiting many suns; it is pushed and pulled by many gravitational centers. We become lost in life's incessant movement. Yet, is the solution to the problem to turn away from the world?



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Long ago, Lord Krishna introduced the possibility of performing worldly duties while remaining equanimous and well-established in Yoga.¹ Sahaj Marg may be understood as a practical expression of this idea and the means by which it is achieved.

On January 12, 1946, Revered Lalaji intercommunicated from the Brighter World and shared a Persian couplet with Babuji Maharaj:

Nami goyam ki az duniya juda bash!

Bahr kare ki bashi ba Khuda bash.

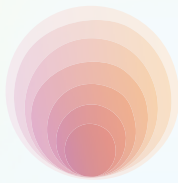
*“I do not ask you to be away from the world,
only to attend to everything with a conscious idea of the Divine.”*

This message is a prescription for balanced living. It describes the engaged centeredness that is achievable through Sahaj Marg, which in those days was undergoing its process of crystallization into the system we also know today as Heartfulness.

The essence of Sahaj Marg is the Transmission we receive from the heart of the Master, infusing us with divine consciousness. Helping us retain that consciousness is the individual daily practice of Sahaj

¹ The reference can be found in the *Bhagavad Gita*, II.47-50.

Marg, consisting principally of meditation, cleaning, and prayer. Each morning in meditation, we adjust and attune ourselves to reestablish centeredness. The evening cleaning wipes away the seeds of future distraction, which would otherwise spoil the conditions bestowed upon us. Finally, at bedtime, we face ourselves and assess our actions, prayerfully setting our intentions for the next day, thereby creating a field of spiritual possibility. The total effect is centeredness.



Through constant remembrance, we remain deeply meditative during all our wakeful activities, established in equanimity and Yoga. That is how we can attend to our duties in consciousness of the Divine, and realize the truth

Meditation frees consciousness. Consciousness is the conduit between body and soul. In the waking state, it reaches out toward the physical periphery of being. During dreaming sleep, consciousness is cut off from the senses and remains involved with itself. In deep, dreamless sleep, consciousness withdraws and rests in the soul. While meditating deeply, consciousness also rests in the soul while simultaneously expanding in an omnidirectional manner. It partakes of both wakeful alertness and the profound centeredness of dreamless sleep. This state is called *Turiya*. When we are able to bring that *Turiya* condition with us out of meditation into our active waking state, it is known as *Turiyatit*. In Sahaj Marg, we call this state *constant remembrance*. Through constant remembrance, we remain deeply meditative during all our wakeful activities, established in equanimity and Yoga. That is how we can attend to our duties in consciousness of the Divine, and realize the truth proclaimed in the anonymous medieval text, *Liber XXIV philosophorum*: “God is an infinite sphere whose center is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere.”

With love and respect,
Kamlesh Patel

On the occasion of the 149th birth anniversary of
Pujya Shri Lalaji Maharaj
4, 5 and 6 February 2022

heartfulness[™]
advancing in love