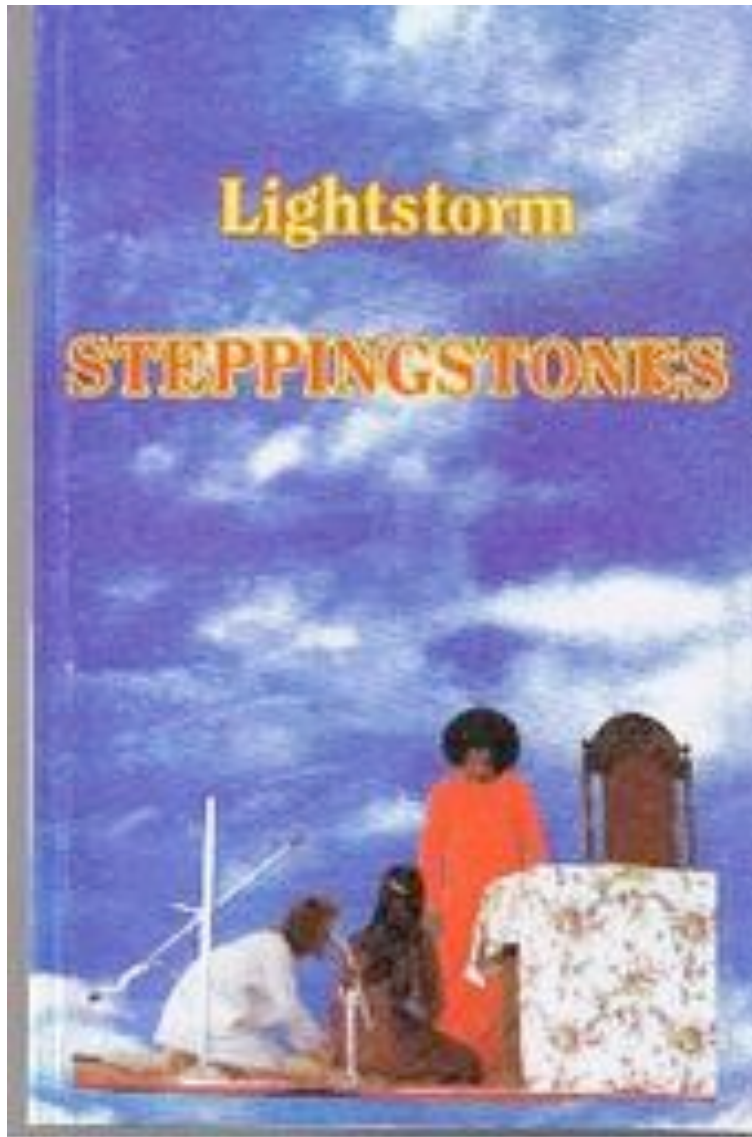


**Lightstorm**

**STEPPINGSTONES**



***Steppingstones***  
*to our Eternal Divine Self!*

*By*  
***Lightstorm***

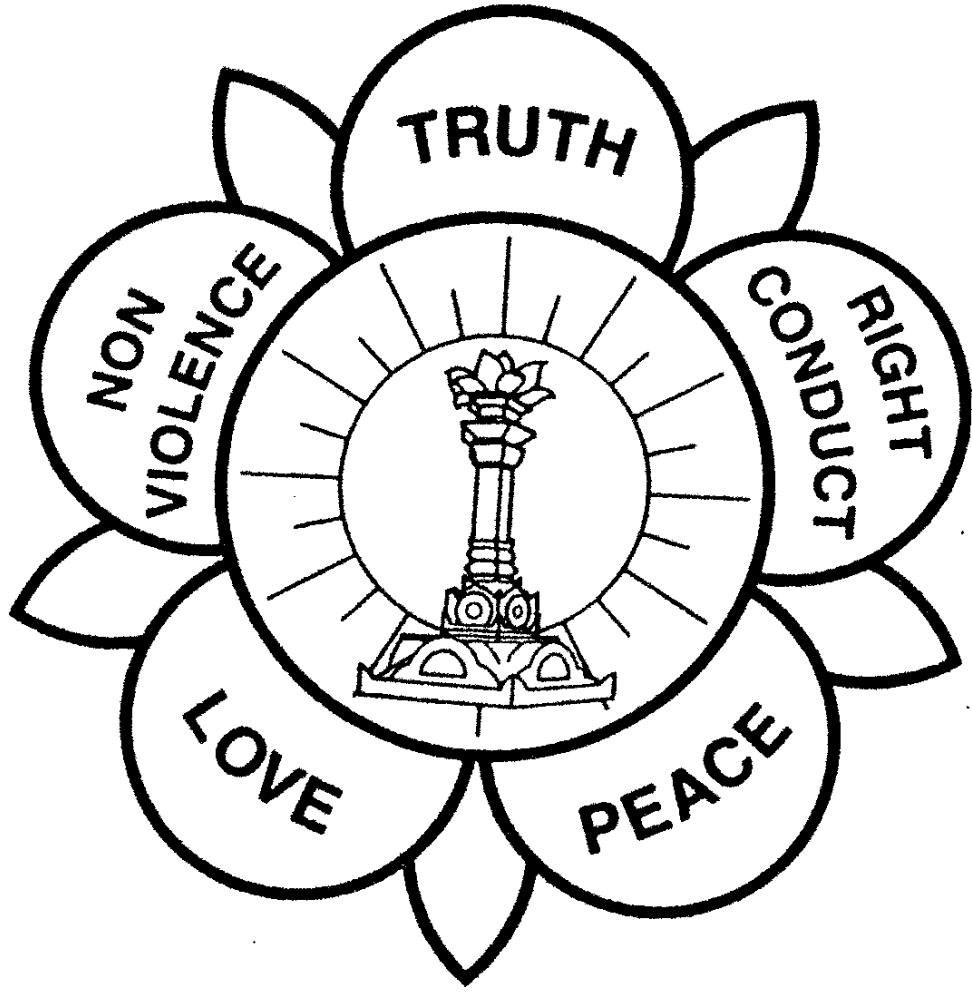
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**TRUTH**

**RIGHT  
CONDUCT**

**PEACE**

**LOVE**

**NON  
VIOLENCE**

**Through the direct flow of  
Omnipresent Love and Grace of our Beloved,  
*Lord of Creation,*  
these few pages of personal insights into our true reality of Self,  
Are Dedicated to all of our dreaming parts, to all of our Embodiments of Love!  
Body, mind, and soul are a dream, a dream of separation from our  
*'True Eternal SELF'***



**Detachment comes swiftly when we perceive the underlying flaw in everything created by  
the five elements and the five senses, gross or subtle.**

**The flaw is their impermanence.**



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# *Steppingstones*

## *Prologue*

*On* one of the many levels of creation there lived an ancient and austere yogi. He was deeply immersed in meditation, or maybe a better way to say it, he was completely immersed in the unchanging, 'Eternal Awareness' of his true Self. This seemed to be causing a lot of vibrational upheaval and problems for the inhabitants of that particular heavenly realm. His immense expanding aura pattern actually began shifting and shaking the entire atomic structure of that level to the point of near destruction. This, of course, caused the inhabitants grave concern. So, they approached their king and pleaded with him to stop the yogi. The king knew, of course, that to even remotely consider disrupting the yogi's deep meditation was a trespass. The king finally concluded that somehow he had to find a way to lure the sage out of his deep contemplation. The king meditated deeply on this problem and finally decided to send two of his most trusted, beautiful and accomplished, as well as reliable, female attendants to seductively bring the sage back to a conscious waking state.

In the meantime, the omnipresent *Lord of creation, Iswara*, appeared to the sage and asked for the yogi's assistance in the upcoming Divine play. *Kesava* (name for the One God who is the Trinity) explained the *Leela* (Divine play) that was about to commence on the physical realm. The Lord explained everything in detail to the yogi, knowing full-well that to that part of Himself (the part playing as the yogi) doing or not doing, living or dying, being attached or detached, being liberated or in bondage, was all the same. The yogi was fully aware that the only thing that truly exists is his eternal Self; the rest is illusion, a dream, a play of dancing Light and Love. But since the sage still retained his separate form and name within the game of creation, he laughed delightedly at the Lord's plan and agreed to play along.

It was at that moment that the two beautiful female attendants of the king could be seen approaching the silent sage, who was still in deep meditation. The two heavenly sisters were at first a little hesitant to go near the yogi. The elder of the two was awed by the splendor of the yogi's vibrational being, and she felt a feeling of irreverence deep in her heart at the whole idea of luring him out of his contemplation. She felt it was incorrect to do what she had been ordered to do. But the younger one of the sisters thought of it quite differently. To her, it was a tremendous challenge to be able to use her feminine wiles, her prowess, to lure this half-naked sage out of his deep contemplation. His asceticism meant very little to her.

After whispering intently to one another for a few moments, the eldest had to agree that it was their duty, their royal assignment to do this job. After all, it might possibly save their entire kingdom from disintegration. So, they commenced with their various allures, dancing seductively, utilizing all the arts of love and seduction. They became more and more intent on their goal of distracting the sage.

The yogi, of course, was amused by their intent and sat unmoved. But then, after an appropriate time, he stirred and opened his eyes. His eyes almost shot flames of outrage at the heavenly nymphs' irreverent behavior, hiding all the while his playful attitude. He had to play his part well. They both cowered from his powerful gaze. The sage spoke in a deep, resonant, booming voice. "For your audacity and your impudence, you shall both be born in human form, in female bodies, on earth at the end of the next Kali Yuga."

It was at that moment that the elder of the two sisters felt deep remorse and shame at what had been done by them both, and she bowed down in front of the yogi in humility. With tears flowing from her sad eyes and with a barely audible raspy voice she pleaded, "Oh great one, please forgive us, we were

ordered to do this shameful deed. Oh, please take back your awful curse. Take pity on us. Look into my heart and see how deeply I repent this terrible transgression. Have mercy.”

The yogi smiled inwardly and softened his demeanor just a little bit on the outside. “I see your true repentance, my child, but the words have been uttered and nothing in creation can negate them; therefore, I cannot do as you ask. But because your heart is soft, my child, I will further state that, in this human birth that you shall take, the Lord of Creation Himself, the Maha Avatar, will take a human form and you will spend time with Him. I will also take a human birth and come to earth at that time. We will then meet again, and I will watch over you. So shall it be!”

Thus the sage turned the initial curse into a great blessing for both of them. Both maidens thanked him with tears of gratitude in their eyes and then asked his permission to leave. The yogi nodded his head affirmatively and smiled just the tiniest bit, just enough to let them both know that all was well again. Inwardly, he said, “All right, the game has begun!” and like an impish child, smiled delightedly.

In due time, true to the sage’s words, it all came to pass. The two sisters were born into the human world, and he also descended to that plane. The Maha Avatar had already preceded all three of them as the game demanded. The yogi found the sisters, and since the younger one required his immediate focus (you see, she continued to play her heavenly seductive games on earth, and was creating much karma for herself) she received his initial attention. The elder of the two lovingly and patiently took a step back in order to help her, for she knew how badly her younger sister needed his help.

As the game of life unfolded for both of them, they indeed met the great Avatar of that age and spent wonder-filled times in His Divine presence. They repeatedly bathed in the Avatar’s embrace of Divine Love and Grace.\*

The game of life on earth during the Kali Yuga went on, and soon the delusive power of Maya beclouded the mind of the younger sister, who fell into the trap of illusion, thinking once again she was that heavenly nymph. She was unable to relinquish her deep identification with body and mind. Her sensual manipulations and desires needed to be expressed and experienced on the earth level, creating new and/or finishing old karma. But her encounter with the Maha Avatar has sped up this karma a thousand fold, and her steppingstones to Self-hood are being gently guided and watched over every step of the way.

As the years rolled by, the eldest sister became more and more in tune with her true nature. The Maha Avatar had filled her with such Divine Love, she could never allow herself to fall into that old Maya ego-trap and lose sight of that pure Love ever again. Far too many lifetimes (on too many levels) had been spent in games; now it was time to reclaim her true nature of ***Love, Truth, and Bliss. GOD!*** Her interaction with the living Maha Avatar became her last steppingstone to Self-knowledge. Her later years of earth life soon became a full and glorious experience. Her Self-discovery, selfless service, and sharing of Divine Love have added a brighter glow to the Light of creation.

Let us all remember that there can never be anything bad in creation. Each experience, whether we call it good or bad, evil or Divine, pleasurable or painful, is simply just another learning experience, another steppingstone to sainthood, no matter how our little ego perceptions tend to interpret any occurrence. Remember, ***all is only GOD!***

\* Story from the ‘Book of Bhrgu’  
PAGE 179



# *Chapter One*

*L*et us tap into the ‘Akasic Records’ (Hall of Records) and take a look at a particular soul incarnation cycle of one of ourselves. We shall name that part of our ‘True Self’ “Angel Child,” for the sake of easy identification, throughout all the multitudes of human incarnation cycles we will look at.

We will be like the ‘Eternal Watcher,’ seeing it all, like a movie, unfolding before us with each new birth and death experience of form and name. Remember, all of us (as long as we are caught in the illusion of the birth and death cycle), each time upon leaving our earth body (after we have reached a certain level of Spirit awareness), review our entire life down to the tiniest detail, including each impulse that prompted the thoughts, feelings, words, deeds and their true intent. Then after a rest period, we, as Spirit, assimilate all of our hard-earned experiences or steppingstones and decide which is the best new birth to take in order to learn our next lessons, and to escape the illusion of the continuous cycles of birth and death.

So, let us now proceed with the story of this one small part of our Eternal Spirit Self, which we shall call Angel.

The first few lives that Angel experienced in the human form were mostly spent in the learning process of how the human body functions and how it has to be kept, in order to survive reasonably on this physical plane called earth. Angel Child was born into several consecutive primitive type families, in male and female bodies. Each new incarnation family was a bit more advanced, or consciously aware, than the previous one.

One of Angel’s incarnations was as a blonde bouncing baby boy, born to the leader of a fierce and savage mountain tribe somewhere on the now European continent. Angel Child grew into a cruel young boy who was the prince of his tribe.

Angel’s tribe, called Nef, had been at war ever since he could remember with a neighboring mountain tribe called Dun. It had all started long ago over a certain moose kill, which parties from both tribes had hunted that ancient day, and then fought over to the death.

Angel grew up to be a mean, selfish, and utterly conscienceless young man. His favorite past time was to bully younger members of his clan. He tormented and raped young girls and women whenever they raided enemy camps and frequently killed indiscriminately. Angel’s father had taught this demon cub of the Nef tribe everything he knew and then some. As you can imagine, everyone feared this nefarious youth, who looked deceptively like a wild and ferocious blonde lion cub.

One day, Angel and his father were out hunting. Suddenly, they came upon a party of enemy hunters. A deadly fight ensued. In the end, Angel was superficially wounded, but his father had a deep chest wound which was bleeding profusely. The last two of the six enemy warriors had fled the battle, leaving their four dead comrades behind.

Angel knelt down beside his wounded father. He looked at his father’s severe condition, and since he had little knowledge of what to do for such a life-threatening injury, he reasoned that this was an opportune time to become chief and leave his dying father right where he lay. He lifted his head up towards the cloud-covered sky, and in his black, dingy cavern of a heart yelled out his victory cry. Their tribe had different ‘Gods’ for different occasions, but he had always laughed at the elders who seemed to

trust in their powers. He, like his father, lived in his own world of violence and rage, and relied only on his own cruel ego ability.

As he looked at the ever-changing cloud formations above his head, he suddenly saw the clouds parting as several golden shafts of glorious sunlight bathed the land. At that moment, he felt a part within him relax just the tiniest bit, as he once more fixed his gaze at the scene before his eyes.

*[Let us all remember that inherent within all hearts resides the intuitive knowledge of right and wrong for each of us. So this tiny spark of Divine Love in Angel's heart (which is the true basis of everything in creation) whispered ever so faintly, as his voice of conscience, to help his wounded father in every way possible, but in the blink of an eye it was drowned out by the loud and shouting voice of Angel's full blown ego.]*

His father, who knew his son well, was also aware of nature's play, and even though his breathing was tortured and raspy, he managed a feeble, sarcastic laugh and croaked, "I see you are invoking the 'Fire Gods' to come to your aid to be chief!"

Angel, now full of intent to leave his dying father, answered cruelly, "I don't think they would hear me, even if they existed! But you are now food for the wolves, father, behold the new Nef chief!" He raised his club and spear over his head and laughed.

Angel became the new chief and his cruel life went on for several years, until he was slain in a battle. As Angel lay there, at his dying moment, the only thing that reflected in his mind, as a thought or feeling, was utter frustration and rage.

As his Spirit left his body, it simply fell into a deep, dark, unconscious state of sleep or blessed oblivion.

**A**ngel Child's actions had been loathsome and destructive throughout that entire life span. So somewhere in a self-created future he would most likely learn by the same method how painful it all is, because he obviously had no idea of what it all felt like to be the victim of his depravity. The die had been cast and 'Karma' must now balance the scales of true, unemotional, perfect justice throughout all the steppingstones back to Godhead or 'Self.'. The next learning step had already been designed by Angel's own past thoughts, feelings, words, and deeds.

Let us remember that by no means do we all have to walk through the same experiences in this dream of ignorance called life, this illusion play of light and shadows. Swami has told us that the easiest way to deal with this illusion of the darkness, of evil, of shadows, is not to waste our energy by focusing on them, by trying to step on these shadows or catch them, but simply by turning towards the light. The light of wisdom. This will put the shadows behind us and thus they will automatically disappear. In other words, if we use our discrimination faculty and always turn back to the light of TRUTH, namely that all of this is a dream, a momentary illusion which is really only the ONE GOD, playing the game as the many, we will no longer be deceived by this cosmic game of Light and Shadow, this dance of Light and Love.

Throughout all of the many diverse and multi-dimensional incarnations that we, as well as our Angel character might create for ourselves and then have to pass through, we will all, at one time or another, meet up with the same reincarnated individuals we have created Karma with. If there is any unfinished or unresolved relationship, positive or negative, we will eventually have to work it out between us. Forgiveness and unconditional Love (due to seeing only God reflected everywhere as the cosmic illusion game of Light and Shadow) are always the final resolve.

In Angel's case, for example, in several of the upcoming lives, his many victims as well as his father will cross his path again. They may all end up with each other as relatives, lovers, enemies, or in a multitude of other relationships. Sons and daughters might become future mothers, fathers, lovers, or siblings of their current parents and so on. Remember, in the karmic wheel we get to play all the different roles with one another.

To really get the idea about the various steppingstones that the Spirit imagines itself to work through, in order to learn all the various self-imposed lessons, a small explanation might be beneficial as well as prudent here.

**B**efore creation existed in any shape or form and by any name, there was, is, and always will be Cosmic Consciousness. Call it Spirit, God, the Absolute True Self, or the ever-existing Awareness of Self, the ever-conscious, ever Bliss-filled Primal Being State beyond form or name or any type of manifestation. The Vedas declare it as *'Not This ... Not That!'* Creation, as we perceive it, came into being when our Eternal Cosmic Consciousness (God) "descended" or projected consciousness into matter. This created causal and astral universes until finally the physical universe came into being. Here, after eons of awakening, it manifested itself as what we generally call the Universal Consciousness. Basically, it is the omnipresent, pure reflection of God's consciousness and intelligence, which is inherent but most often hidden, within even the smallest particle in all of creation. In due time, when this Universal Consciousness descends into the physical body of man, although asleep or dormant, it becomes identified by us as the Soul; sometimes we call it the Super-consciousness. This is simply the ever-existing Awareness of Self, the ever-conscious, ever-blissful God who seems to be now individualized by the encasement of the body (ego). This incorrect identification of ego separation on this third dimensional, physical level can be called mortal or physical consciousness.

The Wise Ones, the Self-realized Saints, Sages and God-men all tell us that the Spirit, which now identifies itself as a separate soul, must climb back up the ladder of consciousness to its full awareness of eternal God Self. The real Truth is that Spirit, God, Self, or Love, has actually never left, or been separated from, its Primal Being State, but is only imagining it. Or, if you prefer, mentally conceiving, this entire creation by simply projecting a single thought, ray, burst, or point of consciousness into the void. Swami tells us that we are God, and our creation is limitless. *If you can think it, then so it can be*, even though it is just an ego illusion.

*There is only God, Love, Self, Energy, or Cosmic Consciousness forever, and nothing else really exists at all.*

So it stands to reason that the secret of happiness for all of us in God's projection, of Divine Consciousness, is to become aware of this fact and once again become God-aware, or Self-aware, once again. By Self-inquiry and constantly keeping our mind and heart in tune to this thought with every little thing that we think, feel, speak, or do, we will quickly and joyfully realize the Truth of 'Who we really are!' 'Where we all came from!' and 'Where we are all ultimately going!' Where we truly have never left!

## ***Relationships and Karma!***

**W**e are sure most of us understand the idea or cosmic principle of Karma by now. As long as we have desires and attachments to all of this momentary and forever changing creation, constructed by the five elements and senses (gross or subtle), and as long as we continue to have this wrong identification of Self, we will inevitably make Karma.

Whether we think, speak, and do good or evil, it will all create Karma if we are attached to the outcome in any way at all. As long as we identify the “I” that we think we are with body, mind, name and form, we act in the mistaken belief that we are the doer, the enjoyer of it all. Our ego thoughts, feelings, words and deeds are all actions that will automatically create reactions.

We have all sorts of different relationships. We have them with the mineral kingdom, the plant kingdom, the animal kingdom, the human kingdom, and the ethereal kingdom. But for now, let us mainly focus on the human types of relationships.

Let us state right from the beginning that ***there is only one true relationship ever - the relationship with God, our ‘True Self.’*** The rest are only momentary, learning relationships. Some are to finish off old, long-standing Karma, and others we start due to some desire and thereby create new Karma.

We first become aware of our relationships with mother and father, and often brothers and sisters. Then come relationships with extended family members, friends, school, community, workplace, lovers, husbands, wives; then, with new children, the cycle begins again.

The simple secret of all good relationships is true equality, a real inner joy of sharing everything that is appropriate to the situation, and unconditional Love without any sort of expectation. Whenever two parts are thus only giving in all ways, then there is a joy-filled, peaceful and loving relationship. This type of relationship constitutes the general idea of heaven on earth or the dawning of the ‘Golden Age.’

If we think about it in this fashion, then we can see that it is up to us whether we live in heaven or in hell. The ‘Golden Age’ is here within us all the time; all we have to do is live in it.

### THE SECRET

*Each little thing that occurs in our life  
Is simply a message from GOD,  
Telling us all, to look deep inside,  
And listen with an open heart.  
Each little breath  
Each joy and each pain,  
Is always showing us another part ... Of God’s Secret!*

*Death is our marriage  
To eternity,  
It’s a bliss-filled adventure  
With Love,  
As pure Light we’ll merge in  
Our Supreme SELF,  
We’re ONE, We’re ALL, We’re LOVE, Forever!*

*Each giant problem that seems so unfair  
To show us that we’re on the wrong track,  
Called Birth and Death,  
The mind and the Ego’s big acting scene, ... (Know) it’s a dream!*

*Is a stop sign created by Love,  
And to shake us out of this dream,  
Attachment and Fear,*

*Death is our marriage .....  
Each single moment is gone in a flash,  
Nothing on Earth stays the same,  
So, free yourself from attachment to things,  
Inner silence will show you the way.  
Power and Fame,*

*Family and Wealth,  
Will forsake you on your dying day, ... Only GOD will stay!*

*Death is our marriage .....*

*Look deep inside ... Love is the way ... We're One!*

*song from the 'Sai Blues' album*

Let us explore some other situations that might be closer to home for some of us. In a family situation, it is usually an automatic thing that everyone assumes that they know the real person. Mostly because they have lived with one another for a long time. Often, nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, in a lot of cases, these individuals just react to one another in certain patterns of behavior, and rarely communicate their real feelings and thoughts. Probably the reason for this is that a lot of us tend to be far too busy with our own little, self-made, imaginary, inner world.

Here are a few stories that we can look at that might be of some small service in dealing with our own various relationships in life.

We (Kalassu & Johnima) are often asked to share our personal experiences, perceptions, and sometimes opinions with seekers. Quite frequently this deals with some personal problem regarding relationships.

**F**or example, more than once a young man or woman approached us and asked how best to start their relationship with a partner that they had chosen to marry and keep it spiritual.

First of all, we asked, "What in all of creation is not spiritual? God is the very basis of everything, so tell us, what could there possibly be that is not basically spiritual?"

Then we went on to explain, "In Our personal understanding, which we are happy to share with you, there is always only one true relationship and that is with God, our 'True Eternal Self,' since in reality that is all there is. Therefore, in order to cut to the chase and circumvent lifetimes of confusion, **marry God first**, and place Him in your heart, above all else. That means both parties of the marriage must consciously (by absolute personal, free, unsolicited choice) state to creation that they marry God first. Then, seeing the God in one another, they can proceed with their desired union. From the outset they should also agree to be absolutely equal partners in this game of marriage and be best friends to each other during this often turbulent adventure."

Usually a desirous or uncontrolled emotional body or ego will dislike this type of priority setting, since it always wants to be first; otherwise it blows up, pouts, or in general tries to make the partner's life miserable in some way. We also point out that as long as any of us deal on the ego separation level and identify mostly with our respective egos, we will probably become disappointed with our life partners before too long. It might be about some habit or way of conduct, it might be the way they think, or even just something silly like the way they squeeze a tube of toothpaste. Egos and emotional bodies seem to have grand expectations from their partners, and the moment that these are not met, anger and frustration set in. The trick for both partners is to learn to have no expectations at all, and not to make hasty judgments. (This actually goes for all of us in general.) Instead, as we remind everyone, start to communicate, speak what you feel and think. If you just think it, then the heavy thought-waves can be interpreted incorrectly and cause more friction.

A couple of times throughout the years, a particular individual here or there didn't like our perceptions, and their frustrated egos accused us of not wanting her or him to get married to a certain partner. But that is, of course, utter nonsense, as well as none of our business. After explaining our viewpoint clearly and precisely, we simply said, "Whatever you do, marry God first in your heart!"

**H**ere is another situation that crops up frequently. A man or woman have lived with the other partner for a number of years, and by now they just tolerate the other. Whether it is out of habit, fear, complacency, or even laziness, it is a pretty miserable situation. No one is happy and no one really speaks about it. Basically no one is honest. They each live their separate little lives passing each other in the night.

One of our lady friends asked, “I just don’t know what to do. My husband still smokes and drinks. I can’t stand it anymore. Basically, he just comes home after work and wants to eat, watch T.V., and go to bed. And the weekends are so frustrating, ‘cause he just hangs around the house watching sports. I’ve tried to talk to him, but it’s been like this for a long time. We don’t have anything in common anymore; there is no more romance in our life. He is coming up for retirement soon, and then he will be around all the time. What am I going to do? I’ll go crazy. He makes fun of Swami and thinks I am crazy because I love Baba so much. What can I do?”

We looked at her sad face and answered, “What do you do now when your husband is home? Do you spend any time together?”

“Oh sure, I eat with him, and sometimes I’ll watch a program with him, but most of the time I just go to my room, lock the door and pray to Baba or cry,” she answered honestly.

“Basically you are running away, right? Well, that is never going to work for anyone. Be a little creative. There are lots of things that you can do,” we said smilingly. “For example, what do you do now when your husband is gone or at work?”

“I clean the house, cook, go shopping and things like that, why?” was the lady’s reply.

“Well, instead of just cleaning the house, sing some bhajans, or put on a tape with Swami singing bhajans or the Gayatri mantra while you are doing it. That will immediately change the vibrations in the entire house and clear up any dark thoughts that might linger around. When you prepare the food, be a little devious and put a pinch of vibhuti in the food (Divine seasoning), or use the Sai Sanjeevini healing cards and make a special formula with water and add it to everything that your husband drinks—coffee, soda, tea, beer, or whatever he asks you for. In that way, you charge the house, the food, the drinks and the very atmosphere with joy, healing, and love vibrations. This will definitely have an effect on anyone who will share the place and the food. In this way, you can charge the atmosphere with higher vibrations and they will gradually have the desired effect. So stop acting so much like the ‘poor me’ victim and act like the God that you are. When you get home today, go to work!” was our straight explanation.

Let us take a look at relationships in a general sense. In our perception there are three basic types. One is where both partners are taking from the relationship. This is your proverbial one night stand, or an extremely short-lived arrangement where each partner simply tolerates the other for what he or she wants out of the relationship. This can include business, family, or any other type of relationship.

The second type is a give and take relationship, where the partners take turns in giving to, and taking from, the other. This is the most common type that we can see everywhere in the world of today. This is the usual Karma type of relationship. This type will usually last reasonably long if the give and take stays fairly evenly divided. As soon as one of the partners starts to continuously take more than he or she gives to the relationship, war breaks out. This can be expressed as physical, emotional, or some type of mental abuse. The relationship becomes a series of arguments and fights, and in general a self-made living hell. Now let us remind you, if one of the partners is timid and basically sweet and patient, this type of one-sided relationship (where one takes and the other gives) may even last a lifetime. But in general, we have found that sooner or later the one giving is going to get tired of the abuse.

The third type is the kind of relationship where both partners are working together by constantly giving. This type of relationship is like living in the 'Golden Age.' This kind of sharing is quite rare in this Kali Yuga, but in our opinion the only worthwhile relationship to have, whether we refer to inner, personal or worldly relationships, and any other kind. The constant giving by each partner (without any desire or expectations of any return) to the relationship will create abundance in all things, a virtual heaven on earth if you like. So let us all endeavor to cultivate this third type of divine relationship from this moment on.

**H**ere is another typical scenario that we come across some times. A husband or a wife becomes so engrossed in the physical God, Christ or Sai form, that they neglect to remember or realize the God or Swami within their partner. They will become increasingly nervous or agitated at too much physical contact, feeling in their hearts that they want to keep all the love just for God. Their normal love-making relationship becomes weird, and sometimes extinct, due to all the hesitations, thoughts, misgivings, maybe even shame for enjoying it. The excuse is often, "Oh, I don't think we should do this right now! I think Swami wants us to be much more spiritual," or something similar.

So the remaining partner becomes frustrated, not knowing how to act anymore. Even if he or she is a real God devotee, they will not understand what has changed the other. All they will be able to conclude is that their life partner no longer cares.

Of course, the real answer to any of this is, we should see God or Swami in everyone, everywhere, all the time. Then we, who are householders in the world, will have a most wonderful gift. We will have our own personal God, Christ or Swami, in the form of our partner, to love, to hold and to share everything with, instead of having to walk the road of life alone. What a loving Divine present, don't you think?

#### ***Steppingstone practice***

When we (both the partners) truly see the Divine Self, the God, in each other and not just each others' ego personality, we become God's Light workers, raising consciousness and sharing that Love throughout all of God's creation. When we hug our partner, we are hugging all of creation. When we are sharing, we are sharing with all of creation. When we make love, we are loving all of creation. In this way, all of our other selves in this creation will benefit from our Love, Joy, Laughter and Bliss. Haven't you ever felt, for no reason at all, a sudden surge of energy, joy or that warm feeling of love all around you? Well, somebody was doing their job! We can all do this, but like all things, it takes practice.

In the end both partners will love the chosen God form more than ever, for allowing them this Divine Grace of unconditional sharing! How simple, how wonderful, how all encompassing.

#### ***Karma & Self Awareness***

Relationships usually belong to the school of Karma, which governs all action and reaction, and are the perfect tool or teacher to accomplish our self-assigned task of life lessons in duality. In the final analysis all Karma will be erased when we realize that it also is a lie, and we awake to our True Self, that Cosmic Consciousness, through selfless service and Love.

#### ***Steppingstone practice***

Here is something that all of us can do in order to find out how we are doing on our journey towards 'Self Awareness.'

Take a few minutes at night, right before you drift off to sleep, and contemplate or study each occurrence of your personal day that you have just experienced carefully. What actions have been performed by you? Why? What was the reason you thought that you had to think, speak, or do? Was the outcome ever important to you? Did you ever even think of God while performing any of them or did

you forget? Did you think that you were doing them? Did you feel responsible for the outcome and try to change it? Did you feel that you did good and that no one appreciated it? Did you behave in a manner that you really did not want to, but you thought it would get you a certain result? Did you feel that it was your duty to act in a certain manner? Did you inwardly, in your heart and mind, take credit or blame for certain actions? Did you outwardly revel in the result or shrink from it?

Well, if your answer is yes to any of them then you most likely have to deal with Karma, sooner or later. Unless God, our Omnipresent 'Self,' in Love and Grace, erases it for you, like Swami often does for us.

***“Much karma coming, but Swami will take most, and give you only what you can handle!”*** is usually what He, out of complete Divine Love and Compassion, tells us if we earn enough Grace to deserve His help.

Or maybe a better way to say this is: If we yell loud enough and with pure love in our hearts yearn for, or desire, only God, Christ, Sai, Allah, Jehovah, Mother Mary, Buddha, Divine Mother (or whatever name we choose) and truly nothing else, God's Grace will shine on us, and He will guide us quickly to Him in the fastest possible way.

### ***Chakras***

Yoga teaches us that the dwelling place of the individualized soul, of man's life force and his Divine consciousness principle, is in the three subtle spiritual centers of the brain.

The first is the crown chakra, or as it is often called the thousand peddled lotus at the top of the cerebrum, the seat of our Cosmic Consciousness.

The second is the point between the eyebrows, often called the third eye, also known as the seat of Universal consciousness. ***“... let thine eye be single ...”***

The third center is approximately in line with the medulla oblongata (which is at the base of the skull), which is connected by electro-magnetic polarity to the eyebrow or third eye center. This is known as the seat of Super-consciousness.

Remember, all of these chakras or centers are not really directly located on the physical body as described. They are the approximate counterparts, actual swirling spiral energy centers, which are part of our etheric body, the duplicate energy body of our physical form. From this point on, if we descend down to the lower chakras, and therefore into body consciousness, we become more identified with the senses, and more deluded into this false idea of ego separation.

From the three highest centers of spiritual perception, all life force essence and the awareness of Self-consciousness flow down through the energy centers, or on the physical plane through the spine, passing through the five astral spinal centers, and they in turn branch outward into our physical and sensory organs of life, which give us our sensory perceptions, and allow all of our physical, mental, and emotional actions through them.

To regain our bliss-full realization of our Eternal Oneness with God, the soul of man must retrace its initial downward course, by once again ascending by the sacred spinal route to its home in the higher cerebral centers of Divine Awareness. This is also known as the rising of the 'Kundalini Energy' which lies dormant at the base of the spine until it is aroused and rises to the higher chakras. This is accomplished quite naturally by our normal spiritual unfolding, or we can aid this process by living in selfless Love and quiet Service, with complete sharing, out of the inner knowledge of perfect equality and oneness, with true inner balance, calm evenness or equal-mindedness.



God or Divine Love must occupy the first place in our heart. Remember, wherever our mind is, and whatever occupies the seat of our heart, that is where we will spend our time, energy, and our life.

### ***Steppingstone practice***

*At night we could pray and say, "Lord, I care not on whatever imaginary level in creation I may find my consciousness momentarily existing, but please grant me the boon of complete frontal awareness of Thee in my heart & mind forever. Don't hide from me anymore, through the law of Karma. Reveal Thyself to me, oh Lord of Creation, my Beloved Kesava, and forever fill my heart with Love! ... and so it is! Om Sai Ram! Sohum! Amen!"*

### ***Thoughts***

Ignorance, delusion, separateness and ego, those are the 'Satan' which binds, as well as blinds, us to the consequences of all actions, good or evil. It causes us to err in our ways, and thus brings pain and suffering to us, in order to learn from both sides of the experience.

The illusion of the power of thought, for good or ill, originates from the thought essence of our universal Self. In manifesting creation, God first projects it as a thought pattern, the finest form of creative vibration, which condenses into forms of causal and astral light and then into grosser atomic structures.

Unfortunately, as long as we seem to have attachments and unfulfilled desires, our thoughts will create new wishful futures. New rounds or cycles of births and deaths, ***new self made Karma!*** This will continue until we realize and understand the creative nature of our thoughts. It is all a picture show of constantly rearranging molecules and atoms, a dance of Light and Love, a cosmic movie, a Divine soap opera.

Here is something that we can all do. A good way to be of real service is to live in the ***NOW, in the moment***, not off in your mind or thoughts of some imagined future or some unchangeable past. If we are fully aware of each moment as it arises, then we will also notice that there is always ample opportunity to be of quiet, real service without having to go out and look for it.

### ***Steppingstone practice***

Simply stay focused in the moment that is at hand, and whatever crosses your awareness, or whatever you become conscious of and you think could use a little help, like: ... seeing a frightened or lonely homeless person, or a drunk in the gutter, maybe a desperately poor, lost, starving runaway, or some vicious, mindless gang members and drug dealers, or some desperate unhappy family situation, an angry or grumpy boss, or an ailing person or animal, take a moment and mentally, or if the situation is right, physically, share or send some kind and loving energy.

For example, you could consciously send out loving thoughts and in your mind say, *"I hereby consciously activate the universal God part of us, in that person or situation, to do what is best, and to be of service to its full Divine potential and whatever is best. ...and so it is! Om Sai Ram! Sohum! Amen!"*

That would be one simple way to be of service. True service is automatic and spontaneous and arises from Love. Remember, your thoughts are God's thoughts and they are all powerful.

The entire universe dwells within each and every one of us! Our thoughts are a microscopic borrowing from God's thought power, and so have the ability, even when undeveloped, to significantly affect our own health, happiness, success or failure, and, when strongly reinforced by similar thoughts of others, they have the ability to change the world in which we live.

Let us all just stop this old habit of believing that our self-created dreams of life are real. Focus solely on the Truth, and know that we have always been. Live fully aware in the experience before us and live in Love!

***God, our Divine Self, is the only True, Permanent, Eternal Reality!***

## *Chapter Two*

Some of our higher evolved, more conscious selves, whose task it is to assist some of our newly incarnated Spirit parts, were right there on the other dimensional level, to help Angel Child design the upcoming new series of future births. Since Angel's consciousness was not yet awake enough to comprehend all the various choices and methods at this early stage of Spirit awakening, these loving Spirit helpers and guides gave the help required in the selection of all the new bodies and the best setup for future life lessons.

To prepare Angel for the next round of incarnations, it was all explained meticulously, and the past incarnations were shown to Angel in the mental 'Hall of (or Akashic) Records' which records absolutely everything that transpires in perfect detail, even down to the true impulse and intent. Think of it as our own personal, biographical video library, the consciousness part of us that records everything.

All these early rounds of incarnations still dealt with the first awakening and the learning of how to deal with lust, depravity, anger, and hate on the physical third dimensional plane.

Angel was born as a male in another tribal situation, and soon became addicted to all of his lower impulses once again. This time, he literally grew into an obese mountain of a man, made up of flabby flesh and fat. He was a slave trader by circumstance and finally by choice. Gluttony and total indulgence in the senses marked Angel's entire life-span. This particular life ended before Angel was thirty years old.

Angel was reborn almost instantly. This next birth was in a female body, born and abandoned in the first year of life. She barely survived all the hardships. It was basic existence at a level that was no more than any animal trying to survive any way possible. At the tender age of thirteen, Angel was raped and killed for a mouthful of stolen food. Angel's ravaged dead body was left for the wild animals to feed on.

Another female birth followed on the heel of the last one. This time, Angel was born into a dark-skinned tribal family, somewhere in the region we now call Arabia. Angel died painfully while giving birth along with her baby at the age of eighteen.

It was in one of the next lives that Angel's sleepy Spirit Consciousness began to wake in a visible way. This time, Angel was born as a proud chieftain's daughter in a village of coastal people who lived on the sandy beaches of what we now call Tibet. (Before the last big land changes in the world, the rugged mountainous region of Tibet was actually at sea level - flat land.) Angel grew up to be a beautiful young woman with long flowing dark hair.

One day, Angel's father called her to his side and informed her that it was now time for her to choose a husband from amongst all of the most eligible young males in the entire village. It really was quite an honor, since most young girls never had a choice in this matter. It was only due to the fact that Angel's father had doted on her all his life in a special way, which gave her great self confidence and self esteem, and ultimately resulted in the fact that she had a mind of her own, and she let her father know this in no uncertain terms.

At first, her father was furious when she exhibited this kind of strong, independent behavior, but deep inside of himself he had to admit that it pleased him to see his beautiful daughter grow in this direction. He reasoned within himself that in this way no one would be able to abuse her or enslave her into

hellish servitude, which often happened in those days. But he was dead wrong. Within the week, raiders from the sea looted the village and killed everyone except the young girls. They took these young maidens back to their village and enslaved them. They were treated even worse than the wild dogs which always hung in packs around the village perimeter.

Angel, a household slave, was passed around the village for years on end. She was constantly tormented in one way or another, and often beaten without mercy. Angel, though on the verge of death many times, never died in all the many years of inhumane slavery. She gave birth to several children who were sold or given away. By the time Angel reached the ripe old age of twenty-seven she gave birth for the last time. The little baby girl was left with Angel to glean the fields and beaches in order to serve her village masters.

It happened that within the next three years half the village died from a plague and eatable food became most scarce. In order for her and her child to survive, Angel was reduced to begging for the small scraps of leftover rotten fish from her master's table. Her latest master finally gave her an ultimatum.

"There is not enough food anymore to feed both of you. Only one of you can live, so kill the child or die," was her master's devastating command.

At that very moment as Angel looked down at the helpless child in her arms, the ever-present small spark of Divine love awakened some more and burst into a tiny flame in the often shadowed recesses of Angel's heart. Angel had suffered and could now identify with the suffering that death by starvation would cause for the little child. She handed her daughter over to the master's wife and without a word or another look backwards she walked into the night. Angel walked aimlessly along the shore of the gray-green ocean where, a few days later, she fainted and consequently drowned.

***I***t was a true, heartfelt sacrifice for another. Her leaving the village, was her first fully conscious physical act of compassion and selfless love.

The Spirit helpers on the other side gently ministered to Angel's Spirit Self and, after a long rest period, showed Angel Child the accomplishment of the past few lifetimes.

Angel's Spirit Self was barely conscious. So only a few distorted, incoherent flashes of earth experiences were recollected in dreamlike fuzziness. But after witnessing everything again in the "Hall of Records," a feeling of accomplishment flooded Angel's consciousness. After all, a lot of Karma had been repaid at once, and finally the awakening Spirit exhibited the first visible sign of love, compassion, and the humble beginning of an actual conscience, the inner voice of our true eternal 'Spirit Self' or God.

Angel's Spirit was lovingly guided to take a long rest. Afterwards, Angel was sent to learn on different dimensions and levels (lokas), for one complete cycle of Yugas (ages, like an iron or bronze age) which takes about 24,000 earth years. In this way one can learn by different means besides pain and suffering.

## ***About beating our self up!***

***L***ooking at Angel's dreadful experiences, we might wonder, WHY? For heavens sake, why? Why do we put ourselves through all of that? Why do we beat ourselves up in the most horrendous ways?

Well, first of all let us all remember that it is all only a momentary experience for our eternal Spirit Self. It is only an experience like our night dreams, which instantly vanish and lose their reality upon waking up. To the Spirit all incarnations feel just like that. But the reason for it all is that our Spirit

Self can thus become fully aware of itself on this dense physical dimension. It is God's cosmic game or Divine Maya (Illusion) play, or maybe a better way of stating it, the climbing or awakening process of our eternal Spirit Self, who voluntarily subjected itself to the deep sleep of ignorance, by descending down into the densest form of physical matter. But let us remember in reality nothing at all is really happening. Besides, what do a few thousand momentary dreams of time and space and incarnations matter in eternity? It is always only the simple projection of a point of consciousness, or a thought of God, our '*Eternal Self*' which simply ***IS FOREVER!***

***L***et us look at a present day experience that happened just a while ago, dealing with this subject of beating our self up. Here we go!

"You are the embodiment of Love itself, you are God!" we gently reminded our new friend L.J..

"Oh Johnima and Kalassu, you don't know how bad I really am. My thoughts are so dark sometimes, so vile, you guys just don't know!" was L.J.'s sad reply that seemed to erupt from deep inside.

"No, No, No!" We both laughingly protested almost in unison, "... they are only steppingstones. First of all you have to keep reminding yourself constantly that we are not this body, this mind, these thoughts and these feelings."

"Always remember we are that One Eternal Consciousness, that Awareness behind everything. We talked about this already, remember?" we elaborated some more. "That Awareness part of us that has always been, is present now, and will always be aware of itself. It simply is! We are this Primal Being state (Sat), this Consciousness, Awareness, or knowing state (Chit), this Happiness, Joy or Bliss state, (Ananda). Bliss is that perfect equanimity, that perfect evenness and inner balance, which arises from the knowledge of knowing who we really are. It rises up like a wave from the ocean, from within our eternal Self. It is an all pervading Consciousness, a deep seated Awareness of being, that is always present. It is the only unchanging and eternally constant part of each of us, it is our True GOD Self."

With a deep sigh L.J. looked at both of us and dejectedly nodded her head. We both realized that to her these were simply nice words. The personal experience was lacking.

"These are all just words to you, aren't they?" we said thoughtfully.

"Yes," was the quiet reply.

"So, let us experience it, right now, right here, it is easy. Swami showed us this simple way of how to gain a personal experience of our Being state, this Awareness or Knowing state, this Bliss or Joy state. Just close your eyes for a moment," we quickly responded.

L.J. looked at us with a slight frown and a forlorn grin, not quite sure if we were kidding or not.

"Go ahead close your eyes for a moment," we repeated persuasively.

"Now, tell us, what do you see? Darkness? Some color pattern? Light? What?" was the question as we perceived L.J. reflecting inwardly with closed eyes.

"Nothing, I see nothing," was the quiet reply.

"Is this nothing you see simply darkness?" we questioned further.

"Yeah, I guess so."

“So, who, or which part of you is aware of, seeing, or perceiving this darkness? Your eyes are closed, so who or what is seeing?” we asked quietly.

“I don’t know...” then after a momentary pause, “I guess it’s my mind,” was the thoughtful reply.

“All right, what do you understand the mind to be?” was our soft question.

L.J. didn’t answer, so we continued, “That part we call our mind is basically nothing more than all of our constant and various interwoven thoughts and projected desires, that we tend to have. Swami explains that the mind is like a piece of woven cloth. All the strands of cotton (thoughts & desires) that crisscross each other give the appearance of the solid cloth. (The mind in other words.) Pull all the cotton strand (thoughts, desires) out of their pattern, and ‘Voila,’ no more cloth (mind). So, the idea of mind is really an illusion in a way, right? Besides, did you have any thoughts when you perceived the darkness?”

“... No ... I didn’t! ... I guess, it must be some other part of me that is aware of this darkness,” L.J. replied thoughtfully.

“Exactly! Some part of you was absolutely aware that there was darkness. That part that was aware is always aware of everything that goes on. Focus on that awareness part. Hold on to it by focusing your thinking ability on this awareness part. This is the consciousness part, the Awareness principle within us, and you just experienced it. Actually, all of us are always experiencing it, we just don’t seem to pay any attention to it, that’s all. If you watch closely, you will notice that this inner awareness never changes,” we interjected to clarify.

“This consciousness is always a constant part of you, L.J., no matter what sort of thoughts, feelings, or experiences arise,” we concluded the explanation.

“Mmmm, ....” was the only response. Then, after a slight pause, “Okay, I can understand that. So, it is that simple? This Awareness, this knowing, is the same part that just saw the darkness. Now that I think about it from a different viewpoint, I can see that it has always been present and aware throughout my entire life. But how does all this help me in becoming happy?” L.J. mused.

“What do you mean becoming happy? Your very nature, the nature of your ever-present Self-awareness is Bliss, Joy, Happiness itself. Just choose to focus on that part of yourself. Choose to be happy! Stop listening to those negative thoughts and feelings when they arise and focus on that calm always aware part within yourself,” we replied pointing L.J. once more to the inner Self.

“Choose, you mean choose because I have free will and all that stuff, right? Tell me, in your understanding what is free will all about?” L.J. frowned.

Well, let us take a closer look at the idea. ‘Free Will’ ... in general parlance this has the meaning of being able to think, speak, and do what we want or like, to choose as we see fit. So, if we look from the ego perception of being Bob or Betty so and so, then this might seem correct that we say we have free will. We definitely have a choice about everything that comes from, or better maybe projects, from our body and mind, even if sometimes we are ruled by compulsions. But if we really contemplate the idea, it quickly becomes apparent (if we deal on the level of the big picture, that all is God) that the idea of ‘Free Will’ is a myth. If even the falling of the smallest leaf and the growing of the tiniest blade of grass is ordained and guided by God (who is the basis of everything to begin with) then there is only God’s Will. That, of course has to be classified (which is ludicrous in the first place) as absolute Freedom. So, take your pick, and use the words ‘Free Will’ in whatever context and whatever you wish to convey,” we answered.

“So how do I choose to be happy then? I really don’t feel like it is a choice at all, I mean how is that my choice?” L.J. persisted.

“As long as you are looking outside of yourself, L.J., for any person, situation, or object to make you happy, you will be disappointed sooner or later. The happiness you seek has forever been within you. Stay calm, peaceful, and choose to be the ‘Watcher’ of your body, mind, and the world around you, and then choose to be happy just because it feels right and you like it. Let the rest of this outer illusion be what it may, know it is only a temporary experience, either pleasurable or painful, and don’t make it so important. The more importance we give to the world and our senses, the more we will feel that we have no choice. The truth is that we have a choice about everything that crosses our Awareness each moment; we just have to pay attention to it,” we endeavored to explain.

“That is a new perception for me. It sounds reasonable; I guess I could choose to be happy instead of waiting for something or someone to make me happy, right?” L.J. nodded

“Yes, it is the same for all of us, real happiness, which is really selfless Love, is the very nature of the Oneness that we all are. But again, this happiness is gained only by constant practice of remembering the Truth,” we softly added.

“Swami always points out this basic Truth to us, this Oneness. But I suppose most of us don’t really think about it, because it seems too abstract. Swami sometimes uses the analogy of the electric current. The current is God or the basis, and all the different electric appliances and different wattage light bulbs represent the creation of form and name. The refrigerator thinks it is better than the toaster, and a seventy-five watt bulb thinks it is better than a sixty watt bulb. But, without the electric current, the underlying Oneness, nothing works at all! The very idea that we are all basically ONE doesn’t seem physically realistic somehow, or emotionally digestible for most of us! But if we look at it from an awareness or energy point of view it makes some sense, doesn’t it?” we inquired.

“I guess so, but this whole Oneness stuff is weird to me. I mean I can concede the idea, that maybe we all have an awareness of some kind, but how in the world does that make me one with a tree, or a car, or a drunkard in the street? It makes me sort of nervous to think that way,” L.J. remarked candidly.

“That’s because you are still identifying your ‘True Self’ with your body and your mind. It is only some silly fear that the ego tries to plant in the mind.” We both smiled and added, “It tries to make us think that if we are truly all one, then when we merge, we will no longer exist as our self. It tries to make us believe that we will lose everything that makes us what we are, or what we think we are. Isn’t that what you really feel deep down?”

“Yes, that is exactly how I feel every time I think about Oneness or merging into God, I’m just afraid of becoming nothing.” L.J. sighed deeply.

We both chuckled at that remark, because we had encountered these same feelings often from other spiritual seekers. The truth is that we lose nothing at all, but gain the awareness of everything and expand into the infinite. We don’t become nothing, *we become EVERYTHING!*

We will be aware of all of creation as our Self. This expanding awareness will become a complete and personal experience, and the absolute joy that is inherent in this experience will soon reflect itself as perfect evenness, as total bliss.

But usually until this experience unfolds for each of us, we are often besieged by worry, doubt, and fear, which is the ego’s ploy to keep us separate from our ‘True Self,’ because that is the only way it can exist. Our identification with this little ego personality will have to vanish, to be crushed, to be crossed out, like brother Jesus did on the cross for all of us to witness. Then instead of staying imprisoned by this tiny, selfish, greedy ego, we will gain the infinite universal individuality of our complete SELF, of LOVE!. Our expanding consciousness will simply shatter that miserable little prison of ego

identification, and expands us into our Eternal ONENESS. Then our life will become the living example of our personal knowledge of this truth.

“Dear embodiment of Love, see the big lie that has kept you apart from that pure Love that you truly are, from God, your own ‘True Self,’ for so many, many lifetimes. Just get mad at this crafty little ego, for even allowing the very idea of separation to exist. How many more lifetimes will you allow this ego to keep you from your true nature of Love!” we emphasized.

“I don’t know, I guess I just have never had that kind of an experience, so, how do I get it?” L.J. asked pointedly.

“You must put forth the effort to get ready, to lay the foundation so to speak, in order to have this experience.” we replied. “Listen to your heart and let the ‘Inner Swami,’ or the flow from the heart as conscience, guide every single thought, word, and deed, even every breath that you take completely. Or just dedicate whatever you think, feel, speak, or do, completely to God, or Swami, or your Atma Self. Do the best you know how in each given circumstance, and give up any attachment you might have to the outcome, or result, of anything that happens. That is one way to practice and lay the foundation for your personal experience of connected Oneness.”

“All the various Saints, Sages, Self-Realized or Liberated parts of us, have all gone through this same school of hard knocks, of desire, attachment, guilt, shame, worry, greed, lust, anger, fear, hate, jealousy etc., called learning experiences. How do you suppose they can be so infinitely patient, so understanding, so all knowing, so loving and blissful? They have done it all, experienced all the stepping-stones, until one day they gained their personal experience of Oneness and saw the flaw of this illusion, the impermanence. So, let us stop beating our self up all the time for having to learn these hard lessons or feeling guilty about them; it is all only growth,” we added.

L.J. nodded her head and quietly contemplated everything. Soon, a slow smile started to form around her eyes and mouth, as she visibly relaxed. It seemed as though a heavy burden had been lifted off her shoulders as she joked, “Now that makes sense, I guess if Saints and Sages had to walk through all this messy stuff too, I’m in good company, right?” All three of us laughed and then we said, “Swami tells us exactly how to do it. He sums it up in a couple of short phrases.”

**LOVE ALL, SERVE ALL!**  
**HELPEVER, HURT NEVER!**  
*Baba*

**D**ear reader, right here might be a good place to ask you to excuse us for some of our repetitious, and sometimes slightly rephrased, statements throughout the different chapters. We realize that some of us might find this annoying or even redundant. The reason behind it is to help us make our subconscious aware of these statements. As you might know, Swami has taught us that our subconscious does not pay attention to things for the first two or three times when they are mentioned. Only when it is repeated enough times will it pay attention and work on assimilating it. So **repeat any affirmation or catch statement at least three times**. Then it can really be used to affect a change in our life.

Remember, to change our old habits of thoughts, words and deeds, we must **employ strong un-bending intent**. A first priority placement, or desire if you like, is required in the beginning, which makes knowing God, or our Self, or unconditional Love, the only real focus in our life. Then everything that takes us away from our quest we can simply and instantly discard, and that which takes us towards our goal will be sensible to partake in.



CHILDREN OF LOVE

*Help ever --- Hurt never,  
Yes, that is the way  
For all God's children to live.*

*Help ever --- Hurt never,  
Let come what may,  
Our nature's to love and to give (cause)*

*God is Love, And Love is God,  
We are His Children,  
Children of Love.*

*Love all --- Serve all,  
As Swami would say  
Let's be the example like Him!*

*Love all --- Serve all,  
Let each heart portray  
The silence that guides from within (know)*

*God is Love .....*

*Help ever --- Hurt never,  
True Love is the way,  
To conquer our ego and mind*

*Love all --- Serve all,  
There's no more to say,  
Our True SELF we'll find today  
song from the 'Sai Blues' album*

## *Chapter Three*

Once again the Spirit helpers on the other level were there to advise and help Angel design the next set of incarnations that were to follow on earth. Angel's Spirit Self, even though still in somewhat of a groggy and sleepy state, was actually able to have some sort of input in the whole procedure this time. This was due to Angel's other dimensional learning experiences.

It was decided that in this round of births and deaths Angel would also start to address experiences with greed, self-satisfaction, pride and vanity, more selflessness, some sacrifice, and love. The new setup was projected for a large number of successive incarnations depending, of course, on the various choices that would be made throughout each life and the intended corresponding lessons.

One of these incarnations landed Angel into the family of a poor fisherman who lived on the shores of what we now call Pakistan. Once more a boy child, Angel was born with a slight handicap. His left leg was three inches shorter than the right one. When he learned to walk, he had a lopsided funny gait, and a crooked hip and spine. This naturally was made fun of by other children in his village, but his mother and father loved him dearly and that made up for it. Angel had a deep-seated fear of the ocean for some unknown reason. But we, as the 'Watcher,' know that it was just a karmic residual memory from a previous death trauma, the incarnation when Angel drowned in the ocean, that triggered this subconscious fear.

As the years rolled by, Angel started to help his father on some of the shorter fishing trips, and soon overcame that dark fear of the ocean. By the time he was sixteen years old, he was well known as being the best net mender up and down the coast. This made his parents and his two sisters very proud, and the other village people treated him with the respect that was deserving of his handiwork. It was the first time that Angel's sleepy Spirit felt self-satisfaction in a physical life. It was also the first time that he worked creatively with his hands to earn a livelihood.

By the time he reached the age of twenty, his entire family died from some sort of pestilence, along with a third of the entire village population. Angel felt deep sadness since their entire family had been very kind and loving to one another. As strange as it seemed, it was mostly due to his physical handicap that Angel was able to overcome much of the anger that surged up from time to time. The handicap had taught him early on how to deal with many of life's diverse problems.

He took over his father's fishing boat, mended the nets for whoever needed his services, and became a respected businessman. He also got married within the next three years to one of the widows that had been left behind by the plague. His life was simple, and Angel's heart was starting to open to the fine and subtle vibrations of love. All of his various choices were made more or less correctly this lifetime as he started to become more and more aware of the love force that underlies all of creation.

When he died in his thirty-seventh year from a broken blood vessel in his head, he had lived his first life without any real violence. As he crossed over to the other dimension, his transition was helped by his Spirit guides. After a short rest period, he was greeted with joyous smiles and congratulations for a job well done.

A number of incarnations later, Angel was born in the ancient time of what we now call India, where he grew up as the son of a rich goldsmith. Angel had a keen eye and learned his father's craft quickly. By the time he was fourteen years old, he was a better goldsmith than his father. His creativity

was amazing, which caused his father to grow inwardly jealous. His mother had died at childbirth, so now with his father distancing himself emotionally from Angel, the boy found himself more or less alone.

His father started to drink and verbally abuse Angel, who then became very haughty. Angel's anger, which soon turned into hatred, made both of their lives miserable. When his father passed away, Angel was only nineteen years old, but he was already a very rich and conceited person. At age twenty-two he was appointed as the court's head goldsmith by the reigning Maharaja. Angel's ego was soon blown out of all proportions, and greed reared its ugly head in the most hideous fashion. The more fame and fortune Angel received through his delicate craft, the larger his pride grew. His vanity, which as you know is one of the most beloved children of the ego, had no bounds, since the Maharaja often visited Angel's extravagant and debauched parties. Lust and greed seemed to work together like hand and glove, and before long, Angel was enslaved without any respite or reprieve. His road of life was broad and lusty, paved with a mountain of gold and unbridled arrogance and immense pride.

Twenty years later, when the kingdom of the Maharaja was attacked and conquered by another ruler, Angel was executed, along with all of the other court ministers.

Angel's next few incarnations were relatively uneventful, with a lot of the same themes repeated: Greed, lust, self-satisfaction, anger and fear, along with more steady unfolding of the heart with occasional feelings of real selfless love and compassion for others. It seemed however that pride, anger, and vanity were always reoccurring to different degrees throughout each of the incarnations.

Angel's life experiences and lessons ranged from being a child prostitute in the Orient who died at the tender age of fourteen, to being a fierce redheaded Viking type king who died in battle; from a gentle, kind-hearted cowherd maiden who married an old hermit recluse, to a famous courtesan whose lecherous emperor had her killed out of jealous rage.

It was a much later incarnation which marked another milestone in Angel's Spirit awakening. Angel was born in the place we now call Turkey. He was an extremely large baby for that time. His mother was widowed by the time Angel was three years old. His father had been a soldier and died in a war. By the time Angel was ten years old, he was well known for his wrestling ability amongst all the children of the city in which he lived. His mother was a servant in the house of Has, a harsh old retired army commander. The commander began to take notice of Angel's fighting aptitude, and closely supervised his soon expanded training in the various arts of warfare. The commander died by the time Angel was sixteen years old, but by then he was a seasoned warrior with the sword and spear. Angel was a master horseman, and soon the king became aware of this large, fierce, young warrior, and made him a captain of his palace guard.

Within the next seven years, Angel was promoted to head commander of the king's army. Jealousy from the older, more seasoned veteran commanders of the king's court was Angel's constant battle in the palace. Many attempts were made on his life, but somehow they all failed. He had wealth, fame, self-confidence, and self-satisfaction, which were evident in his behavior. The king trusted him explicitly and made no secret of that fact. This, of course, caused more jealousy and hatred towards Angel. He had a beautiful wife, whom he loved in a warrior's fashion, but he had no children because his wife was barren. This caused them both a lot of pain, but in the end they accepted it graciously without hurting one another too much emotionally.

Then a great war ensued. Angel was severely wounded in the first great battle in the valley of the fox, on the western side of the border. It happened in a death duel with the invading king's son, who was also a great warrior and the commander of the invaders. Their personal battle lasted for three days and nights, from spears, to swords, to knives, to hand to hand combat. In the end, one of the prince's personal bodyguards entered the fray at the moment when Angel had overpowered the prince and was about to deliver his death blow. The bodyguard's sword blow caught Angel unawares from behind and pierced his back and chest, saving the prince's life. Miraculously, no vital organs were destroyed, so within the next

three months, Angel recuperated under the tender care of his wife and the close attention of the king's personal physician.

The war raged on. Thousands died on the blood-soaked battlefield. The king was worried, and often visited Angel's bedside to confer about the war strategies. One night Angel had a dream. He dreamt that he and the invading prince were dining together under a flag of truce. They were discussing the war and the way in which Angel had been wounded. They ended up with a mutual agreement on how to end the war.

The agreement was to fight one single combat between themselves, and the winner would win the entire war. In this way the useless bloodshed would be halted and both kings would save face. The loser would concede the border territory, over which the war had broken out initially, to the winner, along with a tribute of one ton of gold and silver.

When Angel awoke from this vivid dream, he felt a great excitement in his heart and immediately sent for the king. He explained the dream and asked the king's permission to actualize it in some way. The king was silent for a long while. At last he looked long and hard at Angel and said, "I don't know if it will work, but I will send an emissary today to see if we can arrange it, my friend."

As the king turned to leave, he stopped in mid-turn, looked over his shoulder, and added, "I trust you, but are you sure you are well enough to fight?"

"I will be in another week, my Lord," was Angel's smiling reply.

It came about just as in Angel's dream, he and the prince met and talked. The prince had imprisoned his bodyguard who had attacked Angel from behind because it was against their fighting code. He then waited for the time when they would meet once again. He was a great and honorable warrior and had the guard brought before Angel to determine his punishment for the offense. Angel was pleased with the prince's character and forgave the trespass of the bodyguard, by calling it loyalty and duty on the guard's part, even if it was against the fighting code. The eyes of the prince now showed a certain warmth along with respect for this brave and compassionate warrior before him. There seemed to be some kind of deep connection between them. They both felt it, but did not voice it. Though eager to resume their earlier interrupted duel, they agreed to allow another week to pass before the actual fight. This week would give Angel plenty of time to heal and also allow time for both kings to attend.

The great day flickered into life with a glorious sunrise over the misty valley. Both armies flanked the valley in order to behold this grand spectacle. Both kings also attended with their families. It all appeared to be more of a festive occasion than a battle to the death. Many wagers were made on the outcome, even though the mood was pensive, cautious, and distrustful.

Both warriors paid homage to their respective monarchs, then lustily joined in mortal combat. As before, the duel lasted into the third day. Each night at sunset they would halt their fight and resume it again at sunrise.

About half an hour before the third sunset, it appeared that the 'Gods of War' favored Angel. Both warriors were bleeding from several wounds, and a river of sweat was pouring from their weary bodies. Their grim faces glowed with a light all their own. It was truly a battle that was enjoyed by the Gods in heaven.

The two titans had been trading steady skillful sword blows for the last three hours without the slightest break, when suddenly the prince stumbled backwards and fell to his knees. At that precise moment, Angel struck a Herculean blow at the prince from above. The prince was barely able to counter it, but the force of impact shattered his sword. A great shout arose from the onlookers as they jumped to

their feet almost as one body. This was the moment of truth, victory for one, defeat and death for the other.

Angel raised his sword high above his head for the final blow. A hushed silence fell like a blanket over the entire valley. It seemed as though even nature held its breath in anticipation of the next moment. Angel's eyes met those of the prince, who looked at him with frustrated rage, pride, and anxiety mixed with just a hint of fear. The taunting smile of the defeated prince flashed strong white teeth at Angel as he spat out the words, "Finish it!" between gasps of ragged breaths.

For a moment all hearts skipped a beat, all breathing stopped, even the cool northern night wind ceased, as Angel's sword descended towards the head of the prince. In Angel's heart that silent inner voice of love and conscience cried "NO!" but his sword arm was already in its downward motion. In the blink of an eye Angel twisted his body just enough to avoid the prince, who was bracing himself for the death blow.

At the same time, the most tortured heartfelt cry from his solar plexus escaped Angel's lips, as he sank down beside the prince. Then with a most spectacular thrust, he stuck his sword into the hard rocky ground and with a sharp twist broke it in half.

Both sides stood enraptured by the spectacle, and the Gods rained down flowers on the heads of the gallant warriors. Never had the kings and armies seen such a fight and such honor on the field of battle. A great shout of joy broke out on both sides, as many rushed towards the kneeling pair of valiant soldiers.

This was also the opportune moment for one of the older jealous commanders who had been impatiently waiting to assassinate Angel. He rushed forward with the king and the crowd of soldiers in the hectic frenzy that surrounded both warriors. Within minutes, he struck the fatal blow, an assassin's dagger in the back. Angel pitched forward into the arms of the stunned prince and breathed his last breath.

***I***t was a glorious achievement for Angel; he had at last been able to stop himself from killing another under the harshest of circumstances. He had been able to listen to his conscience, his inner voice, and follow it, without concerning himself with anyone else and what they might want or expect of him. He had sacrificed certain victory, glory and untold honors, for the sake of respect and a feeling of kinship and love for his opponent.

It was a true milestone achievement in the building of Angel's character. This further opening of the temple of his spiritual heart was breathlessly splendid to behold.

## ***The temple of our heart!***

***S***ince we are speaking about the temple of our heart, let us look at it a bit closer and share some of our personal experiences with you, that deal also with following our inner voice, and taking whatever Swami tells us personally, to pertain to us alone and most likely not for the rest of the world.

Oh, sweet embodiments of Love, dear Atmaselves, we all want to be such good children all the time. We want to do everything so absolutely perfectly. A lot of us seem to feel that Swami will be proud of us then. We all want to do it right this time, no matter what. We, Atma (playing as Johnima & Kallassu), have often talked about this very same subject.

Usually the impulse that prompts these feelings is absolutely right, and very beautiful we might add, but some parts of us do seem to get carried away with this idea. We are sure that all of you, at one

time or another, have run across someone who had just returned from Swami's physical presence and then proceeded to tell everyone in the whole world how to live their lives, and what is right and what is wrong to do. (Isn't the ego sneaky!) It often comes off like a dictate rather than sharing their personal experiences. Of course most of us understand that this comes from a deep-rooted feeling of wanting to be so very perfect in the eyes of God.

In itself, this can be seen as rather sweet and amusing, but when it starts taking on the form of demands and dictatorship, then that is where we all have to draw the line. At least each person within themselves.

Maybe we should all think a little about our own inner and outer experiences with Swami, and remember that Swami tells each one of us exactly what is correct for us, but that in no way means it has to apply to everyone else in the world in the same manner. Let us also remember that Swami will usually say, "Yes, yes, yes, ... Swami knows," to appease our worried or troubled mind and heart. So, if we interpret the 'Yes, yes, yes,' to suit our perception, we might be labeling under a false perception. We all know that we have to be absolutely specific with everything when asking Swami about anything, for Swami speaks on many levels.

**H**ere is a small story to illustrate the point we are trying to make. Swami played out this sweet Leela (Divine play) just for us. At that time we did not know why He did this, but over the years it has become painfully obvious to us, as we are sure it will be for you, dear reader.

It was at one of those times when we were once again all alone in the room with Swami. He asked, "Would you like to perform big concert for everyone tomorrow?"

We replied, "Oh yes Swami, of course, we are here only for You!"

Swami looked at us with a gleam in His eyes as He nodded His head and said, "Yes, very, very happy." After a slight pause, He continued, "... pay close attention and don't speak." Then He proceeded to send for one of the house guests. It was a nice looking older Indian lady who came scurrying into the room.

"Yes Swami, I am here what is it?" She approached Swami with folded palms.

Swami looked at us to see if we were paying close attention, and satisfied that we were hanging on every detail that transpired in front of our eyes and ears, He said to the lady, "We have big concert tomorrow, Lightstorm will sing in the hall. You stand on one side of the door and let only *Indian people* come in, yes?"

With the most serious expression on her pretty face, and a heart full of joy for being asked to be of some small service to Swami, she nodded her head emphatically and said, "Yes, Bhagavan, I will stand at the door and let only Indians enter."

Swami dismissed her with a smile and a slight wave of his right hand. But when she was just about to leave the room Swami said, "Remember, only Indians."

She turned towards us and repeated, "Yes Swami, only Indians," and then disappeared quickly behind the curtain.

Swami looked at us with that real impish, mischievous smile flirting around His lips and laughter dancing in those unfathomable eyes. Instantly, this thought flashed across our mind, "Oh boy, what is He up to now?"

He now sent for the lady's sister, who was also staying at the house at that time. Right before she entered, Swami turned to us and said softly, "Pay close attention now!"

When the lady entered we could tell that they were related, because they had similar features. She quickly came and stood in front of Swami, who told her very sweetly, "We have big concert tomorrow. Lightstorm will sing in the hall. You stand on one side of the door and only allow *Western people* inside, yes?"

"Yes Swami, I will stand by the door and let only Westerners come in," she answered without hesitation.

Swami allowed her to touch His feet and then dismissed her with another slight wave of the hand. By the time the lady reached the doorway where the curtain was Swami again said, "Remember, only Westerners."

The lady just turned her head and nodded, "Yes Swami, only Westerners," and then she was gone.

Well, what can we say, when the time for the concert arrived the next day, the two ladies stood fighting in the middle of the doorway to the hall. They were yelling about what Swami had told them, and fighting about who was allowed to come inside. Each one was absolutely convinced she was strictly carrying out Swami's explicit orders.

You can imagine the scene, can't you? Here were the two ladies fighting like cat and dog paying no attention to anything else. So, everyone who could squeeze by them did. Soon the hall was overflowing with bodies. We were watching the ladies very carefully, just as Swami had prompted us to do.

Suddenly, Swami came and walked directly up to the now silent sisters. He flashed a look in our direction to see if we were paying attention, then He sighed, "Fighting, always fighting ... why this ego fighting? Why did you not do what Swami asked?"

"But Swami, you told me only Indians are to come in!" replied the first sister almost in tears.

"...And you told me only Westerners!" said the second lady almost with a belligerent tinge to her voice.

"Yes, that is so. So, why did you not do what Swami asked each of you to do? What does it matter what Swami told someone else? If each of you would have followed what Swami said and minded your own business, Westerners would have come in on one side and Indians on the other side of the door. Everything would have been peaceful and orderly, yes?" Swami said with a playful scowl on His beautiful face. "Now kiss and make up, and remember when Swami tells you something it is for you alone, you follow that and never mind anything or anyone else."

*In* all these many years that we have been Divinely graced by being consciously able to interact with our beloved Sai, we have noticed that each of our own personal lessons in life have always been tailored perfectly and exquisitely.

For example, this body (Kalassu) just returned from another wonderful trip to India a little while ago. A couple of years ago, Swami said to us to come in September of '97. So, in the first part of September ninety-seven, Swami arranged the circumstances in such a way that within one week, I was on my way to Prasanthi Nilayam all alone without Johnima. It was again one of those complete 'Flow' arrangements, you know what we mean, there was no set plan of any kind, it is just how it turned out. It all fell together within a week by Divine Grace. Here is the story.

We had packed and I was ready to go, but somehow I felt really unsure of leaving alone on this trip to India; it all happened so suddenly. You might remember when (in the 'Ten Steps to Kesava' book) we explained the last time I went without Johnima to see Swami. He right away asked me, "Where is husband?"

I answered, "He did not come, we could not afford it at this time, Swami."

Swami shook His head disapprovingly, "Not good, not good, you send, then we will sing!"

This was now on my mind as we were walking towards the airline terminal. The 'Inner Swami' told me that it was all right, but somehow my mind and emotional body wanted to have some outside assurance that we were following the 'Divine Script' and nothing else. As we got to the terminal counter in Boise, I requested an aisle seat all the way to India. The clerk said that it was possible from Los Angeles on, but not on the first leg of the trip. I tried my best to persuade the clerk to find me any aisle seat, but he said that the flight was totally booked and I had to sit in the only seat available in the back of the plane right between two other ladies. So, still not really sure in my heart, I walked to the gate and kissed Johnima goodbye. I saw that the plane was indeed full. As I was being escorted to the back of the plane, my thoughts were on Swami.

'Oh Swami, what's going on? The last time I went without Johnima, You shook Your finger at me and said, "Where is husband?" Please Swami, give me a sign, let me know for sure that this is the Divine plan, not an ego ploy. I only wish to visit You physically if I am invited.'

As I questioned my inner doubts, these thoughts were swirling around in my head. 'Who is the doer here? Please let it only be the 'True Self!' I don't have to travel to India to see You, Swami, I am You!'

The flight attendant seated me between two ladies. Needless to say, my head was in my lap. I buckled up, closed my eyes and started chanting the Gayatri mantra in my head as we taxied and took off. After being up in the air for a while the thoughts returned to, 'Oh Lord, give me some sign that I am following the Divine script. I have gotten into too much trouble in past lives, when the ego ad-libbed the play. Never again, Lord, Your Divine Love guides and sustains me now and forever!'

As I slowly opened my eyes and looked up, there to greet me and answer my prayers was '**Love All - Serve All!**' It was stitched in bold, gold thread on the back of a baseball hat on a man's head directly in front of me. Not on the side or two or three rows up, no, right in front of my nose!

Tears started to flood my eyes as I looked around the plane in order to see if anyone else was wearing a hat. No one else did, only the guy in front of me. I remembered how I had tried to talk the man at the ticket counter into changing my seat to an aisle seat, and how adamant he was that this seat was the only one available. Oh Swami!!! Tears were streaming down my face as the lady next to me, in a sweet and concerned tone, asked if I was okay. I just smiled and nodded my head. I quickly brushed my tears away and thanked her for her concern.

I sat there as if struck by lightning; I was speechless! Then the tears came again, but this time my thoughts were accompanied by a smile of thankful understanding. 'Oh Swami, thank you ... thank you!'

Right along with these thoughts I felt a twinge of playful guilt of having put Swami to so much trouble just to ease my mind. Wow, what kindness, what Love, what Grace, an instant response to my prayer, which had to have been set up way before. Now I knew for sure that I was following only the Divine timetable, God's script so to speak, and that my direct mission (as always) was to '**Love all, serve all!**' on this trip.



After I recovered from the joyful play, I tapped the man in front of me on the shoulder. When he turned to face me, I politely asked, “Excuse me, sir, do you know where the slogan on your cap originated?”

The man shook his head and said, “No, I don’t. I just got the hat at a ‘Hard Rock’ cafe.”

Once again, thank you, Bhagavan, and if we look closely at the entire scenario, we can see how it was meticulously tailored just for my personal experience, as all of ours are. Again it taught me to relax, sit back, and just enjoy His play! It was such a sweet and wonderful Leela, it still brings tears to my eyes every time I think about it.

**S**ai Shanti, our daughter, was also graced to visit Swami for a month over Christmas in ‘97. She went with our Sai sister Ronesa, as Swami’s guests, since Ronesa is a registered nurse and volunteered her time at the Super-Specialty Hospital while they were there. They both had a most beautiful time. The highlight for Shanti was when she was able to sing a solo in the Christmas play for Swami and He smiled at her tenderly, taking the rose she had left for Him. Then again in January, Swami invited Shanti, who ended up staying with the Rahm family, through Alaya Rahm in an interview, to sing English bhajans for Swami with a small group of Western people in the prayer hall. At another time during this trip, Shanti and Athena Rahm were also asked to perform for all the Western people. Shanti played her guitar and they sang a wonderful duet version of one of Lightstorm’s songs, the ‘Swamiji’s song’ .... ***“Every morning when the sun, comes out to play...”***

Shanti had a most wonderful joy-filled trip, and her personal interaction with Swami filled her heart completely. Another cute part of the trip was Shanti’s deeply felt love relationship with Sai Gita, Swami’s pet elephant. At the end, Sai Gita, who was leisurely grazing way across the street in a field from where Shanti was sitting and watching her, walked quickly across the road right up to Shanti. Gita’s front feet stopped a couple of inches in front of where Shanti was sitting, and then with tears in her eyes Sai Gita placed her trunk around Shanti. They both cried as Shanti kissed her on her trunk. Gita knew that Shanti had come to say good-bye, since it was time to leave and return home.

## *Chapter Four*

When Angel's Spirit passed over after his body was assassinated on the battlefield, it was truly a wonderful event to witness. Angel walked out of the 'Hall of Records' erect, proud and with a smile.

The next set of incarnations were all dealing with more of the same type of lesson experiences as we mentioned before. More often than not, Angel completed them and his steppingstones or learning proceeded on course. Angel had many varied life lessons.

After this latest round of earth incarnations, Angel, with the help of his Spirit helpers, decided to go to a different plane, dimension, or loka once again, in order to learn through other forms of experiences. As stated before, on earth we mostly learn through pain and suffering, which is actually the fastest way, but there are other dimensions where we can learn through group participation, through kindness, harmony, patience, peaceful cooperation, love, etc. etc. etc.

After Angel had completed many of these incarnations on different learning dimensions and different universes, it was again time to resume the earth bound journey on the physical dimension. By now another entire Yuga cycle, lasting another 24,000 earth years, had passed.

Angel entered at a time when the human development on earth was reminiscent of the days of an Egyptian type of empire. Angel was born dozens of times into this culture. In one of these lives, Angel was born as a female and became a novice priestess. It was Angel's first real interaction (consciously aware) experience with a God form or Spirit principle on earth. Angel seemed to have a certain capacity or even aptitude for this type of life style. Angel ended this particular incarnation by being forced to die with the reigning Emperor's embalmed body in the inner chamber of his pyramid style tomb. The rest of the Egyptian type of lives ranged from a lowly stonecutter to a great warrior to head priestess.

After this set of incarnations and the return to the other side, Angel, with the help of the guides, opted once more to learn once again on some other levels.

Two more Yuga cycles (48,000 years) passed before Angel returned to earth again. This next set of incarnations landed Angel in our known earth history at the time of the Greek and Roman Empire. By now, Angel had developed an actual conscience as he began to listen more and more to that inner voice, and along with it a fairly reliable intellect became apparent. The first few lives were relatively obscure, and basically dealt with short life spans, the longest being anywhere from twenty-five to thirty-one years.

Here is the one life in the time of ancient Greece that stands out above the rest. Angel had been born as the second daughter to a rich Greek merchant. Aristotle was all the rage at that time and Alexander the Great was barely a teenager. Angel grew up in her father's luxurious household with her older and two younger sisters. When Angel was barely sixteen, she fell devastatingly in love with Andolis, one of the young students who lived nearby, and who could always be seen in the company of Aristotle when he was lecturing around town.

Andolis had come from Macedonia originally, but when his widowed mother moved back to her hometown in Greece, he went with her. He and Angel met in the market place, and it was love at first sight. The magnetic attraction was undeniable. It was the first time that Angel felt such a deep emotional love vibration. It was so complete that she could practically lose herself in him. He was a truly handsome, soft-spoken, gentle lad of about seventeen, who was deeply engrossed in Aristotle's esoteric teach-

ings. They met in several secret rendezvous places and shared the most real, intimate, loving and wonderful relationship. It was truly a fairy tale love story.

Angel's father had no idea about their relationship, and when he accidentally found out about it, he was livid. He had lofty plans for his daughters. They must all marry into rich, affluent, and well known families, and the young Andolis from Macedonia was not at all a suitable match for his most beautiful daughter. He locked her in her room for weeks on end to keep the two lovers apart. But in the end it was to no avail. At the very first opportunity that presented itself, the two ran away. They walked to the coast and there boarded a fishing boat that was headed to the isle of Cyprus.

The angry father sent out two soldiers for hire to bring back his daughter and to kill the young Macedonian in the interim. Eventually the soldiers caught up with the lovers and mortally wounded young Andolis, who died in Angel's loving arms.

His last whispered words to his beloved Angel were, "I love you forever, my dearest love; know in your heart that death can never keep us apart. Our love is stronger than death. We are Spirit and live forever, believe this," as Angel kissed him for the last time.

Angel was returned to her father's house, where she spent the next five years before she died of a broken heart.

It was several incarnations later that Angel's life reflected another major stepping stone in Spiritual development.

Angel was born into a Jewish household as the fifth and youngest daughter, seventeen years before the birth of Jesus Christ. Angel lived most of that life in Jerusalem. Her father was a wine merchant, who traveled often around the countryside in order to buy the best wine crops of the year for his business. He usually took a couple of the girls along with him, but only when he stayed close to home around the outskirts of Jerusalem.

Angel lost her beloved father at the age of eighteen, and also two of her eldest sisters. It was due to some kind of disease. Her mother and the other two sisters kept the wine shop operating with the help of her father's youngest and unmarried brother, who had more or less taken over as head of their household.

The two older sisters were married in time, and moved away to their husbands' households. That left Angel alone with her mother and uncle. Angel was a very plain looking woman, and no suitor was really attracted to her, except the occasional old man, who wanted a servant rather than a wife. Angel had a fierce and well-known temper, and would never settle for any such arrangement, no matter how many pressures her uncle and mother tried to exert upon her. It was Angel who had taken over the traveling that her father used to do in order to buy the finest wine crops. She was very good at it, and everyone who knew her respected her for it. But in general all the neighbors left her alone. Yet when they needed someone to talk to in order to seek advice or share some personal problems, they would come and seek Angel's kind companionship. In the end, she stayed unmarried and alone.

One day on one of her usual buying trips, it happened that she saw a lot of people gathered by the side of the road. A young man stood in their middle and was talking to them quite intensely. Angel tied up her donkeys and walked over to take a look and to listen to what the young rabbi had to say. She was spellbound by the words she heard from this young rabbi. What was even more surprising was the way she felt looking into the eyes of this young man. She did not move for an hour after Jesus had walked away with some of His followers. Something inside of Angel's heart had stirred. She felt more alive somehow, yet in a way more at peace. It was strange, she felt an irresistible urge to follow this young man. But her mind and self-designed feeling of duty to the wine shop stopped her from following that inner feeling.

Within the following year, her mother passed away, and six months later her uncle was killed in a riot. Now, Angel was truly alone. After the appropriate mourning period, she decided to sell her wine shop to a neighbor who had offered her a fair price. Her intention was to go and live in the town where her oldest sister lived with her husband and five children. She was leaving, making her way through the unusually crowded streets of Jerusalem. Suddenly she stood rooted to the spot. There in front of her she saw the same young rabbi, whom she had so ardently listen to, being whipped and dragged to His crucifixion. She was stunned, "Why? Oh why? What had He done to deserve this? He only spoke to the people of Love, Truth, the laws, and of God? He was not a rebel like some of the other young men that I knew!" were her first confused thoughts.

She pushed herself through the crowd right to the very front. The young rabbi looked tired, beaten, and was bleeding, but she could see only a sad, resigned calmness and deep peace reflected in His eyes. A surge of compassion flashed across Angel's heart, as she wanted to rush forward to help Him, but one of the guards pushed her to the ground and kicked her away. At that moment, Jesus stumbled and fell to his knees. As Angel scrambled to get back up, she saw the young rabbi look in her direction. Their eyes locked for scarcely a moment. There was such immense love and compassion reflected in His eyes, and not even a trace of anger or fear. It almost broke her heart as she watched them whipping Him again, moving Him forward. By now the unruly crowd was pushing past her, as Jesus was forced onward.

Angel was numb. She could not move, so she just sat there by the roadside and cried. She could not even think, there was only this emptiness and confusion that she suddenly felt deep inside. It was dusk when she finally got up to continue her journey out of Jerusalem.

Roman guards seemed to be everywhere, looking for any sign of trouble. She watched as some suspicious looking young men were rousted and made to move away. Most people were careful not to get too close or in the way of the Roman guards.

Suddenly Angel saw three young boys with slingshots in the doorway right where she was passing by. The boys were aiming at one of the Roman Centurions, who was standing on the nearby corner. He had his back towards them. They let the sharp stones fly from their slingshots before Angel could stop them.

The stones all hit their intended mark and even drew blood, on the exposed neck and cheek of the soldier. He spun around, raised his short sword and came running after the boys, who tried to escape the angry bleeding soldier. One of the young boys tripped getting passed Angel. In the next instance, the red faced angry Centurion was beside the boy. Without even thinking the furious soldier lifted his sword, probably to beat the lad with the flat side of it, but Angel stepped in the middle to protect the boy.

The Roman soldier, already angry, wiped the blood from his cheek and grabbed Angel by the shawl on her head. He cursed her and Jerusalem, the desert, and the entire Jewish population, as he kicked her twice. Angel, still numb and not thinking straight from her prior experience with Jesus, started to shout in frustration and anger at the soldier, while trying to place her body between the soldier and the scared young boy.

By now the soldier was livid. He kicked her again, but this time Angel grabbed his foot and threw him off balance. As the soldier fell, his sword accidentally slashed down towards the boys head. Angel saw that the boy would be killed, so with one quick movement to her right side she placed herself in the way of the fatal blow. Angel died almost instantly, as the soldier fell on top of her and the young boy scrambled out of the way and ran.

**A**ngel had made the ultimate selfless sacrifice, she laid down her life for another. How absolutely Divine and wonderful.

Angel's encounter with our beloved Christ was the first religious, or maybe better said, conscious spiritual earth experience, which was based on the 'One Eternal Truth' as spoken by the young rabbi, who said that GOD IS LOVE! ALL IS GOD!

Let us all remember that all our various religions are based on the same foundation of Love, Truth, Peace, Right Moral Conduct and Non-violence. ***Everything originated from God.*** God is Love, Truth, and Bliss. We are all children of the same God, therefore we should live in peace and love with one another in true equality in ***the brotherhood of man and under the fatherhood of God.***

## ***Religion and Spirituality!***

***O***f course, we all know that as soon as the different interpretations of dogma and opinions rear their egotistical heads, we have segregation, fear, and totally unreasonable hate or dislike for other cultures, customs, and religious perceptions. Let us also remember that as soon as any set or structured organization is created, that organization will have to become self-serving in order to keep existing. Basically even though the organization might express the truth as it perceives it, in time it will have to become self-serving, often deceptive, secretive or misleading by veiling its partial perception of truth, in order to mystify and retain its own secular ideology and separate existence.

We should all learn from the Sufi practitioners. As soon as anything takes on even the semblance of being organized, they move on and break it all up. In that way, they stay free, responsible only to the moment and the truth as they perceive it. They do not have to expend any type of energy to keep an organization or structure alive. God did not ask for cold stone temples and church buildings. God did not ask for crusades and inquisitors to torture and kill in His name. Jesus Christ did not create any kind of organization. The Buddha did not build meeting halls or churches nor did he shun any other belief systems. Allah did not ask for mosques or the many massacres of unbelievers and infidels. Iswara or Narayana did not tell the various Hindu sects that all other factions or religions are false, and to kill in His name. As a matter of fact, all of the Avatars, like Rama and Krishna, Buddha, Jesus Christ, and our present Sai Avatar, as well as all Saints, Sages, Rishis, holy Men and Women and spiritual Masters of mankind, they all teach us that ***God is Love, God is the only true reality, and that we are that God, that Eternal Consciousness, from which all originates!***

They have forever told us that all these ideas of the various mental, emotional, or physical separations are an illusion, a total lie, which is propagated by our false identification with ego.

There is nothing wrong with churches, temples, mosques and religion in general. Actually it should be quite a lot of fun, and a wonderful experience, to view everything from all the various sides, if we have the true understanding that all are simply different facets of the same God, expressing Himself as the many!

Don't get us wrong, we are not saying that our various religious structures are useless or not required in some measure. We all can see that organized religions are just another steppingstone on the ladder to our emancipation. They are also a wonderful place to meet like-minded people (have satsang) who are interested in the same thing. But the Truth is:

***There is only one religion, the religion of Love!  
There is only One God, He is omnipresent!***

*Baba*

After some thirty years, Swami continues to send us around the world, singing and sharing with the various people, communities, spiritual centers, retreats and church organizations. As Swami always said while touching our heads, "These are now my bodies, Swami will guide!"

The one thing that stands out to us as this is occurring is that there seems to be a lack of real heartfelt joy and shared love, and way too much attachment to pompous ceremony in some of the organizations and spiritual centers, churches and spiritual retreats. I mean really, what is it all about anyway? Isn't it to love one another as our self, like brother Jesus said? Isn't it to help in whatever little way we are capable to kindle that flame of love in the heart of everyone we come in contact with, which is the underlying format of all religions? Does Swami not tell us that we are God, we are Swami, the Eternal Awareness or Consciousness, which is the Christ and Sai principle? Does Swami not say that we truly are all the same God or Universal Consciousness? Then why all these games, this segregation and separation? Why don't we just cross out all our names on the different badges and name-tags and simply write Love, God, Eternal Self or Atma? Then maybe we can simply share, in Love and Joy, each other's experiences, and see each other as that God. What else matters?

As Baba Himself has voiced, ***"Man does not realize the Divine Principle, so he wastes his time on various rituals and religious practices. God cannot be realized through such practices. Only by loving God and getting close to Him, can God be known. Swami does not disapprove of spiritual practices, they are good for using time wisely, but without service to Godly persons they are of no use for attaining liberation from the cycle of mundane existence! Live in selfless love and be of service to all, by seeing the ONE GOD in all, that is the way!"***

What is happening? Are not all centers of any organization only there for people to find out about what the centers have to offer, for service and for gathering of like-minded people? Know that the only real spiritual center or church for each of us is our HEART. That is the True Center where God dwells. Whether we use the name God, Christ, Buddha, Allah, Jehovah, Sai, Mother Mary, Ahura Mazda, Divine Mother, Swami, or a thousand and one other names, it is always only the ONE self-same God.

**T**hat reminds us of another experience that happened to us on this last trip to India, as we explained earlier on. Here is how it happened.

Swami had just finished His morning darshan and everyone was quickly getting up to move around or leave. This body (Kalassu) usually tries to sit very quietly and stay absorbed in Swami's lingering presence, His Love, which remains like a haunting refrain. But the seva ladies rarely allow anyone to just sit quietly anymore, they come and make you move right after darshan. Or, if by chance you can sit for a few minutes, the unruly stampede of the masses tend to knock into you or run you over. So, after another unfruitful attempt to sit quietly, I just got up and slowly walked along the white marble aisle where Swami's feet had walked just a few moments before. With half-closed eyes I lingered there as long as possible and mentally, by osmosis, absorbed Swami's Love, until I was rudely moved along.

So, with downcast eyes, and inwardly still immersed in Swami's love vibration, I went outside the ashram in order to run an errand of love and service, as was my assignment for the entire trip. As I explained earlier on, this body is only here for Swami's use and guidance. As I was walking down the noisy main street, with all the vendors and shopkeepers vying for my attention, the inner Swami told me to enter one out of the way tailor shop. It was not to my liking at all, but without hesitation I followed the directive. As I entered the little shop, my focus was immediately drawn to a western young man who was sitting in the corner all despondent and forlorn. Actually he was crying quietly, he was plainly in a flux within himself.

The 'Inner Swami' urged me to go talk to the young man. A part of me felt very uncomfortable about this, but I inquired, "You seem to be having some troubles, is there anything that I can help you with?"

The young man looked up at me and sighing deeply blurted out in reply, "This is terrible. I came here to be with, and connect with Sai Baba, and I am so confused now. This is not an ashram, it is a circus. I just came from an ashram, where it was so wonderfully peaceful and meditative. I spent several months there meditating, and when I heard about Sai Baba a little while ago, I just knew in my heart that He was the one I was searching for. I sense that He is the living Avatar. But when I came here ... I mean is it always like this? I know it's festival time, but are the seva (service) people always this rude? And what about the various V.I.P. sections, and the special treatments for friends of the people in charge of various ashram duties? I've seen payoffs, thievery, and what about this commercialism everywhere you turn? And it is so noisy, my God, it's all just too crazy. I don't know what to do! I still feel Sai Baba is the real thing, but ..."

I understood exactly where he was coming from, so with a smile I took his hand and said, "You are right, it is a circus, Swami Himself has told us this many times, and has warned us that it's going to get worse. He also confided that the closer we are to Him physically, the more and more dense the Maya principle becomes. He has always cautioned us personally not to pay attention to this circus all around, but to focus solely on Him. That is our constant test in this environment and believe me, it is often extremely difficult to see through this Maya curtain. I think it's one of the great tests. Just follow your heart. You have a feeling that Sai Baba is the Avatar, right? So, next time in darshan, focus just on Him, and do not be inwardly disturbed by anything else around you, that's the test. Make a mental connection, envision a long funnel or straw connecting you and Swami, and drink in *all of HIM* as your eyes focus on Him and His sweet Love! He will show Himself to you, if your love is genuine. Then in meditation, in dreams or even physically, He will come and answer you, know this and don't be sidetracked by the surroundings. If you do this, the circus will no longer matter, and you will have that inner, that real eternal connection, which is what you came for, isn't it?" (The young man nodded emphatically.) "Listen, we all have to get to that same inner connection, and for you it is right here, right now. For some of us, who are still only thinking of the physical Sai Baba form, that is often a lot harder to accomplish. To relinquish our dearly coveted 'separation of distant worship' and imagined need of Baba's form or physical attention is often very hard. It took several years for creation to beat it out of me. So, you have the great opportunity to do it right off the bat, right here, right now! Does any of this make sense to you, or help you understand?"

The eyes of the young man started to light up with an inner understanding, as he looked at me gratefully, "Oh yes, I can see what you are saying is absolutely correct. I guess every Avatar stirs things up in some way."

"Exactly, you got it! Swami is here to stir the pot. He accelerates everything in order to get us back to our 'True Self' the quickest possible way. God does not care about egos, or complacency, earthly fears, troubles, relationships, achievements, or stuff like that. All He sees is Himself, and He will do whatever it takes to bring us back to Him in the quickest fashion, even if it destroys all of our ego perceptions and attachments, including putting us in the middle of disasters in order to hurry up our learning process. We have often seen that when God sees one of His children repeatedly chasing his or her tail, by not progressing, He simply pulls the plug on that life and makes sure that the next incarnation has a better chance for accomplishment. To God we are all only Himself, playing separate parts, in His 'Cosmic Play'!" I elaborated some more.

By now our young friend was visibly smiling again, and with a deep sigh of relief, still clutching my hand, he said, "Thank you so much for talking to me, Swami must have sent you, because I was desperately asking Him for some understanding of all this. Thank you!"

Things of this nature were the constant experiences on this trip. By Divine Grace, I was able to stay in the moment, the NOW, and let God guide this smallest part of Him completely. Many others that were also ready to focus consciously on the 'Inner Swami' crossed my path on this trip, and we were able to share our understanding to be of some small service. Thank You, my Beloved Sai Self, for all the Grace and Love!

***In*** our recent travels to the different Spiritual centers, churches and retreats, we sometimes encounter a slight trait of alienation that is often felt by a few new people, due to some personal preferences by one faction or ego which is in charge of functions or programs. There appears to be too much politics, too much ego, not enough Love, Joy, and Laughter. (The exact things that Swami personally filled us with from the very beginning.) Why all this need of fanfare and often unnecessary and rigid programs? Why have any cloistered framework of idolization of a simple, wonderful, ever-present principle which we have labeled 'SPIRITUALITY'? I mean, what is not spiritual if all is God?

Hopefully the world will soon follow the beautiful Eternal Sai Consciousness Principle, this living example of building free hospitals, free schools and free Universities, instead of putting millions and millions of dollars into building more stone churches and temples. "All of humanity should have complete access to free healthcare and free education."

With Swami's Grace, it will all come to pass, and all these silly little church and various center politics will eventually grow into the joyful, loving, sharing God family ideal, which is exactly what the Sarva Dharma symbol exemplifies.

Back in the early part of 1968, when we helped open up the first Sai center in Los Angeles on Sunset Boulevard, things were much more joyful and simple (at least in our opinion). It was a house which was rented as Richard Bock's office, and the other half of the house became the Center. The front living room was big enough for a medium gathering, where every Thursday night we would get together and share. We would simply sing songs to God, some American Bhajans, some simple Indian Bhajans, and in general we all shared our life experiences with one another. It felt all like an extended family. When anyone new came, who wanted to share a song to the glory of God, whether a Jewish song prayer, a Rock n' Roll love song to God, a Moslem song prayer, a favorite Catholic hymn, a Hindu bhajan, an African chant, a Buddhist mantra, or a lonely foreigner singing in his or her mother tongue, it was all lovingly shared and joyfully accepted.

In Swami's words, ***"All songs, in any language or from any religion, if sung with love and devotion from the heart, are accepted by God!"***

When one of us had a problem arise in life we all spontaneously shared in order to help one another. Together we enjoyed the sharing in the glory of God, and loved each other in ***Divine Love and Service***.

One of the best ways to be of service is to be a good example. Swami always reminds us, ***"... your life is your message ... and Love is the way!"***

Swami told us personally when we asked Him about the idea of centers and churches, that all centers and churches are only for us, not for God.

***"Swami has no need for centers or churches. They are only for some new people, for satsang (good company) or for some service. This is Swami's real center!"*** He leaned over towards us and gently rubbed the spiritual heart area. (Located a little bit in front of the physical chest on the etheric body, ranging from the middle to just a little bit to the right side of the chest area.) ***"Only real center is the heart of each person! God lives there. Without JOY and LOVE in the heart, there is no REAL LIFE!"***



## Chapter Five

**T**his ultimate sacrifice of Angel's life for the young boy was the crowning achievement up to this point. The passing and extremely brief connection with the Christ seemed to have somehow accelerated Angel's spiritual progress from that exact moment on. But we tend to go to extremes until we find that fine balance. You see, some of us tend to explore the darker side of things first. So Angel, who was now exploring religions, was drawn first to the unreal shadows or the negative aspects of religion. From here on, Angel's incarnations had a definite undercurrent of religious fanaticism.

*[Dear reader, let us remind ourselves again, that the only reason to dwell on any of these dark shadow experiences within the dream existence of Angel, is only to give us all a sort of overview, an example of different kinds of steppingstones that some of us might walk through on our quest for Self-realization. Normally it is best not to give any type of energy to the darkness of dream shadows, as Swami points out. "Turn towards the 'Light of Wisdom,' and the shadows will automatically be behind you and disappear!"]*

At first, it exhibited itself as the typical self-serving God fixation. Angel incarnated again and again in different cultures, ages, castes and social classes.

Many times, Angel was drawn to the religious life after the Roman incarnation cycle. Angel's lives ranged from being a lowly naïve novice monk, to being a feared inquisitor, to being a student of Yoga in eastern cultures, to being a whirling dervish.

Throughout all of these lessons, Angel started to round out his experiences on all sides, mentally, emotionally, physically, as well as metaphysically. The various Karma that Angel so religiously created on all these levels for his thousand and one growth lessons, steppingstones, was soon recognized as the guiding force by Angel's Spirit Self, and thus became more and more noticeable and important in the self-created, multifaceted designs for any future existence.

For example, in Angel's life as the inquisitor, he was born into a noble family in medieval Spain, or the dark age as it is often referred to. He was totally caught up in the dark, ignorant, and blind belief that there is only one way to serve this cruel wrathful church-God image. The man-made church dogma, basically created in order to control the people and amass wealth, was in direct opposition to the teachings of Christ, whom they idolized as "their Lord." I mean just think of the grand ceremony of 'sermo generalis' or 'auto-da-fe, were the names of the guilty heretics that were announced publicly and the punishment inflicted. In those days the church and the state were practically united in wedlock. So, while diligently guiding and overseeing all the hideous atrocities, the clergy had the state do all the dirty work, the actual physical punishing. Torturing and various barbaric killing methods like burning at the stake were the norm of the day.

Angel's ego really made him believe he was doing God's work. He had been taught that it was a deadly sin (death sentence) to have the audacity to question the church and God's teachings. Many other inquisitors as well as many of the local bishops with the eager help and well-paid assistance of the local judges and other state officials, used the inquisition as a cloak for political and personal executions, basically for power and revenge.

Remember, everything that contradicted the various self-serving church dogma, even in the slightest degree, was branded as vile, evil, devil's work, heresy, and therefore had to be destroyed by any means. What sheer ignorance, what impudence of the ego!

Oh well, we all learn, whether the hard way by pain and suffering, or the easy way by universal love and service. In that life, Angel was poisoned, at the age of forty-five, by one of the zealous and fanatic young rising stars of the inquisition.

The next set of incarnations were all dealing with more of the same lessons, the ignorant, dark, fanatic and religious pursuit. Angel became a religious crusader three times, a cruel, domineering Queen once, a fierce self-righteous protector of Allah and the Islamic faith twice, and a cult leader of one of the dark 'Kali' assassin factions of Eastern religion once. All of these incarnations made volumes of self-made Karma for Angel.

The next round of incarnations started to teach Angel the other side of the coin. All of Angel's experiences in male and female bodies brought more and more enlightenment to the waking Spirit consciousness. Angel's understanding grew with each painful karmic dream lesson. This time Angel was on the recipient end of the lessons dealing with persecutions, religious fanaticism, cruel injustices, and karmic repayment.

In one of the incarnations, Angel was reunited with Andolis. You will recall her Greek life, where she ran away with him, and he died in her arms, telling her that even death could not erase their love.

Out of the countless other karmic re-connections to focus on, this one was chosen because it shows a most beautiful way of escalating their love vibration to a higher, more selfless type of Love.

Angel was born into a female form once again. She had been barren for almost fifteen years. But then she had a dream in which she saw this gentle young man (Andolis) changing into a beautiful little blonde girl. The little girl danced with joy and ran into her arms, holding her very tight, and then Angel woke up. At first she was startled by her own yearning, her deep love for this young man (little girl) in her dream. But within the year when she became pregnant, she knew that it would be that little girl from her dream.

Sure enough, when the baby was born it was a girl. By the time the little girl reached the age of the dream child, Angel saw the exact same child from her dream, hugging and loving her like no one else had ever.

Angel and her little girl were inseparable, and the love between them was seen and felt by all. It was a remarkable reunion, that lifted both of them and raised their love vibrations to a more selfless type of love. You see, by actually being born by Angel, Andolis became an actual physical part of his beloved, much more so than had he become just another Lover for a little while in one life or another. And he had to be a girl, otherwise their strong attachment and love for each other might have led in a distorted direction and created more Karma.

But it was another incarnation that opened up a new and deeper spiritual perception for Angel's awakening awareness. Angel was born as a girl in a Hindu family in the northern part of India. Her father was of the Brahman caste, and a devotee of Vishnu. Her two older brothers both entered the ashram of a spiritual teacher at the tender age of six. Angel was left at home to help take care of the household. At the age of fourteen she was married to the son of one of her father's lifelong friends. The marriage was short lived since her husband died while trying to protect their local Vishnu temple from an angry Moslem mob bent on destroying the temple.

Thus widowed and left without any children, Angel decided to search for the meaning of life. She went to the sandy banks of a nearby sacred river, and there looked for someone who would teach her the art of meditation and Yoga.

She searched day in and day out, and patiently waited for a worthy spiritual teacher to pass by. Weeks passed and turned into months. Angel meagerly survived on occasional alms, but mostly on roots, berries, tubers, and some eatable leaves which she gathered every day.

Then one early morning an old man walked towards the river bank in order to take his ritual morning bath. Afterwards, the old man sat nearby with closed eyes and sang the most beautiful songs to the various Hindu God personalities. Angel had never heard such beautiful love songs before. She was drawn to this old man like a moth to the flame. Finally when the old man moved on, Angel followed him with his permission. In return for teaching her his Divine love songs, Angel was glad to collect food for both of them and see to the old man's comfort and welfare. He, in turn, looked upon her as his spiritual daughter.

Within a couple of years, the old fellow died peacefully. Angel quietly performed the body-burning ceremony and then simply wandered around the country singing the old man's Divine songs to whomever enjoyed hearing them. Before five years had passed, she was well known for her beautiful voice and songs of God. Even though she had not learned the art of formal meditation, or the deep metaphysical lessons of Yoga, she was happy as a deep inexplicable joy filled her heart with inner peace and true Self-satisfaction. She died one day after finishing her sweet songs. With a smile on her face her heart gave out one late afternoon in the month of May, on the same riverbank where she had first met the old man fifteen years earlier.

When Angel returned to the other side, a new understanding had opened up, and from here on Angel's sincere, earnest, and fully conscious quest to realize the one ultimate eternal truth was conceived.

## ***One Eternal Truth!***

**L**et us look at this idea of 'One Ultimate Eternal Truth.' What does it really all mean? For some of us, these are only some nice sounding, pretty, intellectual words. So, let us all look a bit deeper with our pure, unbiased intellect, and share what we personally know about this 'One Eternal Truth.'

To us the entire universe is merely projected consciousness, or a thought if you like, from God, the 'Real Self.' Creation truly has no existence by itself, separate from the Self. In reality, creation is absolutely nothing at all, it is all smoke and mirrors, so to speak. Projected from the mind, it is all just energy, changing, momentary wave patterns that take on the illusion of momentary forms and names.

Being nonexistent in the first place, all of creation will forever remain nonexistent. The Self, the 'Eternal Awareness' that we are, that alone is permanent, real. The self-illuminated Consciousness, the God-Self, being ever existent, is the true reality, and it can therefore never be nonexistent. That is the one and only "Truth," the rest, which we label as truth, is changeable and relative to any given moment within the illusion. Our perceived lies as well as truths all exist in ego, and are therefore part of this Maya illusion called creation.

***"Each one from ego takes his birth, and clad in ego dies, and comes and goes, gives and receives, and earns and spends, and deals in lies or speaks the truth, in ego all the while. Heaven and hell and incarnations, all these from ego are not free. Those who do away with their ego attain salvation."***

*Baba*

As we stated above, to us the word 'Truth' represents the underlying, unchanging, eternal part of creation that simply exists in its primal state. The Conscious Self-illuminating Awareness, which is the primal source of this entire creation. But let us inquire a little deeper into the mundane 'truth' business,

shall we? What does it mean to each of us? The word itself suggests the real state of things, honesty, actuality, correctness, agreement with fact or reality. These are some of the meanings that come to mind.

Words, words, words, and more words. By now a lot of us are probably sick of all these intellectual words. Besides, most of us are also aware that words are part of the illusion of name and form. Yet, we use them constantly in our daily communications. I guess we should just look at all the words as road signs, directing us in different ways.

Then what shall we label the rest of the different truths, that we so ardently covet as a good thing. Well, let us call it a momentary, relevant, or a 'relative truth.' A relative truth which might be relevant to the time, the place, the person, and the mood or perception of that person. Does that sound reasonable?

So, this relative truth, what is its value or function? In our personal experience it is extremely valuable in our everyday life. If we always endeavor to speak the truth as we perceive it, and then live in accordance with it, our life becomes simple and uncluttered. True, sometimes if we speak the truth as we perceive it, the outcome might not be exactly pleasant, since ego and truth don't always see eye to eye, but one thing is certain, it is always simple. The reason being that we don't have to think about what to make up, or cover up and hide. We just repeat exactly what we perceive, that is easy, it keeps the mind calm and quiet, without any need for hasty manipulations. Now is it a requirement to always speak the truth about everything? To the world around us, not necessarily. If the truth is spoken only to hurt or to vindicate rather than to help, it is best to be silent. But to *your self you must always speak the truth!* Actually we think it is rather imperative never to lie to yourself about anything. As creation always seems to remind everyone so pointedly, we must ruthlessly endeavor to expose it all, down to the often hidden true intent, at least to our self, in order to move forward in our quest of Self-knowledge. Let us bring out the deepest darkest feelings, thoughts, and deeds, and let's make sure we see and understand the *true intent* behind them. Come on, who are we hiding it from anyway, God?

It is only then, that we can begin to change our mind, our habits, thoughts, feelings, desires, and attachments. Swami always tells us, "*First find and diagnose the disease (or dis-ease) then a cure can be affected.*"

Truth allows our mind to become free, clear, and quiet, and our heart to be open. We find that living by truth to the best of our ability is life energy wisely spent

Could a 'Relative Truth' ever be called bad? I guess it could be labeled so, if by chance we create a lot of gossip and Karma with indiscriminate voicing of our ego interpretation, or *personal perception of truth*. Remember, Swami has often warned us that the tongue can wound more fatally than even an arrow.

Let us look at a small example of 'Relative Truth.' It is the story of a lady who found herself in a very interesting situation. We are sure most of us have run across the type of person who uses the word 'truth' as a weapon, a club of some sort, or even a flaming sword, which they love to brandish over the heads of others. We should remember though that this is also just another steppingstone, but hopefully some of us can sneak by this one unnoticed?

It stands to reason, therefore, that the crusaders' particular brand of truth is nothing more or less than their personal ego perception in relation to something they saw, heard, felt or imagined, right? Then we can assume that on that level there may also be other valid perceptions available for this same experienced situation. But let us get on with the story.

*At* one time a young man, whom we shall call P, was seen in a grocery store walking down the aisle. An elderly woman, whom we shall call Mrs. G, just happened to observe this young man, as he nonchalantly picked up a couple of candy bars and stuck them in his pockets. Then he sauntered to the

front of the store, where a security guard was standing in plain view all the time. Our young man walked right past the guard and out of the store without stopping anywhere else.

Mrs. G, who had been watching all of this said to herself, “MY God, that boy just stole those candy bars. Looks like the guard was not paying attention. And he looks like such a nice young man, too. God, if it were my son, I would want him to be confronted on the spot, maybe then he could see the truth, that stealing is wrong. Maybe I should just do it to help him anyway, I mean stealing a few candy bars is not so bad, but it can lead to much worse. Yes, I think I’ll try to help that nice young man. I would certainly be thankful if someone did it for my son.”

Thinking along those lines, she quickly followed P out of the store, while her thoughts kept rambling on. Her thoughts were triggered by a very nice loving impulse of wishing to be of service, and to do unto others as you would like done unto yourself.

Once outside she looked around and saw P just a few steps ahead. “Young man,” she called out to him, “may I talk to you for a moment.” She walked quickly towards the curious young man.

“Yeah lady, what is it?” he inquired curiously, without even a trace of worry, anxiety, or fear crossing his handsome face.

“I saw you in there stealing those candy bars, young man, don’t you know that is wrong?” she questioned him directly.

“No, I did not steal them, lady, I just took them!” he replied with a frown. “Besides what concern is that of yours, anyway?”

“You know I also have a son, and if you were my son, I would hope someone’s mother would confront him the same way as I am doing now. I mean stealing can land you in jail, and then it can lead to a lot worse. I just want you to see the truth and stop, before it goes any further and you get into real trouble,” she explained kindly.

“Well, thanks for the concern, but you don’t understand. I have permission, besides it is none of your business. So, thank you again and goodbye.”

Now if Mrs. G would have been wise, she would have said to herself, “Mmhh, he looks calm and friendly enough and he says he has permission, maybe I don’t know all the circumstances. I really don’t know, do I? Besides he is right, it really is none of my business,” then she could have excused herself and let it be.

Or, if she would have been curious and wished to inquire further, she could have simply asked P’s permission to ask him about it.

However, Mrs. G’s ego was annoyed by the young man’s attitude and nonchalant dismissal of the so-called theft. She choose instead to be a crusader for her perceived ‘Truth.’ She felt very correct about this and sternly said, “What is the matter with you, boy, can’t you face up to the truth? The truth is, you stole those candy bars. I am the witness to it. I saw you do it, so don’t deny it!”

Now P was the type of person who loved to put people on and he disliked having to prove anything to anyone. He laughed sarcastically and said, “What the hell is wrong with you lady, buzz off! If I stole, it’s my business, so get lost!” and turned to walk away.

Now Mrs. G pulled herself to her full height, which was all of 5’2”, and indignantly protested by quickly grabbing his arm, “Wait just one minute here, I am a witness, and maybe I should just call that security guard to teach you a lesson.”

“Go for it Lady!” was P’s annoyed reply as he jerked his arm out of Mrs. G’s hand.

“I just want you to admit that you stole those candy bars and not pretend it didn’t happen or deny it, that’s all! Truth is truth, and you cannot change that, I saw you do it!” was her emphatic matronly reply.

“Just get lost, Lady, you don’t know what the hell you’re talking about, I told you already, I had permission.” P sighed with open exasperation in his voice.

“Sure you did, and I’m the Pope! Listen, son, just tell the truth, that’s all I want to hear.”

“Yes Ma’am, these hands took the candy bars, but I did not steal them!” was P’s sarcastic counter. “There, will that do it for you, lady? Goodbye and good riddance!” he threw the last remark over his shoulder as he quickly walked away.

Mrs. G ran back to the store. Unfortunately, she had fallen into that old ego trap of the ‘Truth crusader’ and now she was hell-bent on saving the young man from his self-made predilection. In her own mind, she wanted so much to show P the truth, even if it meant getting him in trouble.

From the door, she called to the guard who quickly came to see what she wanted. She explained and pointed to P who was just getting into his car in the parking lot.

The guard looked and then smiled and said, “Yeah, I know, he does it all the time, I tell you, Ma’am, he’s a handful. It’s all right though, his father owns the bloody store.”

Mrs. G was speechless. At first, she still felt a bit self-righteous, knowing that she only wanted to do a service, but then as she started to think about it a little deeper, she felt a bit of shame creeping in. She thought, “Boy, what a meddling busybody, sticking my nose where it doesn’t belong. How dare I allow this ego to call someone a liar without knowing everything. I guess until I know myself as everything, I should keep my mouth shut.”

She told us that it was not until much later that night that she finally saw the whole thing as another learning experience, her steppingstone to understanding ‘Relative Truth.’ She realized that it was only her personal ego perception of truth. To this day she finds great pleasure in telling this story.

### *Lies*

But what about lies? What value do they have, if any? Let us try to look at it realistically, considering this Kali Yuga time right now. Lies might bring us some form of momentary advantage, some power, fame, fortune, or some desired relationship. Look around, most of the world politics, businesses and organizations are built on some form of perpetuated lies. So, how much life energy does it take to keep track of all those lies, without getting caught?

In our understanding it takes just about all of our life energy, and our mind is on total hyperactive worry, trying to keep all the lies sorted out. We have no inner peace, no matter how nonchalant we act on the outside. There is always worry and the nagging fear of being found out. This, in turn, causes disease, insomnia and all sorts of misery. We are so afraid that somehow our imaginary and diligently constructed social mask and personal facade will fall apart and crumble.

Finally (sooner or later) when it happens, as it is doomed to from the start, some of us actually feel relieved, even though we often lose everything that we thought valuable in the process. In other words, we have once again managed to spend all of our life energy foolishly, on momentary fleeting shadows of this illusion. Look, we even lie for it!

**God alone is REAL! Yes, that is the one and only “Truth,”** the rest, the stuff we label as truth is changeable and relative to any given moment within the illusion. Our perceived lies as well as truths all exist in ego, and are therefore part of this Maya illusion called creation, this lie of separation.

**O**n this last trip to India in September ‘97, this body (Kalassu) was again curiously confronted by a lot of questions about the early days with Swami, and the whole Lightstorm experience, about the children in general, and so on. Actually, I encountered a lot of people who had been led to believe quite a few lies and misconceptions. One in particular was that Lightstorm as a musical entity did not exist any longer, that it had been dismembered back in the late seventies. Of course, nothing could be further from the truth, since we, Johnima and I, with God’s Grace, have continued to function as Lightstorm all along. Also, no person was ever ousted or thrown out from the group called Lightstorm. The other two original members, Sui-San and Silver, left for worldly pursuits (steppingstones). Silver left to follow his Maya dream of fame and fortune, and Sui-San left later, because she wanted a different lifestyle. The Spartan or Yogic lifestyle of Lightstorm, which is simply living moment by moment, in the NOW, by Divine Grace alone, was not to her liking any longer.

*(Truly, none of this matters and is nobody’s business, but we have been bombarded with so many questions for so many years about all of this silly stuff, so, with great reluctance on one hand and complete indifference and detachment on the other hand, we’ll share some facts. With God’s Grace this will put all this trivial, unimportant (actually no longer existent) nonsense to rest.)*

It was immediately after the interview, the one when **Swami told me to marry Johnima**, that I took Sui-San aside and lovingly told her that I would go even against Swami’s word and leave the group, if marrying Johnima would cause her pain. You see, I loved her as much as I loved myself. Swami had often referred to both of us as sisters and said, “You are sisters, you are like One!”

Sui-San’s reply was simply, “No, no, it has nothing to do with you at all, Swami knows that I’ve already made up my mind. I just want to live differently, I don’t want this vigilant spiritual lifestyle anymore.”

So when we returned home, Sui-San eventually divorced Johnima and I married him. Sui-San still kept her home base relatively with us, since we were raising Sai Sangeet together for the first three years or so. This allowed Sui-San the freedom to play in the world, travel, and pursue her interests. She still traveled with us and the children to see Swami and sing, until she broke away completely.

One day, Sui-San informed us that she was leaving for good with Sangeet. So, out of love for my ‘sister,’ I breached the subject of **my leaving** one last time after Sai Kodey was born. I said, “I’ll take Kodey and stay with Swami, until He directs me elsewhere.” (You see, in my heart I knew that the world could swallow Sui-San up and she might need Johnima more to help keep her on track.) Again Sui-San looked at me and said, “My leaving has nothing to do with you. This is what I want.”

Maybe the best way to write about this is to put in some excerpts of a letter that was written by us, after a dear friend asked us to help her alleviate some of her mental anguish, by please telling her the truth about Sui-San’s leaving, because she had heard too many conflicting stories (gossip) over the years.

So, with Swami’s permission, here are some parts of that letter. Maybe it can be helpful, or at least clear up some silly confusions. All the various ..... (blanks) are either names or paragraph deletions from the letter.

“OM SAI RAM

9 -9 - 97

Dear Embodiment of Love, .....,

*The inner Swami has told us to write this brief summary of physical facts for you. You may do with this as you wish, show ....., send copies to Swami, ..... just use it at your discretion.*

*It is too late in this game of Life for all of us to keep on pretending, hiding, lying, cheating, and in general being untrue. Everything is speeding up very tremendously. Karma is accelerating on all levels, just as Swami has told us all. It is obvious that ..... and ..... have become trapped by the illusion of Mother Maya in an apparent selfish and secretive way. ....*

*But in the light of the big picture, the real truth, we must always remember that all this is truly unreal, none of it will last. It is simply momentary, and it is really only Swami, as the Omnipresent Consciousness, playing through all the different parts of Himself. Sweetheart, we can feel your pain and frustration due to this weird deception of parts of yourself whom you looked upon as friends, but remember the Swami within our heart is the only true friend any of us will ever have. So, maybe by deeply reflecting, we can put aside anger, judgments, hurt, and fury and leave all that in Swami's hands. Because who in this world is without any blame, except God? We agree with you completely about the Adharma of all the lies and hypocrisy, that is why we are going to write down some of the facts about the "Lightstorm saga" for you.*

*..... and ..... will have to answer for everything to their "Inner Swami" for everything anyway, but that is their business. We just have to remember what Swami has told us, that not one leaf falls, not one blade of grass quivers, that is not precisely designated by the One God of All.*

*So, let us all get our hearts in order. Swami has repeatedly warned us, that the only time left for getting our heart in order is right now, there is now no more grace period for uncontrolled senses, minds, and selfish ego-games for any of us.*

*..... A picture is worth a thousand words. So, here is one that shows Swami with Kalassu & Johnima (Lightstorm) on stage singing for Him along with little Kodey. As you can see all the other pictures and documents enclosed also speak for themselves. You know that we have never cared what people thought about us in any way, that is why we never even dealt in all the gossip, so this is only to give you the facts, as they are, so that maybe ..... and our other brothers and sisters of Love will start using their intelligence in the proper way.*

*It has come to our Awareness .....  
Here are some of the facts:*

*The marriage certificate shows that Kalassu & Johnima were married in August of 1973. Photocopy is enclosed. ...*

*The maid of honor, who as the witness, signed the book at the city hall was none other than Sui-San herself. Silver signed as the best man. ...*

*It has always been Sui-San's personal choice from the very beginning.....*

*(Sui-San had a difficult home-life, and right before she met me(Johnima), she was going to run away from home. In order to help her out of this dangerous dilemma, and knowing that she might lose herself in the world, this choice was given to her. "This body is walking a particular road this life time, I will not change this. But in order to help you and keep you safe, I will marry you only in the eyes of the world, so that you can leave home safely. Then we can all still sing together, but you can live your life in any fash-*



ion that you like, you will be free. However, if you choose to follow the same spiritual road I am taking, then there is much to consider and to give up. Make your choice!" This is pretty much the gist of what I told her ... ..At first the spiritual life was fine for Sui-San. Later on when Swami asked her to have a baby and for Kalassu to help her, and after that for her to help Kalassu with her baby, things changed. We explained it in the 'Ten Steps of Kesava' book.)...

For the record, Sui-San was absolutely relieved and happy that Kalassu would have the other two babies, cause she was now re-choosing a different, more worldly, path in life. Of course Swami knows everything and that is why He asked Kalassu to marry Johnima and have babies for Swami.

As you most likely remember, ... .. Sometime in the beginning of the third year she moved in with a friend who lived next door, and then moved in with a man, T..., in El Monte, whom she later married. ... .. The picture of Sui-San holding the newborn baby Kodey, speaks for itself. The year that Kalassu was pregnant we were all in India with Swami, and He gave Kalassu much special attention.

Before we got Swami's permission to leave, we asked Him personally where He wanted Kalassu to give birth, with Him here in India, like Sui-San, or back home. Swami thought about it a little while and then informed us that America was best this time, and to make our arrangements to leave. Kalassu gave birth as soon as we returned from India that year as it was all explained in the Kesava book.

... .. it was all truly only Divine Grace. When Sui-San finally moved to El Monte she used to bring Sangeet to stay with us all the time, until Sai Sangeet started crying and pleading each time that she did not want to go back to El Monte. That is when Sui-San, with tears flowing from her eyes, begged me to allow her to keep Sangeet away, because she was deeply afraid that she would lose some of Sangeet's affection. Out of Love for Sui-San, and knowing that any "parental love conflict" in Sangeet's psyche would be detrimental to her, I agreed to stay out of her life for a little while, until Sui-San thought it would be all right for Sangeet to resume contact with me. This was also very hard on Kalassu, since she loved Sangeet as her own.

... .. Remember, sooner or later all of us will get to the truth. The simplest way is to confront all this stuff within our own self and honestly lay it all at Swami's feet. In that way our heart and mind can get empty and then He can fill us with His Divine Love.

... .. So, whatever misconceptions have multiplied and are flying around from whatever sources, they are fabricated by warped mind perceptions by unhappy, ignorant, and outrageous egos.

... .. We live simply, in the Now, day by day and God is our sole provider; now, before, and always. Out of His Divine Love He has allowed the "Shoes of Life" to fit just right. Not too tight, and not too loose.

The suggestions ... .. "Look at the fruit that falls from the tree." "Does a poisonous tree ever produce sweet nurturing fruits?" In other words, all we have to do is look at the life of someone. Sooner or later it will tell us everything. We don't have to believe, judge, speculate, or wonder. All we have to do is be patient and watch. Truth will always triumph it does not need us. On the other hand if we don't hold fast to the truth, we are hopelessly lost. The only real Truth is that we are all truly ONE. We are not the body, not the mind, not the thoughts or feelings. We are that ever present Awareness within us, that eternal Consciousness, that Swami in our heart, that One God of All. The trick is to live like it. With Bhagavan's Love and Grace each of us will get to it sooner or later.

Dearest Self, ....., and ....., as well as some other brothers and sisters of Love, definitely have to work out some volatile Karmic stuff here, but that is only because Swami's Unconditional Love is allowing it. In this way we can all get done with our petty wants, attachments and desires, so that finally we can live in truth, and express and be the Love that we truly are. It is high time to stop all this self destructive ego fighting and squabbling in the world, the countries, the families, the churches, the Sai centers, and surrender to the Truth that we are all basically that ONE eternal Consciousness, the ever-present Awareness, the Watcher, behind the game of this creation. Let's face it, the only real church or center for Swami, God, our True Self, is in our heart. So, simply remind everyone who in the future condemns in

*front of you what our beloved Brother Jesus Christ said when they wanted to stone Mary Magdalene. "Let him, who is without sin amongst you, cast the first stone!" For fun, be graphic, pick up a stone and hold it out to the individual who is judging and say, "If you have always lived, and are living an absolute flawless and perfect Divine unselfish life, then go ahead condemn, judge, and stone them. Otherwise learn to be silent."*

*From this moment on, never allow any experience that expresses itself through the senses to throw you off balance. Keep your inner calmness, Swami tells us that inner calmness is our greatest protection. Whether upheavals present themselves in the form of the world, ....., ....., mother, father, son or daughter, sister or brother, friend or foe, good or bad, right or wrong, evil or Divine. Look at all of it as just another experience, be the Watcher of the body, the mind, the thoughts & feelings, and then from your heart choose the option that is best for all of our self. Help ever, hurt never; Love all, serve all, what else is there to say? Still, I would personally never hang around for long in vibrations, places, or with people who are negative, deceptive, or vindictive and to be beaten up that way. We always have choices, so be wise ask each time what Swami would say and do. Act or speak from the Love in our heart is the answer to all of it, but remember it does not always have to express itself as only a gentle smile.*

*From now on choose to be happy, in spite of the world around you if you must, just be happy because it is our very nature, and it feels right. Know we are always here for you, we are One heart, One Love, One All.  
LOVE, LOVE, LOVE,  
J. & K."*

### ***Self-reliance***

You might wonder what methods can we use to eliminate this false idea, this false identification with name and form? The mind is constantly busy thinking something or another.

When you start to think "I am not the body, I am not the senses, I am not the mind or intellect," you will find that there is no real mental activity or thought in this procedure.

Thought is possible only in relation to an object, either gross or subtle. Since your attention is directed towards the source of thought, by saying 'I am not this, not that' etc., you are simply stating the truth, so there is no thought activity as such. Your thought simply merges into consciousness.

When you form the thought, "I am pure Consciousness," you are only expressing knowledge. Remember, we are always in our real nature of Consciousness; there is not even the possibility to get away from it, ever.

"By proclaiming, "I am not the body, the mind, the thoughts, etc.," you are just eliminating the outward reaching identification tendency of your senses. What is left of the world when you eliminate your senses, when you close your eyes, plug your ears, and sit quietly, comfortably alone? What is left in your mind after you say 'I am not this, not that?' Is it not a moment of mental silence, in which the Atma alone is present? Check it out for yourself.

If we truly analyze the idea of thought, we have to come to the inevitable conclusion that there is no such thing as a thought. It is only a projected point or ray of consciousness which has the illusion of being limited, which we call by the name of 'thought.'

Remember, dearest selves, what we humans have labeled as GOD, is nothing more, or nothing less, than the totally connected, and perfect, awareness of everything in this creation as our 'Eternal Self.'

The knower of this Truth (Oneness, the Self) is ever conscious of this Truth alone. He or she plays the game of life in the world but is untouched by it in any way. How can we ever compare that awareness state with the ignorant worldly person who is still consumed and plagued with constant attachments and desires?

The one who has known him or her Self as creation itself, will always live in the moment and act spontaneously, naturally, without any trace of desire, attachment or fear to any given circumstance. He or she does what is worth doing each moment, without the slightest concern for praise or blame in any way. He or she, having given up any ego sense of duty altogether, remains calm, poised, and serene, even while appearing to the world to be engaged in duties. You see, there is no longer any ego motive behind any of these actions. Whatever is done, is done simply for the doing, without desire or attachment.

This wise one will feel neither satisfaction nor guilt, for what is done or not done. He or she feels no eagerness, no compulsion, no nervousness, due to being in constant activity or in silent inactivity. In the eyes of the world, he or she may appear to act, because of the left over influence of past Karma, but within there is only indifference to these actions of mind and body. He or she simply remains in the pure Awareness of who they truly are, the Eternal Self.

Swami always tells us, ***“If you truly want to know ME, you must know your Self!”***

What else can we possibly say? Can any words, which are still the illusion, ever really express the inexpressible? In deep inner silence, past body, mind, feeling and intellect, the Self is simply all there is. The Self alone is real, nothing else exists. Only in this Truth, in this Self-realization, can we ever find real fulfillment.

**S**peaking of fulfillment, let this body (Kalassu) tell you a bit more about my last visit with Swami. If you remember I went alone in September. Somehow the ‘dinkies’ (money) came unexpectedly for one ticket and everything fell right into place at the last moment within one week. This is how things usually happen for us since we don’t make any set plans for anything. We are simply Divinity’s little disciples leaving all the plans in the Omnipresent hands. Since I still had a slight desire in my heart to bask in the physical presence of my beloved Baba, the choice was simple. Here are some highlights of the trip.

I realized that this trip was also a lesson in complete Self-reliance. The ‘Inner Swami’ had to be my only security, my only guide, my only focus. It was marvelous, to find that during my entire visit I was able to stay, as well as function completely, in the moment, in the ever present NOW awareness.

Swami riding on the golden chariot, which my eyes were witnessed a couple of days after I arrived in Prashanthi Nilayam, was a Divine surprise.

Afterwards, there were several stories floating around about this special event, which had been declared in the ‘Vedas’ (Hindu religious books) eons ago. One rumor had it, that anyone that saw Swami on the golden chariot that day had also been present at the time of Rama’s coronation in the Treta Yuga. Another story indicated that all those who saw Swami with their physical eyes on that particular day in the golden chariot, would be liberated from the cycles of birth and death this life. It was amazing how many people from all over the world ended up there on that particular day. They all seemed to have gotten it in their heads to go to Puttaparthi, and just like that, within a few days, they had arrived. If you have made this trip before, you might know that it usually takes a few weeks to get everything in order with visas, available flights, bookings, and so on. Let it suffice to say that I was not the only one caught by surprise.

The sacred day of the golden chariot started out very mystical. There was a surrealistic atmosphere pervading all of Puttaparthi. The morning was heralded by mist. Swami looked more like a king,

seated there on a golden throne. This spectacular golden chariot is said to look exactly like the chariot of the sun God, Surya. The chariot was mounted with seven golden horses, and pulled by a thousand students on two long ropes; as it came around the corner a slight drizzle of misty rain started. The clouds were so ominous and the atmosphere was magical, as if the heavens had conspired to contribute their heavenly haze of joyful tears to this Divine play.

The crowds were enormous and pressing in on all sides to get a good look at the majestic spectacle. I have always tried to avoid crowds whenever possible, but this time it was simply of no consequence. In spite of it all, I found myself alone once more after a few moments, as the crowds surged ahead in order to get inside the mandir. It is hard to describe the feeling I had standing there, outside in this mystical drizzle, watching Swami on the golden chariot pass by and wave at me. It was somewhat like awe mixed with joy and tinged with an ancient memory somehow. I sat down and watched the splendor of it all. How wonderful, how dear and loving He was to call me all the way here, so that I could be graced to behold Baba on the mystical golden chariot. It was definitely an out of body day, and it seemed from that moment on my feet never touched the ground the entire trip. Hopefully, these feet will never touch the ground again.

A couple of days later, I was sitting in morning darshan as usual. Swami came out radiating His Divine Love into forever, when I suddenly found myself in a surrealistic, partially out of body, state.

I had been contemplating the fact that everyone around me seemed so needy, so very dependent on physical acknowledgment from Swami, so selfishly desirous. Suddenly, my vision shifted dramatically. At first, I rubbed my eyes, to see if I was dreaming. But the picture did not change, I saw Swami walking along, as hundreds of smaller 'little Swamis,' complete with orange robes and black afros, were sitting, reaching out and stretching, yearning with desire toward the Sai form. It was such a strange sight, it tugged at my heartstrings, because all the 'little Swamis' had no idea at all that they were exactly the same as the big Swami, and needed absolutely nothing. All they had to do was look in the mirror, and realize the Truth! The vision lasted throughout the entire darshan, and the only thing I could do afterwards was cry a few silent tears and pray that each one of us will gain the understanding of the Truth of our Oneness, that Divine Love!

Between witnessing Bhagavan on the golden chariot, and the intense days of Dasara, when voluminous clouds of sacred herbs and incense reeled my senses, I was overwhelmed. To this very day, in my mind, I can still hear the continuous powerful Vedic chants, mantras and bhajans of Dasara which filled creation with such incredible force and magnitude.

You see, Swami had usually called us to India during the Summer School course in Brindavan, so I never really physically experienced these festivals. So this time, Swami treated me to the greatest show on earth!

## Chapter Six

**M**any more incarnations (in different countries and social classes) passed for Angel. As the ages moved forward in time, Angel's next relatively significant incarnation was in the old days of France, around 1155 A.D., at the time when the 'Rosae Crucis,' had formed a very secret and select part of (what was only whispered about) the 'White Brotherhood,' in France and Europe as a whole. It was originally an ancient and secret Oriental occult Brotherhood, dedicated to the welfare of humanity. All of its members are pledged to devote their lives, in a labor of love, for mankind. The Brotherhood is spiritually guided by the various ascended Masters, who are dedicated to guide mankind as a whole unto the path of Light and Love.

*[Dear embodiments of Love, let us also remember right here, that no matter how glorious this all sounds, it is still all only part of the game, the illusion of this momentary dream of form and name. It still deals in ego separations, and therefore, no matter how spiritually elevated and exciting or glorious it all sounds, it is still just another steppingstone. Please know in your heart, that by no means are we trying to make light of, or minimize, the wonderful and loving service the White Brotherhood and the great Ascended Masters provide for the game of Creation, but it is still **the game of separation, an illusion!**]*

**I**n this particular life time, Angel was born into the household of a Marquis of the French nobility, as the youngest son. He had an elder brother by two years, and two younger sisters. Angel grew up in the state befitting his station in life. He was a proficient horseman, excellent marksman, and a better swordsman than his brother. He had an unusual close and long-standing emotional tie, a 'karmic residue' as we call it, with his older brother which made them almost inseparable.

When Angel was twenty, his father was killed in a duel, and his mother got remarried, to the consternation of the entire family. Angel and his brother had a beloved teacher they were close to. The teacher was secretly a member of the fourth degree in the White Brotherhood and had especially been assigned the task of tutoring the brothers. They had many a conversation about esoteric principles and the occult in general. Their old friend and teacher died at the hand of an assassin, while shopping at the open market place. This left the young brothers virtually alone to get on in the world. Oh sure, they had their good times gambling, drinking, and philandering ladies of the night, but in all their travels around Europe, they always seemed to be on a quest. In their hearts, they were looking to find the answers, the truth if you like, God, the real meaning of life. However, once more, arrogance, great impatience, and undue haste marked Angel's character.

From their beloved teacher, they had some knowledge of esoteric principles, which steered them in the right direction, and often seemed to guide them silently through life's maze of sensual immersion. Yet, because of their inbred arrogance of 'Noblesse oblige' (that due to one's noble birth one must always oblige) and Angel's great impatience, volatile anger, and undue haste, the brothers often attracted the wrong energies in their life, which in the end was their undoing.

They were on the road to Spain, in order to meet with another member of their teacher's Brotherhood, who had contacted them earlier. It was right in the beginning of the twenty-eighth year of Angel's life when they were waylaid by a band of highwaymen, who demanded their possessions or their life. As you can guess, the brothers laughed and would have none of it, in spite of the unfavorable overwhelming odds. The fight was relatively short. A couple of the robbers ended up mortally wounded along with An-

gel's older brother. The only reason Angel was left alive was his superior ability with the sword, and due to the fact that the other robbers had confiscated all their possessions by then and fled the scene.

Devastated at his brother's fate, Angel crawled over to where his beloved brother was breathing his last breaths. He gently lifted his brother's head on his lap and cried. It was more out of anger and frustration than pain. His brother got a slightly bemused look on his face and whispered, "... what ... is all this? Have you forgotten father Dupre's teachings so soon?"

Angel had to smile in spite of his deep anger, "... it's not that, mon cher Pierre, I am just ... (he hesitated) angry at our fate, ...at God!"

"Listen, mon petit cher frere," his brother's weak and raspy voice had an intense and compelling urgency, "... know that I will find you again, no matter where or when ... (he paused for a moment) ... and you will find me ... know that if I find the answers, or find the way to reach the Truth, before you ... I will not rest until I find you in whatever life lies before us. Here ... (he painfully removed his father's signet ring from his bloody hand) take this and remember, I will find yo....." then he died.

Angel, angry at creation and devastated by all of the events, made his way back to Paris and eventually ended up drinking and gambling himself into poverty. Angry at God and the fickleness of fate, he was utterly devoid of forbearance of any type. Angel was barely a shell of a man, when he died alone in some French gutter as his liver gave out.

When Angel passed over and reviewed that particular life, he felt like he had flunked his lessons somehow. By allowing anger, undue sorrow, and attachments to sidetrack him from the quest, he had missed another great opportunity to practice forbearance and patience. Angel insisted to be instantly sent back, to be reborn, to do a better job. He tried this three times in a row, but never quite managed it; patience and forbearance seemed to elude his emotional grasp.

## ***Patience and forbearance!***

**W**hat is it, that sometimes makes some of us so impatient? If we break it all down to a common denominator, it will always end in some form of unfulfilled expectation, some form of ego. Truly, patience is a direct expression of Wisdom and Love. It is the result of deep understanding through personal experience. Is the loving mother impatient with her newborn baby because it does not know how to feed itself? It is a silly thought, isn't it? So, what is so different for any of us, when we see some other part of us not understanding, or struggling to learn a certain difficult or even simple lesson? Is it not always due to our own mental attitude or some form of judgment and expectation that makes us feel agitated and impatient? Check it out the next time when you are faced with a situation of this nature.

The wise person, the one that has already learned, will always exhibit gentle tolerance and compassion; he will never feel frustrated. His inner knowledge, that it is a part of himself disguised as another person, who is going through a new learning experience, will immediately fill the wise person with love and patience.

Swami has often told us that patience and forbearance are the two great qualities that must be possessed in order to move forward on the spiritual path and reach the final goal. Exhibiting forbearance means refraining from just reacting blindly out of habits or indiscriminately, and to always show inner calmness. This inner peace or balance should be visible under all trying, harrowing, turbulent, and deeply challenging circumstances in life, since it will always be our greatest protection.

***"Remember, Joy is your self-made heaven, sorrow your self-made hell, and calmness is your own protection!"***

*Baba*

**T**hat brings to mind a special and dramatic life and death experience, dealing with forbearance and patience.

It was in the fall of ninety-four, when God saved us, along with a few hundred firefighters, from being devoured by 'Agni,' the lord of Fire. It was a time when forbearance was an essential requirement for our survival.

The large, out of control forest fire, actually ended up as two large Idaho fires in the end. These bodies (Johnima & Kalassu) were once again the E.M.T.'s (Emergency Medical Technicians) at the original first fire. Creation had prompted us to learn this E.M.T. training, in order to be of some useful help, in case of accidents, since we live remotely out of town, and also to be of service to our community. So, when they have a use of us they call and we do the best we can with Divine Grace.

We had been called to assist as E.M.T.'s on this particular fire by the Payette Forest Service, where we are registered. We were the first ones on the scene and had already set up the E.M.T. tents for a M.A.S.H. type field emergency medical unit deep in the mountainous region outside of McCall. The fire had been caused by dry lightning, and was out of control, consuming thousands of acres of forest and edging its way towards the lake and the town of McCall.

We had been at this "safe" campsite, which the fire experts had selected, for about a week, and every day the fire moved a bit closer towards our elevated position. We had no big emergencies or serious casualties so far; only some blisters, cuts, scrapes and bruises, and the occasional cold or fever.

It was dusk, when we walked down towards the front line of the fire which flared brightly about a few miles away. As we moved closer towards the flames, we felt the tremendous force, the shakti, of the nature of fire. It was quite spectacular, beautiful even, to see such a natural force unleashed at close range.

We moved as close as we dared, without putting our bodies in harm's way. Then we silently sat there and watched the fiery spectacle. We both started to communicate with the energy that we were experiencing internally.

We had been present in a meeting just before we took our walk. The fire experts had told us that we were still all right in our present camp site for the night. They were absolutely certain that the fire would 'lay down' over night, as it usually does. That means that the fire becomes somewhat quiet at night, more a smoldering, slow-moving fire, due to the dampness. The camp commander had asked the experts, since he had felt that it would be best to move the camp, since the fire was advancing directly towards our location. But, as stated above, the experts assured him that we could wait until the next day.

As we sat there, both of us knew, without a shadow of a doubt, that this fire would not lay down. This particular fire had a life and mind of its very own, and was definitely intent on devouring as much as it could in the shortest possible time.

We looked at each other and in almost one voice said, "No way, I don't think it's going to lay down tonight."

We decided to talk to the experts on our way back to the camp and tell them our perceptions. Well, as you might have guessed they thought us crazy. To them we were just some silly E.M.T.'s who knew nothing about fire behavior. They simply dismissed us saying, "Listen we know what we are doing, that's why they pay us the big bucks, remember? Ahh, don't worry, we'll be safe for another day or so."

Those were their famous last words, so we just quietly said, “Okay Divine Mother, whatever, it is in your hands anyway!” and went to our tent for the night.

It was just about one o’clock in the morning, when suddenly someone pounded on our tent and frantically informed us that the fire was just about to run over the camp. He told us to leave everything behind and to run down to the open meadow about a quarter of a mile behind us.

Now you have to realize, this was the base camp, in which we had fuel trucks filled with gasoline, a couple of helicopters were parked in the meadow close by, and in general we had a lot of motor vehicles parked all over the place. Should even one spark from the fire reach any of the fuel trucks, we would all be blown to kingdom come, never mind the fire itself.

We immediately jumped out of our sleeping bags, collected as much of the transportable medical supplies as we could and headed for the nearby meadow. On the way there we looked for out of the way tents, and when we found some we calmly, but forcefully, informed the people of the approaching danger.

Within a few minutes, panic started to overtake some of the first-time fire camp people. These were mostly eighteen to early twenty-year-old men and women, who thought it would be great fun to work in a fire camp and also get paid for camping out.

As we assessed the dangerous situation around us, we became acutely aware that the wind was building and the fire was moving rapidly and directly towards our precarious camp position. Somehow the night fire watch had fallen asleep and not noticed the fire until it was too late to evacuate. The fire had cut off all of our escape routes; all exit roads were overrun by fire. The helicopters could not fly out of it either; it would have been suicide. To say it plainly, there was a hundred and fifty foot wall of fire coming straight at us, with no possible way out, and the wind was blowing forcefully directly at us.

By now, everyone had become fully aware of the possibility that this might be it. It might be the time for all these bodies to die. We could see the hysteria mounting all around the camp. They were starting to cry and shake, they just did not know what to do.

We were all supposed to have our personal fire shelters, which is a one-man pack designed to help us survive the fire if it should run over us. Well, to make things more impossible, there were not enough fire shelters for every person. Only maybe one for every third or fourth person. Now panic really escalated; we heard the fearful sobbing and hysterical crying all around us. Calmly we continued chanting the ‘Gayatri mantra’ while we were setting up a makeshift emergency section near the back of the meadow. We volunteered to go back into the smoldering abandoned camp in order to retrieve the last few fire shelters. On the way there and back, we stopped everywhere we could to help calm down as many of the people as possible. Even a lot of the well-seasoned veterans were losing their composure by now. It was a time when everyone had to look directly into the face of death.

By now everyone knew that escape was not possible since all the exit roads were blocked by fire. We would just have to ride out the fire which was coming closer and closer every moment. Imagine a roaring wall of fire over a hundred feet high, with huge tongues of flames jumping from treetop to treetop. It was lord Agni in all of his fiery, spectacular glory.

In desperation, a lot of the people started praying, as the roaring fiery dragon of nature moved relentlessly towards us.

The heat became oppressive and suffocating. Sparks were flying everywhere. It was a total miracle in itself that not one spark landed near the fuel vehicles. As we returned and handed out the last few fire shelters, we could feel the mass fear. It was like a tangible substance of gray-black with erratic spikes, hooks, lines and flashes of brownish red.



We, as calmly as possible, comforted all the hysterical young people that had crowded around. We could feel the hot searing wind directly on our faces, like a fire dragon's foul, scorching breath.

Within a few moments, our supervisor called us both over to the side and handed us one reserve fire shelter. He quietly said, "Look, I know you would rather give this away to one of the kids, but if by chance, and God willing, any of us make it through this, you're the ones that will be most needed, so please use it." Then he walked away to the pit he had dug for himself, like all the rest of us had hurriedly done from the onset of this fiasco.

We walked a few paces over to the blanket that we had spread out and sat down. There was nothing else to do but wait patiently for whatever. As we both watched the awesome, grand, and truly beautiful spectacle of nature, we wondered if it was time to start OM-ing, - meaning, of course, was it time for our bodies to die.

We closed our eyes and contemplated it for a moment. The 'Inner Swami' said, "No, this is not the time."

Lord, please take care of all these people, and see to it that no one gets really hurt, okay? Then we started singing some bhajans and watched the spectacle before us. It was definitely a time to practice forbearance and patience for all of us, and exhibit it as an example to the best of our ability.

By now the fire had arrived at the outer perimeter of the meadow, about three to four-hundred yards in front of us. We could feel the smoke-filled hot, choking, lung-searing breath of the fire, as huge trees literally exploded all round us into fire bombs, throwing their sparks and missiles everywhere.

All of our brave firefighters had placed themselves between us and the advancing flames. In quiet, exhausted desperation they stood at the front lines, doing what little they could. It truly was a most courageous act of sacrifice.

Suddenly, as we were singing to Swami, we could feel the wind shift on our faces. Instead of blowing directly at us, that hot fiery breath suddenly shifted and blew from the right side. It blew with even more force than it did before. At the same instance, it felt like a giant hand changed the direction of the huge fire wall, which instantly started to turn and move to the left around us and the meadow. To the right was the mountain plateau with our smoldering abandoned camp and all the parked fuel trucks, helicopters, and other vehicles. Think about it, one small spark in the wrong place and "boom!"

It was a miracle, a spectacular Swami rescue. Words really can't do justice to the feeling that everyone felt who was present at that moment. It was Divine!

The fire passed right around us! The moment it had cleared our position, the wind suddenly shifted once more and the fire continued on its original course. Thank you, Swami, for Your Love and Grace and teaching us forbearance and patience, as well as for saving all the lives of our brothers and sisters and our own.

**W**e have been asked many times over the years if we are followers or devotees of Sathya Sai Baba. The first time we were asked we had to reflect deeply before we could answer. At some point in time the answer might have been, "Yes ..., no ..., maybe ..., or whatever, but what kind of label should we use to express our personal connection with our Dear Inner Sai Self? After a moment of deep reflection our answer was this: "Since these are Swami's bodies, by His own words, and since there is no more room for anything else but God's Divine will, we would have to say no, but we might call ourselves God's smallest, most insignificant, loving disciples or extensions, since the Omnipresent God is the master of these bodies, minds, and lives. We can never again be the 'doer' of anything, it is all only God Consciousness.

In all truth, it is really this way for all of us, we are all only His dream extensions. We know that some of us still might have a bit of trouble with this idea, so maybe in some small sense this can be helpful.

It might help us all to think in these, or similar, terms. “We have no requirement, no need, but every night and morning let us consciously and purposely rededicate these bodies, minds, and everything, (simply out of an overflowing love feeling) to our own completeness, the ***One Omnipresent Lord of Creation.***”

### ***Steppingstone practice!***

Let us declare: “*Dear sweet Lord of Creation, Eternal Perfect Christ Consciousness, Beloved Sai, Beloved Divine Self, this is your body, your mind and your senses. On all levels all thoughts, feelings, words and deeds, as well as the impulses that prompt them and the true intent behind them, exist only for our Divine selfless Love, for the power and glory of All! This dream part of Yourself exists only for Your power and glory! ... and so it is! Om Sai Ram! Sohum! Amen!*”

***A***t another time, it was around nineteen seventy-five, we were delivering a friend’s little ‘Triumph’ sports car somewhere in L.A., way out in Orange county. We were on the 5 freeway speeding along with the flow of traffic at about seventy miles an hour. If you are at all familiar with L.A. freeway traffic, then you know that the freeways are usually very crowded.

We were driving in the lane right beside the fast lane on the left, with three other lanes also filled with speeding traffic to our right. Suddenly we heard a loud metallic ‘clunk’ in the engine and underneath our feet. The transmission and drive-shaft dropped. The car instantly stopped and started to spin in circles out of control down the freeway. We both held our breath after this body (Kalassu) called out “***Swami!!!***”

It was magical; we felt like the world was suddenly moving in slow motion all around us. It seemed like a giant unseen hand was moving all the speeding cars right around us, as we spun from one lane into another until the car came to an abrupt halt, facing the oncoming traffic. As we sat there dazed and silent, we silently thanked Swami and looked all around. To our complete amazement all the traffic had slowed down and was carefully moving around us. Why we tried to start the engine again, I don’t know, but by God, it started and we wasted no time crawling our way down to the off ramp, which was just to our right. By all rights, we should have been dead, and in no way should the engine have started again. And that the car actually moved and got us off the freeway, well what can we say?

Many years back this body (Kalassu) was driving with a friend on a rainy day through Laurel Canyon in the Hollywood Hills. I was in the passenger seat, the proverbial suicide seat, as we turned the corner. Without any warning there in front of us was a big semi-truck heading directly at us in our lane. My friend applied the brakes, and we started to spin out of control. As I closed my eyes and expected the inevitable, the last words out of my mouth were, “***Oh sh.. !***”

Somehow we spun to a stop and stalled, without hitting the truck. I realized then, if we had been hit by the truck and died, my last words in this life would have been “Oh sh.. !” So I vowed, right then and there, from that moment on that with my dying breath God’s name will be the last word I utter. I was seventeen years old.

Like all of us, I practiced and when the next close call happened on the freeway (with God’s Grace) I was able to shout, “***Swami!!!***”

Practice paid off for me; always chant the name of God and bask in His glory. But as we said, it takes practice. This road that we have chosen to tread is a constant vigil, because everything around us is

telling us that it is real and important. Our vigil is to realize this dream of life and see the Divine, God and Love in everything.

**H**ere is another one of those spectacular life-saving incidents. This time it was our son, Sai Kodey, who was saved by Swami. Kodey was seventeen at that time. He and Shanti had been invited, like many other times before, to go water-skiing on Cascade lake. Kodey and his friend, along with the help of his friend's Dad, were getting the boat ready to go. It was a sleek older boat with a powerful in-board motor. Shanti, with the friend's younger sister, were sitting nearby on the dock, after having brought the last pair of water-skis from the truck. The Dad, who was just closing the heavy wooden engine cover, wanted to warm up the engine, so he told his son to push the starter. "**Kaboom!**"

The entire boat blew up. Kodey, who had just stepped into the boat, was blown backwards into the lake along with his friend who had pushed the starter. The Dad, along with the engine cover, was blown several feet into the air before he landed in the water. It was a tremendous blast that was heard for miles around. Though stunned and visibly shaken, miraculously no one was hurt. I mean they didn't even have a scratch on them.

Later when the fire department and police arrived and surveyed the charred and splintered boat remains, they all scratched their heads, trying to figure out how no one was hurt. They had never seen anything like it, it even made the local newspaper. Their comment was, that by all rights they should have been killed. They jokingly said that their Guardian Angels had been on the ball, and working overtime. They also figured out that a lot of fuel had leaked, and fuel along with the evaporated fumes had been trapped in the different tightly sealed compartments, and somehow a spark from the electric starter, or battery, had triggered the explosion.

When Kodey came home and told us about it, he explained what he had not yet told anyone else. Just a couple of split seconds before the actual explosion happened, he had seen an orange flash come directly past him onto the boat, and now he knew that it must have been Swami, saving them all.

Along with Shanti's incredible life-saving story, which we wrote about in the 'Ten Steps to Kesava' book, there have been many other life-saving and direct Divine interventions in our lives, as we are sure there have been in your life, dear reader.

God has always protected us all, even though a lot of us might not even know it, or consciously be aware of it. We are sure that all of us have had some of these experiences, when, God, Christ, Saints, Guardian Angels, Swami, or some Divine Power intervened and saved us from certain danger, harm, and death.

#### ***All is for the best***

But whatever lot in life befalls us, whether we call it good or bad, let us think of it all as God's Grace. Know that all these things are only momentary experiences. We can call them trials, lessons, or steppingstones, but let us remember that they are all specifically designed to bring us closer and closer to the goal. The goal always being the attainment, or maybe better the recollection, of our 'True Eternal Self.'

**S**ome of the people, when we speak in this fashion, accost us with a little anger and confusion if they cannot digest this idea that all is for the best and that we really have designed our own learning experiences. Here is a short version of one encounter.

"Am I hearing you right? You are not really suggesting that all our various troubles, or learning experiences as you call them, are always for our own good, and that we even design our own hellish experiences?" N. blurted out.

“Yes, that is exactly what we are saying.” was our answer.

“Yeah, right, tell that to the starving children in Africa, to the millions that are dying from AIDS and cancer, to the rape and molestation victims, to the oppressed and tortured people all over the world, the maimed and the enslaved, and see what they think about your idea!” N. replied with pure sarcasm in his raspy voice.

“As long as we are identifying our real ‘Self’ with our physical body and our mind self, you are absolutely right N., they would all think that we are stark-raving mad. Heck, they might even lynch us for the idea. But the truth is that everything, no matter how bizarre it looks, was designed by our various Karma and by each of us in turn, in order to advance our consciousness, to learn, to understand completely. It is all only for our own good, no matter how awful it seems to us at times. Look at the relationships as well as circumstances in your own life N. Are they not mostly self-created in one way or another by desire, like or dislike?” we questioned.

“Some of it, sure, but all of it? No way! I mean, one would have to be crazy!” he replied with utter conviction.

It was the end of that particular conversation, because N. had closed his mind. Within moments we could feel the vibration of anger rise up from the pit of his stomach, as he thought about the whole idea. N. lowered his head in order to hide his feelings, sighed deeply and left the room.

### *Steppingstone practice*

Dearest embodiments of Love, always go to the big picture when your personal world seems to crumble and fall into chaos around you, or even when you think about the world chaos. Stay calm and focus your thinking ability on the God within you, on the principle of our connected Oneness, on your ever present Awareness and know that the same Awareness or God principle is present in everyone and everything. Stay rooted in your unwavering faith that all is only GOD. ***There is truly no birth or death for our real ‘Self.’*** Never again give up your inner equilibrium, that inner peace, for any part of this momentary, transitory stuff of the world and the senses.

### *Anger*

When people criticize you for some reason or another, stay calm and do not react or try to prove them wrong. Listen calmly and check within yourself if there is any truth in what they say. Then, if there is not, if appropriate, point out the flaw in their judgment, or just be silent. You will be able to do this, if you have done your best for the circumstance at hand. Know right now, that very often to other people, or the world around us, nothing we do, say, or think, will be good enough. But if you know in your heart that you did the very best you knew how, then it is fine, and you do not need to feel attacked, weird, persecuted, or unjustly condemned.

Likewise, when others, due to ego conflicts, speak ill of you, tell lies about you, undermine and back-stab you at work, in your community, in your circle of friends, and even in your own family, be calm, show forbearance. Just forgive them all and send Love to them, and never again allow anger, arrogance, pride, or fear to coerce you into reacting out of ego.

### *Steppingstone practice*

However if the individuals to whom you are showing patience and forbearance continue to be purposely malicious and downright cruel, as well as untrustworthy and unrepentant, then use your discrimination (follow your inner conscience) and deal with them as severely as the situation requires. Expose everything, bring it out into the full light of truth. But remember, this is only on the outside. ***In your heart you must always be calm, peaceful and balanced with pure love.*** (Remember Divine Love is Forgiveness itself!) Count to ten and then ask your inner heart for your particular situation, “How would Jesus act or what would Swami say?” You will be able to do this if you remember that these other parts

of God, of yourself, are also passing through a learning experience or steppingstone, but this takes patience and understanding and selfless Love.

So, let us all practice the traits of patience and forbearance from this moment on, and see them as our crown jewels, as the treasure of the Wise!

## *Chapter Seven*

After Angel returned from that last instant triple rebirth, the Spirit guides became aware of a definite change in Angel. For some unknown reason, Angel showed signs of deep seated belligerence, an attitude of spite, scorn, or rebellion towards God. It was ever so slight, and though it was barely visible at first, it was recognized as a deeply planted seed. Oh, they tried to explain it, show it, change it, by diligently pointing Angel into a different mental attitude, but it was of no avail. In the end, they all had to accept the fact that Angel was headed down this hard learning road.

More incarnations followed. Again, in various countries and social classes of the world. Here and there, it appeared that Angel finally began to see the light, so to speak, but each time it was only a mirage. This dark streak of rebellion, intolerance, and unreasonable belligerence was still there underneath, hiding, festering, seething.

As the 'Watcher' we can see that it might have come as the result of a defeatist attitude of constantly failing to exhibit enough patience, forbearance, tolerance, humility, compassion and love, but it went deeper than even that. Angel's warped, strong ego personality was fighting an imaginary God. We all seem to go through this love - hate relationship with God at one point. It was such a powerful subconscious emotion, it transcended every part of Angel on all levels. The French life tragedy, where his elder brother died while they were on the quest for God, had been the straw that broke the camel's back, so to speak.

For example, one time Angel was born into the Chinese culture as a male child. He became a soldier and later an official tax-collector. He was ordered to go to Tibet frequently to collect the tribute that Tibet was paying China.

On one of these trips, which Angel hated with a passion, he was caught in a snowstorm right outside of Lhasa, the forbidden city. When the storm finally passed, it was five days later. Angel was already angry at the entire perilous trip, and this just took him over the edge of what little patience he had in the first place.

He, along with his small regiment of soldiers, arrogantly strutted into Lhasa. Always before they had avoided going past the Potala and used the alternate route, which took them along the Ling Kor Road away from the sacred Potala. But this time, Angel wanted trouble; he was so mad at the whole situation; he was inviting conflict. He hated the religious monks and Lamas in particular. So, when a small group of monks they encountered did not move quickly enough to make room for their passage, he ordered them to be beaten by his soldiers. A Lama, who happened to pass by and saw the severe beatings of the monks, stepped in and told Angel that he was in the wrong part of Lhasa and to move on immediately.

Well, this was just too much for our arrogant official Chinese tax-collector's ego. With trembling rage, Angel ordered two of his soldiers to grab and hold the Lama fast. He then dismounted from his horse and walked right up to the restrained Lama. With cold, cruel eyes he hissed at the Lama, "I will do what I like, your God does not scare me. In fact, I challenge Him to stop me and save your miserable hide."

With his clenched fist, he hit the Lama in the face. The Lama reacted very little to the blow, he only moved his head slightly with the force of it. Now, Angel became livid and without thinking he put both thumbs into the Lama's eye-sockets and pushed, blinding the Lama. Afterwards Angel whispered

into the screaming Lama's left ear, "So fool, where was your God? He did not save you, did He?" Then he climbed back on his horse and motioned for the soldiers to follow.

Angel lived to a ripe old age, but in the end died alone, forsaken, and without any glory.

A number of other lives followed, but his deep anger at the idea of God remained deeply hidden in his heart.

Yet, at one point, Angel chose that the next few incarnations should be handicapped, in order to learn quicker and experience the other side of his Karma. Being born blind in one, and in another crippled, maybe once mentally retarded, etc. The Spirit helpers warned Angel that it was a very difficult step to take, and that it would take tremendous courage to consciously tackle even just one of these kinds of learning experience. They explained that in their belief Angel was not yet emotionally quite ready for it. On the other hand, they agreed that it was a fast way to learn and to facilitate all the various karmic debts.

However, Angel chose to be born as a girl, who was blinded by a thief at the age of nineteen, in order to accelerate the learning process. As foreseen, Angel did not do too well. She was bitter her whole life for being blinded so cruelly and unjustly by God or fate. Angel's God fixation only grew more hidden.

Angel made a few other valiant attempts by asking for a handicapped body in order to hurry things along. Twice it actually worked well for Angel and he achieved the desired success, but overall it had little impact on changing his hidden attitude about God.

After many incarnations, this dark and secret attitude (which actually became a hidden fixation, or we could liken it unto a festering pimple) finally came to a head. It was on the after death side, the Spirit side, where it fully erupted. This is how it happened.

Angel was born in America into an old established Southern family as Edward Ballantine the Third. After being brought up in the southern gentleman tradition by a harsh and cruel father, with all its sordid slave and master innuendoes, Angel had become a General in the Civil war at the age of thirty-seven. In an inconsequential skirmish at Marye's Heights, near Fredericksburg in 1864, a union soldier shot his horse from under him. Other bullets wounded him in the groin and stomach and he was left to die alone in agony. However, Angel did not die, and after being rescued he recovered from his physical wounds in time. But his emotional and mental wounds did not heal. At the age of forty-one Angel committed suicide. In one moment of utter frustration, anger, and deep dark depression, he blew his brains out, since he would not live as half-a-man, as he put it.

Immediately after crossing over he went to the half-way station, or in-between state as it is sometimes referred to, where suicides usually end up. From there, they are then quickly incarnated in the first suitable and available body, in order to make up the time that they so abruptly cut off from their previously planned, allotted life span.

Well, Angel awoke from his short rest reprieve and was instantly confronted with the choices available for his next body on earth. In the council chamber, he was given the choice of being born to a couple of poor migrant farm workers in California, a couple of Hungarian immigrants, or a couple of factory workers who were of American native descent.

Angel was outraged at this selection; how dare they treat a General like this! He demanded that he be given special consideration, because of the horrible circumstances that fate and God had placed him into. When he was told that it was all only his self-made karma, and that these were the choices and that was it, he bristled like a riled porcupine.

“What kind of help is this? This feels like a fixed court trail, and I am being railroaded here!” was his indignant outburst. “I will not do it! I simply will not comply!” he raged on.

It was again explained in gentle terms, that due to the act of suicide, he really had no other choice. He had to make up thirty-six years. It was just one of the cosmic rules. The rule is quite simple. By our own desires, thoughts, and actions we create and design our life experiences. Once this procedure is set in motion it has to run its course. If we interrupt or interfere by committing suicide, in order to escape or run away from certain problems, we are compelled to re-experience and make up the time originally planned. (It is like having to make up a school work assignment that was missed due to absence.) Angel was told that everything had been taken into consideration, and that he was actually getting a choice of three couples, when usually the first available one is chosen automatically due to the law of action-reaction.

Angel rebelled with all his long-standing, pent-up subconscious fury. “No! Never will I submit to this, do you hear me, never!!!” he shouted. “I might consider being born as a doctor’s son, or to a lawyer, or some sort of high-ranking political official, but never ... you hear me ... never to any of these ... these ... ahh... ahh ...peasants ... I mean really ...” was his superior, insolent, belligerent, and angry reply.

“We understand, but those are all the best choices we have for you, from here on they get worse. You have only a few more moments to choose, before the birth window passes. If you do not comply now, then the very next available birth channel that opens will become yours. It is all ruled by the karmic magnetic forces, as you well know,” was the reply from his Spirit helpers.

“I don’t give a damn! I will not comply, and no one can make me. I will not choose! No, I will not choose any of these ... these ... degrading births,” was Angel’s arrogant, spiteful rebuttal.

Within a few short moments the three birth windows had passed, and Angel’s Spirit helpers sighed with deep compassion and understanding when they informed Angel of the next step. “We understand, and we strongly recommend that you become a doctor and save lives this time to compensate for your karmic debt, but by your willfulness you have made the choice of your next birth. Here is the next opportunity, the bio-genetic frequency conjunction is compatible, so look closely.”

When Angel looked, he saw that he was about to be born as a girl child in the slums of Calcutta, India. Angel was absolutely horrified and started yelling like a madman, “No, no, no, you can’t make me, I am an aristocrat, damn you all, Noooooo!”

His Spirit helpers tried to gently remind Angel that all of these earth perceptions remained because of his untimely demise, but truly, they were of no consequence any more, since basic, absolute equality in the Spirit sense is the Truth. ONENESS in the actual sense, if we consider the eternal, underlying, omnipresent Consciousness. But Angel was too busy shouting to pay any attention. The transfer countdown continued relentlessly ... 15-14-13-12 -11-10- “I refuse ... I refuse ...” 9-8-7- “...I will not go!” Angel shouted in protest. 6-5-4-3 ... suddenly a great, blinding, golden light flooded the hall as the countdown abruptly stopped.

Out of this mystic light appeared one of the ancient Light Masters and said, “Our love will allow this one to pass, it would be much too difficult a life! The next conjunction will do. That one however is your destiny, my beloved child!” He walked right up and touched Angel’s head, whose wild anger vanished along with the bewildered look in his eyes. Angel was instantly calm, as a great peace flooded the entire place.

“Have no fear, my beloved embodiment of Love. Know in your heart, it is all for the best, and no matter what, we are always with you.” The Light Master continued with overwhelming compassion and Love, while stroking Angel’s cheek. “This time, my Love, we will succeed. Remember,” as he tapped



Angel's third eye, "become a doctor!" With these last words echoing, He vanished in the same golden aura of mystic Light that had brought Him.

Angel's next bio-genetic conjunction was 97% acceptable which placed him into a dark skinned baby boy who was born in Nairobi, Africa, to a dock worker's family.

As Angel felt himself being irresistibly propelled into the mist that surrounded everything, the only thing that remained was a low, pulsing, almost imperceptible drone or hum. He no longer struggled or resisted, there was no pain, only a deep feeling of peace, and waves of new vibrations. At one point he heard the Light Master's voice again, "You are never alone my child, we are always with you, remember, - doctor."

At that same moment the mist slightly parted and for just an instant Angel saw a beautiful female face smiling at him tenderly. She whispered, "In this place of sorrow where you are now going, remember to share your Light and Love, be of service, be a doctor, my dearest Love!" right as that old, familiar, irresistible, electro-magnetic pull forced Angel into his new birth channel.

The mist turned to inky blackness as Angel was carried along. The blackness was gradually illuminated with the most soothing light and color patterns that rushed past Angel's Awareness. A feeling of being pressed, compacted, and molded into a small space was enhanced by the ever-present, low rumbling sound which accompanied it. It made Angel feel as though he was experiencing a tremendous earthquake. Suddenly, through all of this, Angel became aware of muffled screams. He realized quickly that it was his new mother, who was screaming while giving birth to his new body.

Angel's Spirit awareness lingered for a while, as he slowly identified with his new body and three dimensional surroundings.

His parents loved Angel (Albert) dearly and doted on this bright, funny, lovable bouncing baby boy. From the moment Angel was able to lisp his first words, his parents heard him often say, "... doctor .... be doctor ..."

As Angel grew older and learned to read and write at one of the missionary schools, he would study old medical periodicals and magazines. At first, his parents tried to persuade him to give up this compulsive idea of becoming a doctor. After all, he was only a poor little black child in Africa, but Angel would not budge from his determination. Angel's course had been charted by a pilot far wiser than they.

By the time Angel was eighteen, his parents died from influenza. He had been diligently studying and working at the missionary school for several years when it happened. 'World War I' was breaking out all over Europe, and the missionaries were being recalled to return home.

As fate would have it, Angel was elected to accompany them. Since they were aware of his deep-seated attraction to medicine, they sponsored him to become a doctor. After his studies, Angel opted to go to the war front right from the start, in order to be of the most service, which was so desperately needed at that time. He was a doctor, he cared nothing about politics or sides, he just helped anyone that he came in contact with. He was deeply loved and respected by all who came to know him, for his caring and selfless service which he freely shared with all.

It was the day of his thirty-sixth birthday, when Albert (Angel) was caught in a mortar attack. He worked feverishly to be everywhere at once, in order to help the wounded and dying soldiers all around him. He himself had several pieces of shrapnel embedded in his body, but nothing would stop him.

At one point, he even crawled into a bunker where he heard someone whimpering in agonizing pain. Angel reached the young soldier who had a painful abdominal wound. As he was patching him up, the bunker was hit by a grenade, killing Angel and the young soldier. Even in his last moment of life,

Angel heroically tried to shield the young soldier with his own body in order to protect him from the falling debris and shrapnel.

Angel felt no pain as he found himself surrounded by darkness. Suddenly, the darkness was ripped asunder by a searing blinding flash of light. It was as if a curtain had been ripped away, and Angel became aware of shadowy figures all around him.

It all felt so familiar to him, but he was still so confused in his memory, he thought that he was in the middle of a war, a doctor, saving lives ... but now he was ... here ... it was all so confusing.

As the darkness became a shimmering sea of light, Angel heard a familiar voice, "We have been waiting for you, my Love. That was a very noble and beautiful life, your suicide has been atoned many times over, and your heart has blossomed into a beautiful living lotus of Light! Time to rest, my Love!"

Angel smiled, as he slowly remembered everything. Soon a deep wonderful feeling of inner peace washed over him as the most blessed inner silence became his only focus.

## *Inner Silence!*

**W**hy do the Wise proclaim that 'Inner Silence' is the gateway to our real Self? They obviously must have the experience, otherwise they would not say so.

On the other hand, they tell us that the doorway to the world of matter, physical or subtle, are through the five senses and their corresponding organs, right? Then, if we really analyze both statements thoroughly, it would stand to reason that by withdrawing, or suspending the use of those five senses, it should place us right on the threshold of inner silence, don't you agree?

Let us quickly analyze this idea of gross and subtle matter, like the physical matter we encounter while in the waking state, and the subtle matter which we encounter in our dreaming states on astral and even subtler mental levels.

Let us say that an ice-cube from our refrigerator represents the solid mass of physical matter. If we speed up the molecules of this ice-cube by heating it up, the ice-cube will turn into water. Solid ice, has changed to a subtle form, water. Let us think of the water stage of the ice-cube as subtle astral matter, which we encounter in our astral dreams. Now, if we continue to speed up the vibrational rate by the heating process, this water will turn into steam and become even more subtle. So, let us think of this steam as representing the more subtle matter which we encounter on the causal levels. The ice-cube has now undergone changes from the gross, to the subtle, to the more subtle. Hopefully, this small example helps some of us in understanding the idea of gross and subtle matter.

Maybe as another example, we could think of 'Inner Silence' in terms of a deep sea diver, who has experienced a form of absolute silent, profound stillness at the very bottom of the ocean (the ocean representing the inner silence of our Eternal Consciousness). Now then, from deep within this ocean of Consciousness, which is always full, complete, and aware, arises movement or stirring of some sort. This slight movement of Consciousness is the first emanation so to speak and is the creation of an ever-expanding ripple, wave, which is continuously projecting its awareness towards the outer rim of the ocean, or dense material creation. The five elements, along with the five senses, are the gateways for consciousness, and for having the experiences of animating, moving, and molding or shaping this dense material matter. So everything is really nothing more than projected consciousness, experienced in the different depths and movements of the ocean.

Looking from an energy viewpoint, this projected point or wave of Consciousness, by changing variations in movement or speed, creates the illusion of different wave formations or layers, which in turn is imagined as different levels lokas or realms. Each consecutive layer or level, from the first ultra subtle state to the gross physical state, has its own believed reality, which is simply the original point of Consciousness held in certain momentary suspension, while vibrating or pulsing at a particular rate, as Consciousness expands. Like ripples in a pond.

Let us look at it in another way. We have all peeled an onion before, right? Let us imagine that creation is like an onion with many layers. The outer hard and tough layer would be the three-dimensional gross physical level. Each succeeding layer below the first one would be a more subtle level. Let us think of the center of the onion as our full Complete Consciousness in absolute abeyance, or cessation, in other words, in perfect inner stillness, in silence.

From this center, of perfect balanced Awareness of Self, one single pin-point of Consciousness moves outward as the most subtle projected flash, ray, or wave, towards the skin, the outer hard layer of the onion, which represents the dense material universe of matter. This minute or slightest movement of Consciousness is the first emanation, so to speak, and is the creation of an ever expanding ripple, ray or wave, of Consciousness, which is continuously projecting its awareness. Again as before, the five elements along with the five senses are the gateways for this consciousness to experience this dense material matter universe.

So, in truth, only Consciousness itself exists, and the rest is only a perceived relative experience of this Consciousness as it moves through these various vibrational layers and rates of expansion. In short, Consciousness is the origin, the experience, and the result.

So, if we shut off our five senses, gross and subtle, only the initial, the all pervading, silent, ever Blissful Self or God Consciousness exists like it always has.

### AWARENESS

*Awareness is, what we all are  
I AM, I AM, I AM,  
Awake, in dreams, in samadhi,  
I AM, I simply AM.  
Awareness is the root of all,  
Of body, mind, and soul ..... It's the goal (Love feeds the soul)*

*Awareness, ..... Conscious Awareness,  
Awareness, ..... Blissful Awareness,  
I AM, ... Eternally, ... forever free ...*

*Awareness knows no birth, no death,  
No time, no space, no pain,  
Awareness is our perfect Self,  
Behind this Cosmic Game.  
The silent Watcher deep inside,  
Who has no form, no name ...always the same (Bliss is my name)  
Awareness, .....  
Awareness is, and that is all,*

*There's nothing more to say,  
Deep inner silence will erase  
This thought - mind - ego play,  
This dream, this motion picture show  
The mind projects today ..... What can I say? (Life is Love's play)  
Awareness, .....*

*song from the 'Sai Blues' album*

**G**o directly to the idea that everything exists only as objects of illusion, and we can then suspend our focus on all objects. All of creation belongs to this category, which includes the five elements as well as the five senses, in their gross as well as subtle states. All these represent objects that are known to us either in the waking or dreaming state. Time-limited subtle objects, which we call ideas, and all space-limited gross objects which we call solid matter, are included. Time and space also fall in this category of objects known. They cannot exist independently in their own right. They exist only as a perceived or recognized idea, by our Consciousness. In essence, what appears as the entire outside world is nothing other than sound, touch, form, taste, smell and so on. These sense organs deceive us through their functions. Their tendency is to go outward to the world of 'objects'. Our job is to find the way to shut off this reaching outward tendency of the mind, and direct our attention inward to the inner Awareness principle.

We all need to constantly remember that the 'True Self' remains ever unattached and nothing whatsoever is done by it. The body alone acts, owing to its past karma. Knowing this, we should no longer be involved or attached with body, mind, action or inaction. We should just decide to be happy and stick to it with unbending intent!

### ***Mind***

What is that thing we call the mind? Swami tells us that the mind is nothing more than the constantly interweaving thoughts and desires that we project or reach out for with our thinking ability.

***"The mind is nothing more than a bundle of desires!"***

*Baba*

Let us break down this attachment we have to the mind, our thoughts, feelings, and desires, shall we? What is a desire in the first place, and where does it come from? Is it not a deep longing after something that we believe we are missing? We have been in a sleep of ignorance, in the dream illusion of creation lifetime after lifetime! This inevitably comes from our false belief of the first lie of separation, the illusion of Maya! Is there anything that we could classify as a good desire? If there is such a thing at all, then the only worthwhile one would be the desire to know our True Self, and that desire will also have to be relinquished in order to reach that goal.

***"You have been asleep and dreaming for thousands of lifetimes. If you do not awake now, this chance may not come again for thousands more.***

***Come with me. Separation is no longer the order of the day. I separated Myself from Myself so that I could love Myself more. The experience is now finished. I want all of Myself to return and merge into Me, the ONE SELF!***

***Did I not move Heaven and Earth to bring you to ME? I have asked all devotees to repeat the mantra -***

***\* I AM GOD - I AM NOT DIFFERENT FROM GOD! \****

***Now I ask you specifically follow the instruction, it will be ever more helpful than any other one thing you can do.***

***Now remember, I love you,  
Love YOURSELF!"***

***Baba***

Here is something that goes along with Swami's specific instructions. We might do this while driving in a car, or doing housework or some other task that does not require complete focused concentration. This can also be carried over into various occupations. It will heighten your awareness, bring Joy and Bliss, and make you feel good throughout your daily life.

***Steppingstone practice***

*"I am God, I am God, I am not different from God!"*

*OR*

*"I am God, One with God, I am always and forever merged in God Consciousness, consciously, perfectly, totally!"*

We can substitute any name for 'God' in the above statement like, Christ, Sai, Allah, Krishna, Jehovah, Atma, or even Love, Truth, Peace, Bliss, Joy, Om, All ... or whatever we feel close to, or use them all one after the other. We can speak it or put a melody to it and sing it, or just think it, whatever feels good!

We know that some of us are not yet comfortable with this constant identification of SELF as God! We might still have a desire to be the child or a part of God! Always be honest about every one of your feelings. Remember, it's okay, it's just a steppingstone. So for us who feel like that, we might contemplate and say something like this:

*"Om Eternal Jesus Christ Self, Om, Om Eternal Krishna Self Om, Om Eternal Rama Self Iswara, Kesava, Om Eternal Buddha or Sai Self Om!"* and with each voicing or thinking of 'Christ, Krishna, Rama Buddha or Baba Self' we can visualize that beloved God form rising like an ethereal image from our spiritual heart region and floating before us with his feet at eye level. Then we can mentally just bow our head at those imaginary feet and feel happy. There are a thousand different ways in which we can do this sort of thing. Just pick one.

***Who is the doer?***

Think about it for a moment, has worry or anxiety in the mind ever accomplished anything to help change a situation? Has it ever done anything for anyone, except to make one a nervous wreck or sick? So, you see in our understanding it is simply wasted energy.

As long as any of us are still deluded by body consciousness, we will be concerned with activities of the body. As you know, some of us insist that the performance of actions to gain spiritual merits is the correct path, while others will uphold the idea that only the cessation of all actions is the best spiritual practice. But think about it, if we no longer have the identification with our body, mind, or senses, what will remain? What will there be for any of us to gain or to lose by action or in-action? So, if we are truly wise we will neither act nor refrain from action. Besides who is acting? We will simply shut off our senses and experience our Eternal Self, our Primal Being State, forever. Regardless of where in this creation we will find our Awareness focused.

Look around, can you not see that a lot of us are feeling unhappy because we feel that we have to exert ourselves every day? Usually it is for the acquisition of some momentary, trivial or meaningless

thing, right? Something that will sooner or later change or get old, break or disappoint us in some way, just like these bodies.

As long as we believe that we are the doer of anything, this attitude of having to suffer exertion will prevail. If we dwell on the idea that we are exerting ourselves, we are actually saying that there is some desire, either one that is satisfying to us, so we keep doing it, or one that has not yet been satisfied. This kind of identification, belief, or perception, is the cause of misery for us. We must all remember that we are not the doer of anything!

### ***Steppingstone practice***

By watching everything, including our own body and mind (our thoughts, feelings, impulses and intent) then very soon there will no longer arise that egotistical feeling of needing, wanting, or wishing to do anything. When we start to live in this realization, our body and mind may be active or inactive to the eyes of the world (outwardly), but we will be inactive inwardly. Before long we will be able to abide steadily in the knowledge of our 'True Self,' completely detached from all mental and physical agitation and activity.

That is the real happiness we have always been searching for our entire life. Our mind will then be free from any sense of duty, like this needs to be done, and this other thing is wrong to do etc.; we will no longer dwell on any opposites. We will be completely indifferent to all desires and attachments, basically any type of earthly goal in life, and simply live in joy and love each moment. We will no longer even hanker after Self-realization or Liberation, because it will be meaningless to us, who know our 'Self' as everything.

Dearest embodiment of Love, of 'Self', the Self alone exists, all else is unreal. When consciousness of the body or the things of the world engage our attention we cannot abide in the Self. To realize the Self we must be determined to expose the illusion (Maya) and relinquish all attachments to it!

Yes, the body or mind may show some activity, but inwardly, when we get rid of our desires and attachments, we will forever be inactive, simply watching from our Awareness standpoint behind our self. Swami tells us, ***"To be the 'Watcher' of everything, that is the secret to Self-realization!"***

## *Chapter Eight*

Angel's triumphant return was the real turning point. From that moment on, Angel's systematic climb towards Self-realization began. Somehow, by the touch of the Light Master, Angel's Spirit awareness was now balanced again. The negative energy and rebellion against God and creation was dissipated and released. It was replaced by deep personal self-satisfaction and joy. Now, Angel was ready to experience the positive side of a true seeker's quest. We, as the 'Watcher,' understand, of course, that Angel had always been a true seeker, even in his darkest hour. They were simply lessons, learning experiences, steppingstones if you will. As by now most of us are aware, we often tend to explore the negative side of things first, just like in Angel's case. This is similar to the child who is fascinated by fire and burns itself before it understands.

Angel's next birth was in China, where he was born as an orphan who was adopted by a ferry boat man near the border of Tibet and China. This kindhearted, loving step-father taught young Angel the art of meditation simply by watching the river day in and day out. The Buddha became the secret idol in Angel's heart. Before his tenth birthday, Angel's ability to concentrate and keep his mind on a single focus was exquisite. Angel's life-span was very short; he was killed at the age of twelve in a flood while trying to rescue his adopted father, who had been swept overboard by the turbulent, flooding river.

Now, Angel was ready for a Master. Angel was born as the daughter of a Maharaja in India. When she was just a little baby, she would be rocked to sleep hearing about the most glorious adventures of Lord Krishna. So by the time she was able to walk and talk, the Divine Avatar Krishna had already stolen her heart. She had been given a little Krishna statue made out of the most beautiful piece of blue 'lapis lazuli' stone on her fifth birthday. She would always carry her Krishna with her wherever she went. As fate would have it, one day a Self-realized Master visited her father's palace. It was Angel's job to serve him and see to all of his needs, which she did with love and respect and total joy.

The Master was very pleased by her earnest devotion and, as a present for her loving selfless service, he told her to ask for a boon. Without any thought or the slightest hesitation, Angel asked, "Teach me how to merge with my Krishna; that is all that I want Holy One!"

The sage was extremely pleased, and when the Maharaja gave permission for his daughter to accompany the Master, she followed him joyfully to his distant hermitage in the jungle. Angel became a great Yogini. She quickly gained control over her senses and could go into samadhi at will. Latent seeds of the different Yogic powers became evident, like clairvoyance, healing by touch, slight forms of levitation (showing some control over the elements), and so on. However, Angel was accidentally killed by a hunter, whose wayward arrow pierced her chest while she was fetching water for her Master at the age of seventeen.

While reviewing the 'Hall of Records,' Angel observed the darkness that was intent on swallowing the light of the world, and he wished to add his light in the fight against this darkness. So Angel chose a particular, yet difficult, circumstance for himself. It was in the last couple of years of the dark energy of 'World War II.' Angel chose to be born with another physical handicap. This one was not too severe, but it would stop him from being sidetracked into some sort of vanity; he was born with a slight hunchback.

Angel took birth in Russia as the son of a general under Stalin. From the earliest moment on, everyone was drawn to this bright, witty, delightful child. In spite of his handicap, he seemed to have a

magnetic personality. As Angel grew up, he began to question all of the prevalent ideologies of the Communistic system, a grossly distorted version of true Socialism. At first, he was very careful about not voicing his thoughts, so he started writing them down. But as the years rolled by and he became involved with certain underground leaders, he openly opposed the system by writing articles about freedom, truth, justice, human values, people's fundamental human rights, equality, and freedom of thought and speech. He constantly tried to expose Stalin as the bloody butcher he was and the inhumane mass killings, the monstrous lies of their self-serving leaders, and the general festering evil that he saw all around. Angel's Spirit Light shone bright, but before long he was compromised by a spy. Angel was executed after being tortured to reveal the names of his associates which, by the way, he never did. But Angel's death made him a martyr, a hero, and within days advanced the fight for freedom enormously. Due to Angel's cruel death, his writings became the missing solid foundation, or cornerstone, of the growing underground revolution, which later on led to the total collapse of Communism in the Soviet Union.

Next, Angel was born once again in India, this time as a male child. He became a powerful yogi, who spent most of his life in a cave in the Himalayan mountain region. It was in this life that a lost European man (who was really the reincarnation of Angel's older brother from their earlier French life, where his beloved brother died in his arms) happened to stumble across the youthful-looking yogi in his cave. Angel recognized his karmic link through his inner vision and invited the man to stay.

Angel was able to share his understanding of the Truth with him, and before the man left to return home, Angel gave him a beautiful golden ॐ Om symbol ring saying, "Once long ago, dear brother, you gave me our father's ring and you told me that our love would unite us again. So, true to your word, you have found me. Our quest was to find the Eternal Truth, the road to God. Well, now the circle is complete; I have shared that Truth with you, so now go live in this knowledge of the Truth. Live in love, be of service to all, live in peace and inner silence as you have learned! Be happy!"

His brother cried tears of love and devotion, for somehow he knew that Angel had spoken the truth. He took the precious ring, which never left his finger again, and took leave of the Yogi with tears in his eyes and a heavy heart. He promised himself that he would return to sit at the feet of this great Yogi once more, after his worldly business was completed. But that was not to be. Angel passed from this world early in November one year before his long lost brother could return. Angel had fully realized his Oneness with all on the mental wisdom level, but he still had to make the ultimate complete connection and merge into his Spiritual heart.

### ***Yogic powers***

We, from the 'Eternal Watcher' point of view, can see the probable future of Angel's quest, since in reality time and space do not exist. For instance, the first probability that can be seen is Angel's slight hidden infatuation with Yogic siddhis (powers). This will probably ensnare his mind for two more life times. (This happens frequently to some of us, since the ego can get a hold of it as a form of glorification. It is a very persuasive and alluring Maya trick, to keep us a little longer from the ultimate realization of merging.) You see, Yogic siddhis are always represented, by the last remnant ego ploy, as being the tools that need to be used for the good of all the worlds, for the saving of mankind and all sentient beings, as well as for the fostering of creation in general. It is true, of course, but in a lot of cases the smallest trace of ego starts to become involved somewhere and turns it almost imperceptibly into a self-serving or self-glorifying act.

So, to the Wise ones, Yogic powers are simply a byproduct of knowing the Self. They pay little or no attention to these powers and use them, usually unnoticed and quietly, only when it can serve a divine purpose.

*[As we all know, Sai Baba is called the Avatar of our present age, and therefore this does not seem to apply to Him in any way. As He has many times declared Himself, His complete power over creation is simply his calling card, so that we can maybe recognize Him. It is only His spontaneous complete*



*Love which responds to us by showing itself as the many miracles, from His constant materializations to His divine resurrections of the dead. But to us the greatest miracle is His unconditional Love!]*

So, after seemingly blowing it twice in a row, by being caught up in these Yogic powers, as the probability shows us, Angel will get it straight on one of the heavenly levels, with the help of the Light Masters. We can see that in the life when he had first become a powerful Yogi with siddhis, the Light Masters came to him and invited him to join their ranks in the place of the 'Golden Light.' Angel was very pleased with this and was willing to undergo the test required to join. These tests are usually designed to erase any last trace of personal ego and will be the next two consecutive lifetimes where Angel will become ensnared by Yogic powers.

After this, Angel becomes a sage on the heavenly fields and learns the final lesson. The understanding of Oneness which expands spontaneously like a flood of total joy and love from the heart. All concepts vanish, as ***he simply is everything in that Blissful Being State - Awareness - Bliss & Love!***

## ***About Liberation!***

**W**e are aware that, over the years, quite a number of us have asked Swami for the gift of Liberation. Well, the truth is, we (as the 'True Self') are all already liberated, we have always been, and will always stay liberated. Swami said that the identification with our impermanent mental and physical traits, like: greed, anger, lust, hate, arrogance, jealousy, pride, guilt, shame, worry, fear etc., these are the things that need to be liberated.

So, we should all simply focus on our ***Divine LOVE*** that radiates from each heart to some degree, and make it the projection through the vehicles of mind and body. That is the clear unmistakable way.

We have often wondered why some of our selves have not been able to understand the liberation process more clearly. Maybe we just don't think it through to the end. Swami has often complied to our ardent prayers for quick Liberation. However, this liberation process sometimes starts in ways that are not necessarily pleasant to our worldly ego perceptions.

For example: The procedure might start by taking away, or maybe only distancing us from family, friends, lovers, lifelong professions, (even to the point of nullifying or erasing our eagerly worshipped and beloved personal God form). Things also might arrange themselves in some way that all our possessions will disappear if we are the least bit attached to them. And finally it might come to pass that our prized and coveted ego reputation will somehow become tarnished, or be pulled down, or we will be falsely accused through blatant lies, and sometimes dragged through the mud of public opinions.

God, our eternal Self, will not sit by and allow these parts to be lulled into complacency or into some dark ignorant oblivion anymore. No, on the contrary, He will stir up every last hidden little agenda or dark little secret within us and bring it out into the open. He will stir the pot again and again, until we are thoroughly cooked and again become the delicious morsels of Divine Love, which we have always been.

Remember, God does not care about offending, crushing, or destroying our imagined egos, or any of our human attachments and desires. He is only seeing us as parts of Himself. He will do whatever is most expedient and the absolute quickest way to bring us unto Him again. He is like the supreme Divine

goldsmith, who beats us and continuously immerses us in the fire, until we, His beloved gold, are pure again. Only then will God forge and shape each one of us into the most beautiful precious ornament that is *pure Love*.

So, this beating and fire purification that life walks us through may seem harsh, cruel, even unbearable at times. (If you, dear one, are walking through a nightmare, a hellish life of pain and suffering, know that you are an extremely brave soul to choose this. Truly these difficult lessons are perfect and God's absolute Grace. Know that it is the quickest way of finding the God within.)

Now we will have the wonderful opportunity to give up these imagined attachments and desires of all this momentary physical and mental stuff, and focus solely on the God within us, our True Eternal Self. In this way, we can rely completely on the 'Inner Swami,' for each moment, each breath, each morsel of food, in short, EVERYTHING.

**L**et us share a little story with you which occurred in this body's (Johnima's) last teenage year. Maybe with Swami's Grace, this can be helpful to some of us.

One day after I returned home from a short trip to L.A., my stepfather informed me that my mother had just left for Europe in order to take part in the testing of a series of cellular regeneration injections. Her physical body was a medical mess and functioning poorly. Various glands and organs had started to give her problems, and this seemed to be her only hope.

Before this, throughout my teenage years, I had often contemplated the idea that I did not really belong on this earth. I mean, I had always felt so separate, so foreign, like a stranger in a strange land. Sometimes I thought that for some reason I had been punished by being born into this world of war and pain, greed, lust, anger, hatred, violence, jealousy and fear. I had often cried alone at night, looking up at the starry sky, and asked my Divine Mother & Father to take me home again, out of this insane asylum.

I had been left alone most of the time. My dear mother, Shar, was always working hard to support us. She seldom was home, since she taught at a live-in school sixty miles away. My stepfather tried his best to help, but he lived in a world of his own. He always tried to get his pet project, his 'College of Languages,' off the ground, since he disliked to work for or under anyone. His language school never really took off enough to satisfy him. Eventually he left us and went back to Europe where he married another lady with my Mom's genuine blessing. She was truly happy for him, and he kept in contact with us over all the years until he died.

My personal communication with him, while we were together, was very shallow and mostly dealt with the mundane level of physical existence. Even though deep in his heart he loved me, he was never able to identify with my inner being. No matter how I tried to share different ideas with him, to him the only reality was what his five senses could gauge, the rest just caused him fear.

By choice and an inner prompting, I had long ago become my own disciplinarian. I had forced my slight (often sickly) body to the limit of endurance again and again, in order to finally gain control over it or collapse. By some miracle it worked in spite of every obstacle that presented itself. Out of often apparent physical failure, by Divine Grace alone, we managed to forge success for the inner being.

Let us try to explain what is meant by that. The reason I wanted to be in control of my body, my thoughts, and my feelings was simply this. Our family had seen, and been caught in, the cruelty of World War II, as we ran and hid for years trying to escape from Hitler's S.S. My step-father (who had one Jewish ancestor) was caught only once in all the years. It was only by Divine Grace that we were there to help him and others escape from the concentration work camp.

Later as a young teenager, I perceived man's indulgence in the world. Mankind as a whole seemed to me to be out of control. They were usually attached in some way to money, sex, booze, pills, drugs, food, cigarettes, or whatever. Their egos had a thousand and one reasons and excuses for their actions. But the truth, as I saw it, was that they simply had no self-control. It seemed to me that only a handful of so-called adults were exhibiting any type of sense control and discrimination or moderation. Selfish behavior and greed seemed to me to be the root cause of the world's troubles.

The solution seemed to be so simple in my naïve understanding. By exhibiting a bit of sense and self-discipline, a little moderation, some understanding, care and compassion for other people's suffering, mixed with a spark of genuine love with no expectations, we could all live in relative harmony.

So, I decided, "Not me!" ... I would learn self-discipline and exercise discrimination to the best of my ability, and thereby learn how to control habits, whether bad or good. I figured only in that way would I retain any real ability of choice, at least as much as it is possible on this earth. As we stated before, I started with the physical body. Then I went on, mostly by trial and error, to understand the root cause of my emotions. Finally, I tackled the thoughts and the mind. I found that if I indulged in my runaway imagination and fantasies, or if I desired any type of result or had certain expectations, anger and frustration would quickly rear their ugly heads when I found myself disappointed, as was usually the case. (I did a lot of talking to myself.) Slowly I began to learn how to separate the ego from the God-self, and just watch what was happening before speaking, doing, or reacting stupidly. My mother hated that time with me, since to her emotional body this came across as a lack of caring, a lack of emotional love. To her this quiet detached attitude was insolent behavior and she often called it cold, unfeeling, and hard-hearted. I tried many times to explain it, but the words never came out quite right. It ended up by me being silent and leaving the room, which of course, was worse. If I would have had enough compassion and understanding, I could have tried to communicate some more. Or I could have smiled, given her a big hug and said, "Hey, it's okay Mom, I'm just practicing some internal stuff, just know that I love you!" which would have been kinder and soothed her emotions.

For some time now, I had been feeling the urge to burn all of my various meager, personal items, and here was my chance. Mom was off in Europe so I wasted no time. I emptied my small room completely. I even ripped out my corner closet after everything else was gone. I burned letters, pictures, papers, records, paintings and schoolbooks, books full of adolescent poetry, clothes, assorted writings of my thoughts, etc. ... everything, until only a handful of white ashes remained. My stepfather thought that I had lost my mind, which in a way I had. But when I earnestly asked him to leave me alone and not to interfere, he did. It was one of the nicest and kindest things he ever did for me.

A couple of days later, I asked him to promise not to knock on my door or enter my room or to disturb me for anything whatsoever. He did not understand. It upset him, so he asked with a worried look, "... but what shall I say when someone calls for you, or comes by the house to see you?"

I said, "Just tell them that I have died!" I knew this was not the right thing to tell anyone, but I did.

He was speechless for a moment and his mouth hung open. The confusion on his face made me laugh, so I quickly added, "... don't worry, it's just a figure of speech, but please do not disturb me, no matter how long I stay in my room, okay?"

He finally shrugged his shoulders, called me a weird crazy kid, and promised to do as I had requested.

I locked the door, took off all my clothes, and wrapped my naked body in one thin blanket, in my now stark, empty room. I lay down on the floor and looked out at the sky through the open window. Within my being, I somehow remembered how to speed up my vibrational pattern in order to exit my physical body through the top of my skull and die.

Thoughts rambled on about me not belonging here in this dreadful place, this insane asylum. Not having anything in common with anyone around, nor having any real interest in this physical stuff. Basically I did not feel much connection with this world. (A quick dose of humility and a concrete lesson of Oneness seemed to be in order!)

Well, I was sure that I would achieve my goal and never return! Suddenly, when the electromagnetic force was ready to explode through the top of my head, I felt a force, or something like a giant hand, pushing me down a couple of vibrational notches. I stabilized within a couple of seconds and found myself consciously stepping out of my body as I had done before. I quickly looked and found that my silver cord of light was still quite attached and pulsing happily between me and my prone physical body below me. The same force or hand that had stopped me before gently guided my Spirit form to a beautiful high mountain top.

I floated down onto a carpet of vibrant green grass. As I moved on towards the highest snow-covered cliff of this majestic mountain range, I felt wonderful and free again.

On the plateau at the top, I saw the figure of a kind, old man sitting and waving to me. I laughed and happily went to where he sat on a smooth rock. He was smiling delightedly and his big blue-purple-hued eyes flashed a greeting to me. His long hair was wavy and shimmered like a silver, cascading waterfall.

“Do you know who I am, boy?” was his silent question to me.

Without the slightest hesitation I answered, “Yes, you are me!”

He clapped his hands in great joy and giggled like a child. “Correct, now come and sit on my knee!”

I did as he asked and he continued, “Is that all you know?”

“No,” I replied playfully, “I am Energy, Spirit, beyond form, see?” With that, I disbursed my atomic structure of form and became invisible, so to speak, before his eyes.

He chuckled softly and said, “Yes, yes, quite so. But what else are we?”

I answered telepathically, “We simply are!”

He nodded his head approvingly and then replied the same way, “Good. Now recall your mental form, boy!”

I did not want to and simply laughed. He waited a few moments and then with a slight frown, said softly, “That’s enough, now come back.”

“Why?” was my playful question.

“Because there is more to know,” he replied with his eyes overflowing with tender love.

So, I reassembled my subtle mental form or body on his lap as before. He smiled lovingly, caressed my hair and face, and then took my hands in his. Suddenly, his voice echoed within me, “Come, my love, and truly experience, *be all and beyond, BE!*”

Instantly, I felt a sort of electric shock-wave crackle through my frame as a loud, explosive-type sound sent my subtle atoms reeling and accelerating with incomprehensible speed. It was so fast that it

appeared to be standing still. Both our mental forms intermingled with the speed itself. That did not stop it; on the contrary, it accelerated over and over until it felt like my very consciousness exploded. With the most startling clarity, I was all of creation itself.

It is really beyond words, but let us try to give you even a semblance of an explanation. It was as if I suddenly awoke from a fuzzy dream into crystal clear reality. I simply was everything everywhere at the same time.

In another part of my consciousness, an earth awareness, for example, I was aware of myself as the baby being born, the mother giving birth, the father pacing the hallway, the floor, the light, the doctors, the nurses, as well as the blood itself, the needles, the scalpels and tools..

I was also the soldier being shot, the enemy who was shooting him, the rifle, the bullet, the tree, the falling leaf, the sap in the tree, the roots, the sun, the moon, the stars, all worlds, all people and beings everywhere, all galaxies. In short, I was all there *is*, all there ever *was*, and *will ever be*!

All was one consciousness within my endless scope of being, and not one single thing was out of place or bad or evil. It was all simply a double-sided energy flow, expanding and contracting, rhythmically, perfectly, eternally. The only sensation (I can't even call it that) was an uninterrupted peaceful ecstasy of expansion. I guess I would have to label that as Divine Love; it was all inclusive and expanded into infinity! And yet, I was *beyond all* of it, everything was within me; no, *I simply was!* I knew then, *I simply am, forever!* There really are no words to describe it, and the mind cannot fathom it, we can only be it!

Since time is relevant, and in truth does not exist at all, I do not know how long I lingered in this state. Let it suffice to say that at one point my consciousness sort of leaned (I don't know how else to put it) towards something that felt like the slightest itch deep within some aspect of my awareness.

Without warning or notice, I felt a rushing movement swallow up my awareness once again. It appeared to me like a vortex, a whirlpool of brilliant undulating Light vibrating into waves of color. It was truly the cosmic dance of Light and Shadows; a dance of Light and Love.

### NATARAJ

*His first step calls creation forth,  
And then the dance begins,  
It changes with each single beat,  
He lets His hand-drum sing,  
As Nataraj keeps dancing on and on!  
Atoms whirl as burning Light,  
In supernova style,  
It is the dance of Life and Death,  
Can you see His blissful smile?  
Sai Nataraj keeps dancing on and on!*

*Nataraj our dance of Love, is glorious and wild,  
I dance with you deep in my heart,  
I am your Loving child!*

*All forms and names appear within  
His whirling spinning Light,  
As body, mind, and soul appear  
In waves of day and night!  
As Nataraj keeps dancing on and on!*

*His eyes are closed in silent bliss,  
His smile is ecstasy,  
As Love and Light expand and whirl  
Into eternity!  
As Nataraj keeps dancing on and on!*

*Nataraj .....*

*No loss, no gain, no birth, no death,  
Creation is a dream,  
Created by this dance of Light,  
The mind projects this scene,  
As Nataraj keeps dancing on and on!*

*We are the dance, the dancer too,  
Our last step will reveal,  
All separation is a lie,  
We're ONE, and that is real!  
We're Nataraj, Yes, all is truly ONE!*

*song from the 'Sai Blues' album*

Once more I became conscious of sitting on the lap of the old man. We were both laughing in the joy of knowing. "So, what now?" was his unspoken question. Still laughing with the realization that the physical body of the 'Johnima illusion' already existed in our dream for a perfect and particular reason, and to allow this nonexistent ego to change things was ludicrous, it made no sense at all. It all did not really exist, so what was the big deal? Dreaming a name and form, a body, or not having a body, dreaming on earth, or in some heaven or hell, does it really matter? ***It is all an illusion!***

***D***ear embodiments of Love, I realized that the 'Self' alone exists and that all else is unreal. When my body consciousness and this dream world tried to engage my attention once more, I found it difficult to remain in my 'God-Self' state. I realized that the 'Self' cannot be known through the intellect. Even when I tried to fill my mind with the highest spiritual teachings I was aware of, it did not lead me directly to 'Self knowledge.' I understood somehow within myself, that in order to realize the 'Self,' I had to again inquire within and then let go of all concepts, all knowledge, basically everything, shut off all five senses gross and subtle, and simply ***BE*** what we always are: ***Undisturbed Inner Silence, Bliss, Eternal Consciousness, Oneness!***

Without the slightest hesitation, I took a swan-dive off the cliff in front of us and dove straight into a dark cavern which appeared to be located at the other side of an endless abyss in the face of another smaller mountain.

As the vibrational roar within my mental body began to slow down, I found myself swaying gently above my prone physical form. As we synchronized, I found myself gently slipping back into my earth body. It felt like putting on a cool and clammy wet suit. As I opened my physical eyes, I was still laughing. I still had my complete conscious awareness of all that had transpired. It was perfectly lucid and clear, and more real than my physical reality. Songs of love and joyous adoration of creation spilled forth from my overflowing heart. As I looked out of the window, the clouds turned into the many smiling faces and Divine forms of our human adoration. The real heroes of mankind: My beloved brother Jesus Christ, the Buddha, Rama and Sita, Lord Krishna, Sai (at that time I had no conscious idea of who He was), Mohammed, Mother Mary, Lord Shiva, Paramahansa Yogananda, Babaji, Sri Yukteswar, Moses, Saint Francis, and countless others, known and unknown.

It had been several days since I had locked myself into the room, so when I finally opened the door, my stepfather was pacing up and down and sweating bullets of anxiety and fear. Not only that, he

had even cooked several meals for me, he was so worried. But in spite of everything, he had still kept his promise not to disturb me. Still laughing, I gave him a big hug and assured him that all was perfect!

Let us remind ourselves that this entire experience happened on the inner plane, and is not at all a requirement in the same fashion for an experience of our underlying Oneness. It is simply that our Jahnima mind/body personality has always been flamboyant with a flair for the dramatic and coupled with a very active and fertile imagination.

The experience can come softly and silently, like little cats paws in the night. Or it might be like simply waking up from a fuzzy dream into the crystal clarity of our complete Self Awareness. Or it might be the thoughtless state of our own eternal Being, which suddenly knows, in the perfect inner suspension of everything. Or it might come as a silent feeling of joy suspended in absolute motionless balance and clarity. There are a thousand and one ways, some dramatic, some mystical or imagined, yet the end result will always be the same, the 'complete Awareness of Self,' of Oneness!

Sometimes explanations and words might be rather useless, they may even cause some confusion. So let us conclude with the fact that we at least made the attempt to convey the unexplainable.

Close your eyes for a few moments and sense between the lines, past all the word illusions, and let your inner knowledge bring you all the way towards the comprehension within your heart. Let go of all physical, mental, and emotional concepts and be what we truly are. Love, eternal blissful Awareness, the God of this creation.

### LOVE IS THE SOURCE

*The glorious sunset dissolves into night,  
My mind disappears in its flame,  
Alone once again, to simply just BE,  
And to lose this form and this name,  
In silence, inner silence, I remain ...*

*Love is the source ... The fire that burns,  
It whirls in the silence that IS,  
As Light, as Love, and as Bliss ...It is ...  
My Lover's kiss ... Eternal Bliss ...*

*All dreams and desires, will drown in the Light,  
Attachments will no longer bind,  
The ego will die, in the fire of Love,  
When Silence erases the mind,  
True Silence, inner Silence, we will find ...*

*Love is the source ...*

*This deep inner Silence, this ocean of Love,  
Embraces us all in the end,  
We'll all reach the goal, Awareness of 'Self,'  
True Oneness we will comprehend,  
With Silence, inner silence, as our friend ...  
song from the 'Sai Blues' album*

## *Chapter Nine*

We, from the 'Eternal Watcher' point of view, can see the probability that at that point, the choice of staying in the all encompassing 'Merger' is ever present for Angel. Angel will most likely chose to return to the very slight separation of once more entering into the cosmic dream illusion on the 'Golden Light' loka as a Light Master.

Once there, Angel will confer with the other Light Masters for some time and then take one final earth incarnation. Angel will be a fully realized Master, a powerful sage, sharing his Light and Love with the world before completely merging into Eternal Oneness.

In this incarnation, as the Self-realized Sage, he will shed his Light on the world, due to his compassion and love. He will continue the work of elevating world consciousness.

In this last earth existence, Angel will travel all over the earth. Whoever he touches can't help but feel the Divine Love and complete understanding of the ultimate Truth, the Oneness of all, which will emanate from Angel! (He will have completed all of his steppingstones!)

We, the 'Watcher,' can see many of Angel's disciples gaining their Self-realization in time by just being in his presence.

It is seen that near the end of Angel's life, a young man, who had been searching for answers out of his self-made hell, falls near Angel's feet. Angel will allow him to approach. You see, this young man had heard about Angel and had traveled far, overcoming many obstacles, trying desperately to reach the Master. Angel will look kindly at the young man, who will be crying bitter tears full of self-incrimination. The man will cry out, "Oh great One, I know that I am not even worthy to be the dust on your feet; I am a miserable wretch of a man. I am wicked and evil in my thoughts and deeds, and I am ashamed even to have you look at me; but I beg of you, please, Holy Master, please allow me to touch the hem of your robe, I know that I will be blessed beyond belief. It will surely cleanse me and drive the wickedness and evil from me!"

Angel's look of love, compassion, and *complete understanding* will be overwhelming to say the least. Then with the most playful, all knowing smile he will bend down, take the young man's hand, and lift him to his feet, saying, "I know, I know; don't worry my child, all will be well with you. We are the same, my child, only our learning experiences are different, that is all. From this moment on, know that you are Divine. Your body and mind are not your True Self, you are the Embodiment of Love itself, you are Eternal Consciousness! Your unwavering faith has brought you here to hear this Truth. From now on your wayward mind will bother you no more, so, let your heart be open! Let Love and service be your focus, now go and *be happy*." With these loving words, Angel will lightly touch the crying, awestricken young man on the forehead.

The young man will be speechless as he sinks to his knees. He will stay like this for hours, long after Angel will have left. His mind will be silent. He will only hear Angel's voice echoing in his head, "You are Divine, the Embodiment of Love itself, you are Eternal Consciousness!"



## ***Worship!***

***It*** seems to us that we, meaning the general aspirants and seekers of Truth and Enlightenment, have divined a new type of idol worship. We seem to have placed words such as, “Self-Realization” “Liberation” or “Moksha” “Full Enlightenment” and “Spirituality” in general, on a mental and emotional pedestal or throne, in front of which a lot of us tend to worship religiously. Why?

If everything is only God, what in all of creation is not spiritual? And if Swami speaks the Truth, as His very name (Sathya) proclaims, that we are all ONE in essence, and have been and will forever be that ONE Eternal Consciousness, that God, then why do we want to idolize this natural state of ours?

Is it not simple and basic, if we are everything, what in creation is there to want or to desire? What in all of creation is there to be attached to? Why do we keep on playing this game of separation, when, in truth, it does not exist?

In the ‘Songbird’ book we go into this worship business in a little more detail; you will remember what Swami said about worship, ***“No more worship! Worship is separation! You are Swami, you are God, now act like it.”***

Think about it, ***worship is automatic separation!*** If we put God, Allah, Buddha, Christ, Kabir, Mother Mary, or Swami, or anyone (even anything like an idea) on this high, removed, and unreachable pedestal, how can we ever feel intimately connected or one with Him? How can we ever hope to merge with God, or even really know Him? By worshipping, we are making our own ‘Spiritual’ barrier between God and our miserable, little prison of ego. Idolization or worship of God is a wonderful steppingstone, and most of us walk through it, but it is still a lie of this ego illusion!

***J***ust for fun, let us play the game of being presumptuous. What is the goal of all spiritual endeavors, like: books, seminars, courses, retreats, schools, ashrams, etc.? It is to help each part of us to reach the goal of our True Self, is it not? To attain Liberation, Self-realization, Emancipation, merging into the ultimate reality, and so on, right? Well, we can dispense with all of this stuff right now, and reach the goal in the time it takes for you to read the next couple of pages.

All pretended illusion and pretended ignorance stems strictly from our age-old habit of incorrect identification. Identification with the body and the mind, including thoughts and feelings, ego and emotion. The five elements (gross and subtle), along with the five senses (gross and subtle), are the tools we utilize to reach this false identification. As long as we identify with them in any way as being our Self, we will appear to be caught in the endless cycles of birth and death and rebirth.

### ***Desires***

We constantly re-imprison our false self by the constant projection of desires and then we bind our false self with the golden chains of attachment. This then catapults us again and again into pain and sorrow. Here is how it works.

You are aware of this moment. You do not like this moment. It has no special excitement, no special glamour, no special sensual gratification. So, you allow the mind to start dreaming, projecting a new scenario in the future, whether immediate or long range. You start to make plans to create this future. Since in reality you are God, you have just put into motion the energy to manifest that future, depending upon the strength of your desire. Now let us say you walk out the front door at work, and a runaway car runs you down and your body dies.

Now there is this unfulfilled projected subtle dream energy creation out there in the cosmos, riding your personal energy waves, waiting and compelling you to create another body, so that you can experience your earlier projected desire. In essence, you have just made Karma for yourself. A new birth and life full of all your runaway desires of the mind, whether this projection of desire was set in motion on the physical, astral, or causal plane, makes absolutely no difference. Also, attachment or aversion to someone or some situation or some type of experience will create an energy stream that will cause you to re-experience it as well. That is the name of the game!

It must be obvious to all of us by now, that in order to break this continuing cycle of birth and death, our mental and emotional projections have to cease. How do we do this, you ask?

### *Steppingstone practice*

First, we must practice control of our *monkey mind*, as Swami calls it. We must still the thoughts either by chanting OM, God's name, a song or mantra, or by focusing only on the Awareness part, the 'I Am that I am,' within us. Practice, practice, practice. {Soon, you will only hear the OM sound, or remain focused on that inner silence (until you lose your normal body-mind-ego identification) and merge in it.}

Pay attention to what is happening at every moment within the mind (monitor the thoughts). When a desire crops up, examine it. If it is just a passing fancy, then dismiss it as unimportant. If it is a deep-rooted one, uproot it by exposing it completely. Ask Swami or your 'True Self' to help you fulfill it as quickly as possible, so that you can move on to the true reality that *you already are everything!* How many thousands of lifetimes has your ego, desire, and attachment kept you away from your Love, your 'True Self?' If anything, use your anger as a tool. Start getting mad at this ego, expose it every time it crops up and tries to enslave you and deny you your true heritage of Divine Love, Laughter, Joy and Bliss!

**T**he behavior of a Self-realized being is always devoid of doubts in his or her heart. But if we look only from the outside, he or she may appear to move and act like any other ordinary person. So, don't be fooled. It could be the butcher down the street, the stockbroker on Wall Street, the baker's wife down the road, the police chief or army general, the short order cook or nurse, etc. etc. etc. who could be Self-realized. All their outer behavior is no sure clue to their inner knowledge, and unless we are in the same state of Self-awareness, we cannot really understand a Self-realized being correctly. But if we watch them closely, we will see that the Self-realized one remains even-minded under all circumstances. The world may collapse on his or her head, their families may die tragically, their fortunes may be wiped out in an instance, their good name, their fame and reputation may be destroyed in some way, but they stay calm and even, ever established in the absolute; they are always inwardly balanced, without attachment or worry, desire or fear. So you see, if we truly want to understand a Self-realized being, we must simply know our 'Self.'

At one time or another, have you not felt the struggle which accompanies all desires, even the most useful desire to become Self-realized? Have you not felt how the body becomes weary and drained from doing some kind of religious practice or penance? Have you ever felt tired of endlessly repeating mantras and practicing concentration? Well, if you have, then know there is a silver lining to that cloud. Know right here, right now, that the very instant we truly give up all desires and attachments to everything, we will become free. This is true freedom.

### *Self-deception*

This body (Kalassu) had a wake-up call in my late teens, when I realized by mentally saying that you give something up it's often not enough. Most of the time, we have to have the personal experience. Then, once we have acquired our object of desire, we can see the flaw in it, and then we can truly relinquish our attachment to it. As a matter of fact, quite often we get disenchanted, annoyed, and even disgusted with the objects of our desires, after we have them. Think about it! Here is the story.

*It* was one of those especially beautiful sunny California mornings and I was just going to work. After having parked the car a block away, I walked in front of the different store windows that flanked the sidewalk and I noticed a beautiful red dress in one of the windows.

It was the most beautiful dress I had ever seen, and my desire body jumped up instantly. Oh how I wanted that dress. But I was working on detachment at that time. I had heard and read about it all. In the best spiritual books it said, "Giving up desires and attachment is the shortest way to Self-realization." So, with as much will power as I could muster, I started to convince myself that this silly desire for that dress was stupid; I must give it up. As the day wore on, I repeatedly had to subdue the thoughts dealing with that confounded dress. Eventually, the whole thing took a back seat in my mind. As the days went on, the dress would sometimes turn up in my thoughts, but each time I dismissed it, because I was giving everything up, detachment (grumble, grumble)!!!

Then one night I had a dream. You guessed it, it was the dress that I dreamed about. I knew right then that my subconscious self had gotten a hold of the desire for that darn dress. So I just buried it deeper and deeper and deeper, I was being Spiritual! I am a Yogini, I need nothing! (Yeah, right!) How about honesty?

As I was suppressing these natural feelings day in and day out (boy I can be stubborn sometimes), Swami finally took pity on me. He came to my rescue in a wonderful dream, where He appeared in front of me with a large box, colorfully wrapped with a beautiful pink ribbon tied around it. As He handed me the box, He gave me such a mischievous Krishna grin and said in the sweetest voice, "This is for you."

His eyes looked at me with such compassion and unfathomable Love as I opened the present. You guessed it, it was the red dress! Swami very sweetly, as the proverbial Divine Mother, helped me put it on and zipped up the back. His soft, fuzzy hair tickled me, as He leaned forward and whispered in my ear, "Child of Love, you took birth to realize and fulfill all unfulfilled desires. Don't stifle them, uproot them! Then and only then can you discover the flaw in this world of illusion."

I woke up that morning with tears still in my eyes. Well, I'm sure you guessed it by now; on my way to work that morning, I bought the dress. I wore it on a few occasions, but with time that bright, once beautiful, red dress faded and eventually I gave it away.

I realized fully that we are here on this earth to root up all of our desires, and the only way to do this is to do it with absolute and ruthless self-honesty. If we have any unfulfilled desires, don't pretend to not have them. Just dredge them up, look them straight in the eye, and ask Swami - your True Self or God - to set it up in the most efficient way so that you can get done with it and move on. They are only steppingstones!

### ***Steppingstone practice***

It does not matter how dark or bad you think your hidden desires are. Just bring them to your frontal consciousness and look at them clearly. Then and only then, will you be able to deal with them reasonably. Swami is here to help us uproot all of these hidden agendas and get us over them as quickly as possible, so that He can fill our hearts with His Love. If our hearts are full of all sorts of hidden desires and attachments, God has no room to fill us up with that pure Love. So, let us just empty our hearts to Him at night before we go to sleep and ask for His help in getting all this desire stuff done as quickly as possible. Believe me, God, Swami, or your True Self will then arrange it.

Dearest embodiments of Love, if we see distraction in our mind and body self, we will attempt to control our self, is that not so? But once we know our true reality, our Eternal Self Awareness, what practices are appropriate for us?

To the wise ones amongst us, for whom distraction has no meaning at all, what is there to do, to control? They are not the doer of anything! What is there good or bad for them? Where is the meaning of birth or death for them?

Bondage as well as liberation has no meaning to them, not even the knowledge of Self! Why? Because the mind, when liberated from all sense objects, no longer exists. Only the constant Awareness of our ever-existent 'Being State,' ever-free, ever unborn Consciousness exists.

When we finally reach that understanding, that personal experience, of 'Self' we will no longer fear birth and death. Life will be a constant NOW, which will reflect our joy and love. We will finally be even, without the need to cater to life's constant ups and downs, with perfect inner balance, and that deep inner blissful silence. Then at last, we will all be able to follow Swami's frequent directive. He always reminds us to "**BE HAPPY!**"

**S**o, if we become vigilant and start to focus, and then identify, with our constantly present Awareness part, we will soon have a real personal experience. Many of us already have had this experience, an out-of-body experience. Some of us had this in an after-death state which they vividly recall after being brought back to life, or in an accident, when they are still in shock or dazed. In fact, most of us have had this experience of not being the body at one time or another. For example, when we have those vivid, real, perfectly recalled dreams, while the body was dead asleep. Those kind of dreams, most likely were an astral or causal projection or experience. Yet, until we have this type of an experience in the fully conscious and awake state we cannot reconcile it in our mind as a true and valid experience.

This personal experience often starts with a feeling of sinking deeper and deeper into our awareness part, as we identify more and more with it. It might be likened unto the feeling of sinking down to the bottom of the ocean. It will become more and more silent, more and more still. Soon, you will notice a complete sense of equilibrium, of inner balance, that is not disturbed by thoughts or feelings, desires or attachments. At this point, no more words will jump up and no more pictures will be projected by your mind. You will be fully conscious, aware, and a deep and perfect knowing of your own existence will be experienced. This is the perfect state of being. Think of the wave in the ocean and remember how it rises up to the surface. Is it not always due to some sort of movement, some sort of agitation? If the bottom of the calm, ever silent and present ocean is thought of as the "Eternal Self" (Paramatma), then the wave that rises up can be called the "Atma," and the foam bubbles on the top of the waves can be called our ego identification of name and form (our various bodies on whatever dimension), the ludicrous lie of separation.

If we stay tuned in to that constant Awareness part within us, and identify our self with it, rather than the body or the mind, then within a relatively short time we will begin to have this out of body experience consciously.

### I AM

*In the beginning, the dawn of creation ... I AM  
And in the end, the night of destruction ... I AM  
Without and within, the silence of all ... I AM  
Reposing in Bliss, while dancing as Light ... I AM*

*The great impostor, the seed of illusion ... I AM  
The first breath of Life, the pure sound of OM ... I AM  
The wave and the foam, of this cosmic ocean ... I AM  
The silent secret, that rests at the bottom ... I AM*

*I AM THAT I AM, Forever I AM,*

*I AM ..... I AM THAT I AM!*

*In glorious rapture, the dust of creation ... I AM  
Life's devastation, in dream separation ... I AM  
The Lover of Love, The bride of Awareness ... I AM  
The True Self in all, the ultimate bridegroom ... I AM*

*All mad desperation, and final elation ... I AM  
The desolate pain of wanting and longing ... I AM  
The tender Love flame, inside every heart ... I AM  
Exposed in all living, by burning and giving ... I AM*

*I AM THAT I AM, .....*

*Beyond birth and death, the Life of all Life ... I AM  
Suns, Moons, and Stars, all hells and all heavens ... I AM  
The Alpha - Omega, and all resurrection ... I AM  
Beyond all conception, yet in each reflection ... I AM*

*Father and Mother, and Sister and Brother ... I AM  
The friend and the foe, the thief and the stranger ... I AM  
The shattered glass pane, yet always the same ... I AM  
The ONE that is ALL, yet nothing at all ... I AM*

*I AM THAT I AM, .....*

*song from the 'Sai Blues' album*

**A** little while ago, someone asked us once again if we were realized beings. Our answer was, "Yes, and so are you! We are all realized to some degree or whatever level of consciousness we live by."

Let us take a closer look at this word 'Self-Realized.' It simply states that you realize your Self. Now comes the tricky part, what is your identification of Self? Is it the body, the mind, the thoughts, feelings, and memories that you think define your being? What is it for you?

Let us take our dearest brother, Jesus the Christ, for example. He exhibited his full Self-realization when he spoke the words, "**My father and I are One!**"

That's when Jesus became the living Christ Consciousness Principle. We, in the same exact way, can be in this Eternal Cosmic Christ Consciousness or Cosmic Sai Consciousness. It is all the same exact complete eternal 'Self Awareness' or 'Self Consciousness.' It only takes the proper identification, and the total relinquishing of the idea that we are the body, the mind, the thoughts, and feelings or the intellect.

At first this will be a conscious mental effort, but soon it will dawn on our Awareness that it is the exact truth, and from that moment on we will abide in that absolute Truth.

**I**n order to get to that 'Self,' in the old days of India some of us (as even today) became renunciates (sanyasins) and walked in the forests, or sat in some remote cave in order to facilitate this process of divesting our self of all temporary and worldly paraphernalia.

Swami has told us to deeply inquire within and find out the answer to "Who am I?" and soon the 'Self' will be experienced. He also said to stay in the society and to be of some service to our other parts,

while dedicating all of our thoughts, words, deeds and feelings to God (formless or with form and name) or to Him. He told us to always stay completely detached in the mind to any of the outcomes that may result from all of these doings, whether they appear to be negative or positive.

Just live in Love, with inner peace and equanimity. Be alike to everyone, regardless of caste, color, creed, culture, or race, because all are truly ONE! Simply share without greed, just be the love that illuminates the heart, and let that inner flame of light ignite the flame of love-light in every heart.

Swami tells us, ***“Always stay completely unaffected by praise or blame alike! Be equal-minded and alike to everyone, by focusing on the God within them. See only God everywhere. Remember, all are really just the ONE, playing the game of many!”***

**T**hat reminds us of the time when a very serious young man asked us the following question, very intently we might add.

“Have you seen God?”

Our obvious answer was, “Yes, everywhere we look, we see God!”

The person just sighed that, “...yeah, I knew it, just another platitude...” sigh, and then started to turn away politely while mumbling some trite excuse.

But before he turned, we continued by asking him a question, “Who is seeing God?”

He looked at us with a puzzled look, not knowing how to take the question. This person was obviously the intellectual type, who required some mental stimuli in order to dive deeper into this whole God business.

“What do you mean, who sees God? You said you did, everywhere!” he replied sort of sarcastically while gesturing all around.

We smiled and said, “Yes, that is quite true, what else should we perceive, I mean all is only God, right?”

“Come on, guys, that is just another feeble way of saying nothing at all, it’s a platitude, it’s just intellectual crap.” he retorted smilingly.

“No, not really, it is actually the Truth, but you are right, a lot of us say that, but we don’t really have the personal experience that it is truly so,” we interjected. “So, once again, who sees God?” we continued.

“Listen, I have been meditating for years, trying to see God, even a fleeting glimpse of the Christ would have been sufficient, but I have not seen anything like that. A few colors, some weird patterns maybe, but that is it. Sometimes I just fall asleep,” he confided quietly. “I just can’t relate to this idea that all is God.”

“If it is you who would be seeing God, then you must be separate from God in order to be seeing Him. This should prove to you (the seer) that your fundamental idea about God is something seen by you, like any other object. This would mean that in your mind ignorance has reduced the ‘Almighty God Principle’ into an ordinary object to be seen. Think of it another way, at the higher intellectual level, an object cannot exist unless it is known, right? That is probably why, to the Buddha, this separation of a God figure did not exist (only the state of Nirvana existed). Nirvana obviously represents the true per-

sonal experience of His omnipresent 'Awareness State,' which was His ultimate experience of 'Self'." We engaged his somewhat haughty mental disposition.

"So, when we, who are really God in disguise, only see God everywhere, by focusing solely on the omnipresent 'Awareness Principle,' which is the basis of every molecule and atom of creation (of everything), then there is no more false identification with imagined separation, is there? So, the statement of, 'Yes, we see Him everywhere,' is quite true, don't you agree?" We pushed the point a bit further.

"Oh ..." was all the perplexed young man could utter.

"Listen," we confided softly, "forget all this deep intellectual stuff, just live in Love, Swami keeps telling us that it is the simplest way. Just repeat 'Sohum (I am God),' or any name of God, and live your life in Love, that is enough. In this way you will soon remember your own Divine nature and know it has always been your closest Self."

Let us all remember, the simple way to do this is to follow Swami's constant example. Live in Love, that is enough!

### LOVE IS ENOUGH

*I can feel your quiet worry,  
When you look into my eyes.  
You think, "What will save the world from dying,  
From war, from greed and lies?"  
Just remember Love is power, and know  
We are the Light!*

*I can sense your deep compassion,  
Rising from your heart and soul,  
For all those hungry, lonely children,  
Who seem hurt, and lost without a goal,  
Just remember who we are and share  
Your Light and Love!*

*Got to hold on to the Truth, Dear,  
Inner silence points the way,  
Simply trust your intuition,  
It's God's voice guiding us each day,  
So fill each day with Love,  
Shanti Darling, that's enough,  
Yes, fill each day with Love,  
Shanti Darling, that's enough!*

*Brother Jesus said it plainly,  
Love thy neighbor as Thyself,  
Loving service will soon bring us  
Face to face with our God-Self,  
Just remember we are Spirit and know  
We are One!*

*Got to hold on to the Truth, Dear, .....  
(I said) Start each day with Love .....  
(And) fill each day with Love .....  
(Now) end each day with Love .....*

*(Yes) Fill each day with Love .....  
song from the 'Sai Blues' album*

### ***Life goes on***

**O**ver the years we have often been asked about our personal life situations, dealing with the children, grandchildren, and so on.

We wrote a little bit about these things in the 'Ten Steps to Kesava' book, so here is the continuation for the moment.

As some of you already know, Sai Kodey married, divorced, and is blessed to be father and mother to his son Jaydon Sai. You see, Sai Kodey took birth this life to learn selflessness. So Swami arranged it so that Sai Kodey would become a single parent. Kodey, with Jaydon Sai's help, is learning tolerance, patience, and selfless Love. His heart is growing larger and larger at the tender age of twenty-three. Oh Swami, how beautiful, how perfect; You certainly don't waste any time. Jaydon Sai is now two years old, and quite a handful. He lives in California with Sai Kodey, but comes up here to visit us whenever possible, or sometimes we travel down to see them.

Sai Shanti, after returning from visiting Swami, had decided that she would really like to travel some more all over the world. So, she might take a travel agency course at BSU. Her music is also progressing very nicely indeed, as her guitar playing, song-writing, and singing are improving day by day. Directing and Acting are also still an option for her at this point. Shanti's basic nature has always been giving. Wherever she goes, her smile lights up the world around her; and whoever she meets, if they are forlorn or sad, she leaves them with a feeling of warmth in the heart and a smile on the face. So, who but the 'Inner Swami' knows what her future will hold. In the meantime, she is happy being at home and working in McCall until the summer. It is all in God's hands, as always, and it will be interesting to watch.

Sai Sangeet has not visited us in some time. From all that we can gather, she is working and helping Sui-San. Hopefully, she is still working on her projected music career. But again, it is all in God's hands.

**O**f all created things and beings, from the tiniest speck of sand or cosmic dust, to the highest heavenly God-type sentient being, the truly wise or liberated being is the only one who will act without desire for anything, or without aversion to anything. The liberated one simply abides in the absolute, the Awareness State of Eternal Being, and knows the Supreme Self to be all there ever was, will be, or ever is.

This Consciousness has forever accompanied all of our experiences, through countless karmic cycles of birth and death. Everything else in this creation, no matter what levels or things we may perceive, is a constantly changing, re-arranging, growing and eroding, living and dying phenomenon, and thereby only temporary.

But for those of us who have looked for (or even those who have had a vision of) the Supreme Divinity in a name or form state, they will probably still meditate and say "I am one with God, the ultimate reality, and then attain that form."

Which is, of course, a wonderful thing or steppingstone and ultimately will also lead them to the experience of Oneness.



Swami tells us that the easiest thing, right now in this Kali age, to do in order to become liberated, is to repeat any name of God or Sohum (I am God), or constant inner Self-inquiry.

Dearest Atmasef, brothers & sisters of Light and Love! Very recently, an old friend of ours, “B” (we have known him for over 25 years) came to visit us in McCall. It was now time for him to get his head back into the forest. B had walked through his self-made hell and knew he was done - even to the point of shaving his head, donning the ocher robe of a renunciate, and following his guru. We told him that this was all wonderful if he had an inner desire to do so but that it was not necessary. We explained that it was just another steppingstone.

B asked, “Then how on earth can I acquire bliss in my daily life? I mean, if I am going to exist in the world and seek a living, I can’t meditate all the time! How do you guys do it? How often do you meditate?”

We answered, “Our life is our meditation! If you only spend one or two hours each day meditating and then go to work and deal on the world level that might be helpful to survive, but really, it is no different than going to church on Sunday, filling your heart with the love of God, then come Monday morning, you kick the dog, yell at the kids, curse the bills while adding up the payroll, and in general, being a grump. Concentration or focusing on one thing is the practice we use for controlling our monkey mind. Meditation on the other hand (as Swami tells us) is remembering God! To consciously focus on the moment, the NOW, on the underlying Oneness, the all-inclusive nature of selfless Divine Love. Your heart is your church, your meditation room where you talk and walk with God. So live, by constantly remembering God in everything you think, feel, and do, then your life is meditation. See God everywhere, in everything, as everyone, then it will be easy!”


In this book, we reviewed many steppingstones. Remember, *you are God and your thoughts are all powerful!*

Here are some helpful suggestions on how we, in our daily lives, can acquire Bliss. You might forget to do it a few times now and then, but don’t beat yourself up, it just takes practice. In time, you will remember and soon, that all-inclusive, selfless Love will be part of your daily life. Remember that worldly paycheck is just a side issue; it is not your goal. The real goal, and what you will be ohhh so proud of when you review your life in the ‘Hall of Records,’ will be the Divine Love and Joy that you shared with all of creation. This is the only worthwhile payroll check you can take with you; it is your ticket to Bliss!

### *Steppingstone practice*

Whatever you do in your walk through life, you can incorporate Love and God, and expand this Love to all of creation.

For example, B works as a computer tech. As his hands are inside the computer working with it, he can give the following affirmation: “For all who touch this computer, may they realize the ‘True Self’ and may their hearts and lives be filled with love and laughter, and so it is!”

A house painter can paint beautiful symbols like  or a cross or write the different names of God with love energy on the undercoat so that whoever enters that room will be filled with Divine Love energy. Doctors and Healthcare workers can visualize their hands as being God’s extended hands. Electricians can visualize the electrical current that they are working with as being the one electric current of Light and Love (that we are all made up of), and let it flow freely through all of creation whenever a light switch, light bulb or socket is touched.

Gardeners can visualize pulling out the weeds of lust, greed, and desire, and plant the seeds of love and light. If you are a waitress or cook, when you cook or serve the food or beverage just bless it with a little affirmation: “May all that you consume fill your heart with Love, Happiness, and Divine Bliss and may you share it with all of creation and know yourself as God!”

If you are a mechanic, bless the car you are working on so that anyone driving in it will feel Love and Joy and be safe. If you are a stockbroker, bless every dollar that is earned or lost each day. Think of it as God’s money which should be used positively and only for the welfare of all of creation. If you are a police officer, know that even the most hardened criminal is a part of God. Silently, in your heart, send them love and protection and surround them with good thought energies so that they may be able to change and know that they are God. No matter what you do, whoever and whatever you touch or see, you have it within your power (as God) to be that Light-worker.

Everyone in all walks of life can visualize God in those around them, and in themselves continually, and treat others how they themselves wish to be treated. ***That is our real job!***

Once again, it comes down to constant practice! Mentally saying and reminding ourselves of, “Sohum, I am God; and so is everything and everyone else!” no matter where we are and what our bodies might be engaged in.

As Swami has told us:

***“Let your body be in the world, but keep your head in the forest!”***

***“Keep the body active (with some form of helpful service) in the world, but keep the mind quiet and focused only of God!”***

***“Just be and move in the world, but do not let the world be or move in you!”***

***“Be in the world, but not of it!”***

*Baba*

Swami tells us that, in order to deserve God’s Grace for a quick and final liberation from our false identification, we must be willing and eager to sacrifice this false identification with body and mind.

***“Liberation or Freedom is the Freedom from bondage of the Ego. We deserve liberation when we break away from the bond of attachment and desire!”***

*Baba*

**G**od is a ‘Jealous God’ as it says in the Bible. What is meant by this is that our True Self, God, will do whatever it takes to bring us back to Him the quickest possible way. He does not look at whose ego or feelings are hurt, or how inconvenient or devastating it may all be for us. He only looks for the shortest possible means to get us back to Him, the place where we truly belong and ***where we have never left!***

In Swami's own words:

*“My dear children,*

***AWAKE!***

***AWAKE!!***

***AWAKE!!!***

.....

*I gave many of you the advantage of an unhappy childhood, including conflict and separation from your Mother and Father. In doing this, I removed you from the temptation to become attached to human parents or a specific family situation; that left you with only one option, to attach yourself to ME!*

*Why do you not avail yourself of this opportunity instead of continually seeking these relationships which can never satisfy you? Even if your childhood has been as idyllic as you would have liked, it is not your Mother's love that you need.*

*Ultimately it is not even HIS (God's) Name and Form that you long for.*

.....

*Your deepest innermost urge is to return to YOURSELF - to LOVE YOURSELF - to become the BEING, the AWARENESS and the BLISS - which is all you will ever be.*

*Let go of the past, stop trying to get from each other what you still think you missed in childhood or marriage. You will never find anyone who is enough,*

**NOT EVEN ME!!!**

*Love Yourself, Know Yourself! Only YOU will ever be enough.*

.....

*Now remember, I love you,  
Love YOURSELF!”*

*Baba*



SAI RAM

*Steppingstones  
to Sainthood  
Poem*

Each small mistake, or huge transgress,  
Which mostly makes a painful mess,  
Is nothing more, or nothing less  
Then a steppingstone to Sainthood!  
Ego opinions judge us quick,  
We're labeled bad, evil, or sick,  
Or beat our self with a big stick,  
Of guilt, shame, fear, and worry!  
All Saints and Sages, big or small,  
Like you and me, have done it all,  
Until at last they heard the call,  
And lived their life as Love!  
They also beat themselves to dust,  
Like most of us with greed and lust,  
They learned no anger is ever just,  
Until they saw the Light.  
So, when you look deep in those eyes  
Of Saints and Sages, realize,  
No tale of woe is a surprise,  
They've been through everything!  
That's why they sport that patient smile,  
They've trod attachment's burning mile,  
With mind shackled in need and guile,  
making a messy Karma pile,  
Repeating some hard learning trial,  
The same way that we are!

Life's dream we weave with Love,  
The stuff we're made up of,  
Until we've had enough,  
So wake up, Dreaming Sleeper!  
Truly if there's an enemy,  
It's only make believe, you see,  
Desire and Ego chains you and me  
To cycles of illusion.  
They keep us tightly body bound,  
The mind then justifies each round,

**Of birth and death as sacred ground,  
Until we see the flaw.  
Oh, how we defend this Ego play,  
Keep it alive, to strike the next day,  
Until we've had enough and pray,  
To God for Liberation!**

**False identification, Maya's sweet kiss,  
Is Keeping us separate from perfect Bliss,  
Resolve you've had enough of this,  
And step right up to Sainthood!  
We are the God, the Self, the All,  
Awareness that's forever,  
Projecting body, mind, and soul,  
Who all pretend to have control,  
In cosmic games of love!  
The Truth is simple, I confess,  
We're all Eternal Consciousness,  
Our mind and body is the dress  
We wear for our senses.**

**Five senses are the doors to learn,  
We give and take, we spend and earn,  
Until we finally start to yearn,  
To know our own 'True Self!'  
Each right or wrong we think we did,  
Grotesquely evil, or splendid,  
Is only an experience, Kid,  
A steppingstone to Sainthood!  
How else do you suppose we learn,  
A child knows fire by the burn,  
Right knowledge helps us to return  
To our True God Self!  
Experience helps awareness grow,  
We always reap just what we sow,  
Until once more we truly know,  
Our Omnipresent Self!  
The Truth is, we are always ONE!  
The Truth is, nothing has been done!  
Just dreams of effervescence have been spun!  
We're Consciousness complete and full,  
Awareness without end,  
The rest is just pretend,  
Imaginations fancy hand,  
Illusions we defend,**

**A dreaming Ego stand,  
But that is just illusion.  
Because we simply and forever ARE,  
LOVE,  
The shining PARAMATMA!!!**



Steppingstones is truly what the title suggests. It is a wonderful, uplifting book, which steadily guides the reader towards the 'Highest Self'.

Angel's struggle for 'Realization' is thought provoking and gives us a deeper insight into our own quest for God or 'Self'.

The interwoven stories of Sai Baba with Lightstorm are as usual wonderful, joyful and a blessing for us all.

This book belongs in every library of the world. I loved it and was absolutely spellbound by it !

P.B., Canada



JOHNIMA



SATHYA SAI BABA

*Lightstorm*



KALASSU