

# SUFFERING IS THE ROOT AND FLOWERS ARE THE RESULTS

## Abstract:

This paper is divided into two parts, the first part (Part-A) dealing with Suffering, a proper understanding of Suffering, the right attitude towards Suffering and how the sincere adherent of SRRY is able to take Suffering in his stride by following the Ten Commandments-the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 7<sup>th</sup> in particular. The PAM practices and the assistance through Pranahuti from the Trainer enables him to convert what appears as an impediment, a disadvantage into a great helper on the path.

The second part (Part-B) deals with the results ensuing from the undergoing of sufferings as per the teachings of SRRY under 'Flowers are the results'.

## Part-A

### SUFFERING IS THE ROOT

#### UNDERSTANDING SUFFERING:

We will first look at suffering in its ordinary sense. We call it suffering whenever we undergo a painful or unpleasant experience. Suffering can be at the physical, emotional (vital) and mental levels as when a person suffers due to chronic illness, emotional trauma due to loss of a dear one and mental anguish as a result of being unable to overcome the roadblocks encountered while trying to achieve a desired objective. What really happens though is we convert suffering of whatever level mostly into a mental one. It can be stated that for a person liberated from the mental vital and physical layers or kosas there is no suffering as we understand that term. This conversion to the mental level of suffering is due to the verbalizing and objectifying nature of the thinking, analyzing and awareness faculties we humans possess. The very statement that 'I am suffering from or due to such and such' is an example of this mentalization of suffering.

This is not to deny the constant interaction between thought and feeling aspects of any experience, thought trying to crystallize the usually amorphous nature of feeling, giving it a shape, casting it into a mould we are accustomed to by virtue of conditionings brought about by the influence of parents, peer-groups, tradition, societal and cultural settings in which we find ourselves. We tend to become comfortable once we are able to categorize or pigeon-hole anything which becomes a subject of our introspection.

Rather, for man who is a thinking animal there is nothing which escapes this inward gaze, his constant unceasing attempt at classification, separation into neat mutually exclusive easily recognizable compartments of anything and everything. It has become an act of faith for us to hold that categorization leads to eventual control.

This very attempt has helped in the evolution of language and the evolving language has in turn accentuated and refined the very act of classification. The same language, that unique faculty of humans, the communication tool par excellence is useful in internal or 'self' to 'self' communication as much during introspection as it is in 'self' to 'other' communication. The point being made is we encapsulate all suffering which is mainly of the nature of feeling pain into a thought capsule called impression or samskar, the result of consolidation or compaction even in the literal sense due to brooding over the experience;- participation of the brain and heart as the Master would put it.

A proper understanding of suffering can come about only when we are able to view it from a higher level, that is distancing ourselves so to speak as a disinterested witness, from the mere rational and discursive mental plane. That is the level of vijnana or wisdom level as it happens in the case of the illumined souls, the Great Masters.

As Lord Buddha states on the awakening of the Bodhi or wisdom in Him, there is suffering in this phenomenal existence, there is its arising, there is a cause of suffering and there is a way for the removal of suffering (the Four Noble Truths). Our Great Master has made repeated references to the inevitability and the ubiquitousness of suffering and miseries in the lives of all embodied beings. He says none can escape it, even the great saints and the Avatars were subjected to it. There are many reasons for suffering, namely ill-health, poverty, pain, loss of near and dear ones. If the poor suffer due to lack of wealth the rich are worried at not being richer still. This is the routine course of Nature. While suffering is thus common, the difference between such exalted ones like our Great Master and His Master the Rev. AdiGuru Lalaji Maharaj and us, ordinary folks is in the attitude adopted towards suffering and its enjoyment.

It is relatively simple to grasp the truth that suffering is caused by our undue attachment to the body, its state of health, pleasurable sensations arising from the contact of the five senses with their corresponding objects in the world and the clinging or grasping of the pleasure producing objects. We can be truly rid of most suffering if only we can divert the attention (thought) away from the body to the soul consciousness.

We have developed liking towards those (objects and humans included) capable of causing pleasant feeling-sensations in us and dislike towards those opposed to the former.

The welcoming attitude towards the pleasurable and repulsive attitude to those causing pain and sorrow have complicated inordinately our reactions to the events in our life. As it has been well said everything in this world is ultimately productive of pain, the reason being all pleasures are fleeting and are dependent on the aggregates or coming together of sense objects and the human company promoting happiness and enjoyment. We suffer pain or dukkha when we contemplate the evanescent nature of all pleasure and the palpable lack of control we have in maintaining the conditions/situations productive of the pleasant experiences.

### PROPER ATTITUDE TO SUFFERING

Master says, 'the Workman had sent us pure and crystal clear. The responsibility for the dirt and dust, which has come over us is upon us alone. We have ourselves formed the impressions which have become coverings upon coverings and succeeded in covering us up like the silkworm in the cocoon' totally hiding the Reality within. This obscuration of Reality from our gaze is the principal factor behind loss of discriminative attitude, the root cause behind suffering itself. He further states, 'One who is born is in tumult in disorder, because contradictions presented themselves the very moment he came into existence. Now one who attaches himself unduly to them is found to be held fast in their trammels'.

From the above it is clear that we need to accept the fact of suffering, realize that all of it is our own making arising from the undue attachment we have developed towards the body, wealth and our relations, primarily wife and children (ISHANATRAYA). As our original condition is one of purity and balance, a return to the original condition would put an end to the state of suffering. Recourse to a proper method and securing the connection with and guidance of a capable Master who has Himself attained to the desirable condition, is the solution to the problem of suffering.

Half the problem is solved when we can define the problem and develop the courage to face it with the confidence that there is a solution to it. Our Master gives always a realistic and positive approach to all life's problems. Problems are not to be wished away, they have to be looked at in the proper perspective and squarely faced. The problem itself is found to disappear when put in the correct perspective. This is what Master does when He says, 'Suffering and miseries have their own place in life....Had there been no sufferings in the world man's thought could never have gone up to the reverse side of it i.e., the bliss. Thus man's affliction offers him inducement for finding out means for emancipation. In other words they serve as stimulants'.

Master gives us another clue when He cites the example of transformation of coal into diamond saying a change in set up gives the thing a new appearance. A thing becomes useful and pleasing when its set up is right and becomes painful and ugly if it is wrong. The same is the case with afflictions.

We intensify and perpetuate suffering due to the clouding of our discriminative faculty which has become clouded by the hankerings of the mind that we have become quite blind to the real values of life. In fact everything in life is for our ultimate good; only we have to learn to turn them to our advantage.

We should also note here the fact that the constant attention towards the afflictions and brooding over them strengthens them, our attachment increases towards them and we get trapped in their intricacies. This is due to the misutilization of the thought power in us.

It helps a good deal in our dealing with sufferings if only we could recognize that suffering is as fleeting as the state of happiness it replaces; pleasure and pain alternate. The pessimist says pain is the interval, a rather long one at that between two pleasure states whereas the optimist holds the opposite view. This too shall pass away is the universal criterion to be adopted while we face life events.

The best course would be to regard sufferings and afflictions as opportunities provided to us for developing submission and forbearance. Home is the training ground for the grihasta for whom putting up patiently with the day-to-day events of life is the highest form of penance and sacrifice. Instead of anger and resentment he should develop a meek temperament.

The earnest seeker after liberation and realization would be impatient to get rid of all the coverings and bondages caused by the samskars formed in the course of so many past lives. The so-called sufferings are the only means for the exhaustion of the samskars through bhoga. In fact a true devotee of God utterly dependent on Him becomes delighted at the great opportunity provided to him by God through suffering. The Master says, 'the disease is hated by all who suffer. But basically it is very purifying. When the impure samskars come to bhog the eye of the Creator is towards us. It serves as a cradle for the rocking of the baby and we get nourished. Even when the virtuous samskars come to bhog the eyes of God are towards us—all is the paly of His love'.

In this context the aspirant in the path of Sriramachandra's rajayoga, realizes the immense benefits he derives in following the 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> commandments which sum up the attitude and frame of mind one should adopt in facing upto and dealing with sufferings. The fifth commandment asks us to trat miseries as Divine Blessings for our own good and be grateful. This is the condition of the true devotee and lover of God who feels the graceful attention of God towards him when he is subject to the miseries and afflictions. Misery is a state of extreme unhappiness, pain or acute discomfort, feeling of wretchedness and worthlessness (from the Dictionary).

Such a state is brought about when we are unable to accept suffering, we question why we should have been targeted unjustifiably, we are jealous of others who are better placed and do not realize that the afflictions are bhoga we have to undergo as they are but consequences of our own past actions. It also means that we do not accept that God is samavarti. Misery is more the result of the brooding over the state of suffering which ends up in producing a state of depression, despair and despondency, which is poisonous to spiritual growth. The 7<sup>th</sup> commandment deals with the state of suffering brought about by the wrongs done by others. The logic governing our attitude shaped by following the 7<sup>th</sup> commandment is the same as already advanced above and in addition it takes into account the fact that all are brothers and sisters springing from the common Source and we shall not be revengeful for the perceived wrongs done through their agency. The acts emanating from a vengeful attitude not only robs us of peace and contentment but engenders further samskars adding further to the requirement of bhoga ensuring continued misery through additional lives. Assiduous sadhana under SRRY and the invaluable help through Pranahuti go a long way in exhausting the bhoga through suffering without adding to the samskaric load.

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## Part-B

### FLOWERS ARE THE RESULTS

A flower is the best and most visible part of a plant and in most plants is the crucial organ involved in the propagation of the species. Fruits come forth from flowers. Flowers bloom in a rich variety of colours and are beautiful to look at. Every living species is attracted towards them and they fill the hearts of the beholder (the humans) with joy. A thing of beauty is a joy forever as they say. They are very delicate and sensitive. When aroma is added to colour the flower becomes all the more dear to us, such as the rose the queen of flowers. Again metaphorically, the term flower is used to denote 'the finest specimen', 'ornamental as in flowery speech' and 'reach finest state of development'. The blooming stage of the flower from the bud state is used allegorically to represent the spiritual awakening and expansion of consciousness. The stage of flowering in a plant is the penultimate and indispensable state prior to the state of fruit-bearing, the state of fulfillment of the very purpose of the origination of the plant. Master uses the 'flower' metaphor quite frequently in all His works. He would say, 'God has created the world so that every flower may grow in its right standard'. 'Life is a state of being, which should remain permanently, as long as we live, thoroughly in contact with the Being smelling at each step the fragrance of the being'.

'Many of you have not fully seen the grace of the beautiful flowers of the garden and have not tasted their fragrance'. 'If they get the fragrance, which comes in the wake of spiritual regeneration they will rise towards their transformation soon'. 'Everywhere I find the people poor in spirituality. All of us should try to make up the deficiency. In spite of our labour the flower is still in the bud'. 'It is certain that in SRRY the fragrance of Pranahuti indwells'.

When we ponder over the above sayings, we gather the following ideas.

The very process of creation is one of 'manyness from one-ness and the one having entered them all forming an integral part thereof'.

There is a place for every being, animate, inanimate, sentient and insentient in God's scheme of things and He has willed that every being shall express the Divine totally without any blemish or shortcoming, functioning in tune with His purpose. Every being is a unique expression or flower allowed to grow to its right standard. It is the duty of every being to cooperate with all others to enable the proper and full expression of the Divine each according to its native character, its intended role in creation and capacity. Real and abiding happiness lies only in this endeavour of sharing, mutual service and co-operation. Any act contrary would spoil His creation and add to the combined misery as it is happening today and the Special Personality has come down for the express purpose of correcting the above universal malady, under the direct dictates of Nature.

Fragrance is indicative of great moral character-smell used figuratively for character and also as indicated above the state of spiritual regeneration. The diversion of thought towards the state of 'U' consciousness and stabilization therein makes him truly altruistic, service minded, endowed with the spiritual qualities of maitri (concord) and karuna (compassion). He has the good of all in his heart and as the Master says, 'then the power starts running towards them automatically and it forms the foundation of spiritual regeneration', the first part of the Divine Master's Mission, viz.; Spiritual Regeneration of all mankind.

Master says, 'suffering is the root and flowers are the results' thereby meaning that a proper understanding of the nature of suffering, its cause, development of a proper attitude to suffering and undergoing the same following the commandments, especially the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 7<sup>th</sup> would produce the results termed as the 'flowers'- the finest specimens of humanity. Man becomes the real man, what he ought to be.

We are familiar with the lives of great saints who underwent all manner of sufferings and afflictions, such as, abject poverty, deprivation, loss of near and dear ones, loss of wealth, insults, injuries even physical, condemnation, loss of fame and name and emerged successfully such fiery ordeals due to their indomitable courage, fierce determination, unshakeable faith in themselves, in God and the will to achieve the final object of life.

The golden ore mixed as it is with dross and impurities is melted in the fire to yield the pure gold and hammered on the anvil for shaping into adorable ornaments. They became the 'flowers of humanity' thoroughly honed by sufferings.

Let us look at the results mentioned in the same article; He says that the Adi Guru laid great stress on right morals and proper behaviour, which have always been the basis of yoga. He further says that the person whose life is not pregnant with high morals is incapable of having the finest type of spirituality, which is beyond everything and worth having. Every suffering event is a learning opportunity and if undergone sensibly as outlined previously, we develop 'fortitude and forbearance and even a little peace of mind'. Peace of mind develops through right understanding, through the faith in Master and having given everything to His charge, the charge of the higher soul and having therefore disassociated from the bhoga itself as if it were someone else is undergoing the same. We emerge as stronger personalities now capable of even undergoing suffering for others' sake, which in fact every saint worth his salt does willingly and lovingly too. We develop strong feelings of empathy and sympathy towards all the disadvantaged, the dispossessed, the downtrodden, the disabled and the discarded and are strongly motivated to do whatever is possible to alleviate their sufferings without discriminating. That is nobility of character, resulting from our own experience of suffering.

We also realize from our experience straying from the path of virtue and ignoring the real values of life brought us untold suffering. As a result we bear principled character and strive to uphold the real values of life and this prepares us to hold on to the finest type of spirituality.

He says further that through the practice of PAM, tension goes and de-tension develops and finally both tension and de-tension go leaving a partial vacuum. God is total vacuum, hence we get nearer to God's state progressively. We get into the condition of silence, which is the hallmark of spirituality. The silence is the result of the disappearance of conflicts in the mind, which happens through the progressive exhaustion of the samskars through intelligent bhoga of the suffering.

'The state of trouble reminds us of its silent stage and we should be aware of the state of comfort in the state of discomfort'. The original condition is one of perfect calmness and is free from conflicts and contradictions. Hence by reviving the thought of the origin, developing a strong attraction towards it and cultivating a restless impatience to attain that condition we can hit two birds with the same arrow-free ourselves from the very notion of suffering as we are now dwelling in the opposite condition so to speak and win the attention and grace of the Supreme Master who could safely carry us to the destination.

When Master connects fragrance to Pranahuti, the most significant and unique feature of our system He is referring to the very process of Pranahuti itself, which is the result of 'yawning of the Centre towards the circumference', the loving grace of the Divine Supreme towards Its own children and grace is inseparable from the Supreme. It is His very nature. The fragrance leads us pulls us irresistibly towards its source, 'God is the flower of His own tree'.

Master is the expert gardener who is tending the plants of spirituality in all His fellow beings with whom He feels an inseparable relationship, protecting them from all dangers, carefully nursing them and hoping sincerely that one day they would bud, then flower and finally yield the desired fruit. But He says despite our labour, it is all His labour but He is very gracious in including all His associates in this divine endeavour-this undoubtedly inculcates in us the sense of participation, be conscious of the trust He has already placed in us even when we lack severely in participating in His noble task, urges us to reciprocate the trust placed in us and above all the confidence that we could also do something about it.

Another noteworthy result on the way is the state acquired wherein one loses the sense of doership and when this is progressed further the stopping of the samskars takes place leading to the state of jeevan moksha. All this is brought about by 'turning towards God which is the greatest power; the divine power begins to flow rendering the afflictions totally ineffective'. This is wise management of 'suffering and afflictions' leading to the flowering of the exalted state of jeevan moksha.

The finest specimens or flowers blossom when the sincere and dedicated abhyasis are able to mould themselves in such a way that piety and love would be aroused in their fellow beings (9<sup>th</sup> commandment). By leading the family life in such a way that all their actions have themselves become penances, they have been able to mould themselves. They have been able to create the atmosphere of forests in their homes; the homes have become ashrams where the finest spiritual service can be rendered. In all that the toiling of the Gardener (the Supreme Master), the nutrient of Pranahuti and the sincere aspiration and sadhana of the plant (conscious and conscientious sadhaka) have come together in harmony for achieving the central purpose of human life.

Such flowers are the true Sun-Flowers always seeking the Sun, ever facing the Sun and basking in the Sunshine of His munificent grace producing a great irresistible attraction towards them in the Sun Itself; the beloved becomes itself the lover. The abhyasi has become the cynosure of the Master's (Sun's) eyes, the ideal disciple. Now little remains to be done.



The fruit of Realization is ready to be borne, the honey bee is ready to play its destined role of pollination, the bee is Master who has got the inner signal from God to carry out His noble task of perfecting yet another soul, another full expression of the Divine.

As the Master puts it His task is to deliver such a deserving soul to its Maker but as He would put it, His job is not yet over. He has to remain cleaning the soul of any superfine defilements which would make it unfit to be in the state of mergence with the Supreme Principle, as long as it remains embodied. The service of such a Master the very expression of Unalloyed Love continues beyond His own earthly sojourn.

Before we end this paper we need to address another aspect of suffering altogether in a different class.

The Master states in His article, 'My Pain', 'I developed a feeling of impatience---- It soon developed into a sort of restlessness and pain--- the pangs aggravated to such an extent that a person not connected with spirituality would have committed suicide'. He further says that He could have sacrificed thousands of lives for having a similar state of pain-longing, craving or restlessness created in Him, the state became so dear to Him. People want peace and rest whereas He talks of restless impatience, the pangs of separation. He even pleads with us that we could give Him some satisfaction and solace by cultivating at least a fraction of this pain-longing.

Achieving peace and tranquility is fairly easy but even the greatest saints of the past have fallen short of the mark, namely this restless longing which is but reserved for those whose eyes are fixed firmly on Him. Having that kind of pain is the foundation of the structure which brings forth such rare personalities into the world as the Adi Guru and our own Rev. Master. Elsewhere the Master states, 'I have suffered so much burning during the period during my abhyas that there have been all burns in my breast. But those have become flower-beds and fire flowers. I have crossed the field of spirituality by selling away peace!'

Can there ever be another finer and more exquisite flower with its root in the above kind of 'suffering'- the painful longing and restless impatience enduring all through His sadhana, than our great Master the Result Extraordinary blossoming forth in all blessing splendour?

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