



Rose Petals

Extracts from Sri Babuji's Satsangs

Resistance to Love

DEVOTEE: Guruji, it makes me very sad that you are offering to help me but something is preventing me from taking the help. Why is that so?

GURUJI: It's due to your past habits of refusing help. Resistances arise because of so many experiences in our lives; it's different for everybody. We've experienced so many traumas that it's created a kind of emotional frigidity in us. Try to get rid of this, then you will experience the help more fully. What is actually causing the resistance is that frigidity. Explore every nook and corner of your heart, then abolish it, remove it! Or at least refuse to be a prey to it, to be at the mercy of the mind's pranks. Then you will get help. But you're doing both things: asking and resisting, asking and resisting. That won't take you anywhere, you'll be caught there always. It becomes so frustrating after some time, then that frustration makes you even more frigid. So the more frustration you have, the more frigid you become – it becomes a cycle, a pattern, a habit.



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DEVOTEE: So what's the way out of the cycle?

GURUJI: That's what I'm trying to tell you. I have given you the diagnosis, now you have to take the treatment: take the help. How to accept the help? Simply be open, wait without judgement. Don't try to judge the nature of the help; this is not the time to think about that. Take the help fully, unconditionally and wholeheartedly. And if you find yourself judging, resisting or trying to put labels on it, simply stop doing it! Otherwise it reinforces the habit. All these things, even resistances, don't come from the heart, they come from habit. Our mind is habituated to think like that, to feel like that, so again and again it repeats those tendencies. So if at all you want to do something, just stop that habit. But how to stop a habit? It's very difficult. It's like trying to cut off the branch you are sitting on, because *you* are the habit. So, take a new habit, one which will help you not to resist. These new habits are called 'spiritual practices' in many traditions, but to me they are nothing more than acquiring a new habit in order to destroy an old habit, 'using one thorn to remove another', as Ramana Maharshi said. Because the new habit is also a thorn.

DEVOTEE: Are the habits that get in the way labelling and judgement?

GURUJI: Whatever holds you back and gives you resistance is what you have to stop. Let's explore

it fully, whatever it is. That is real exploration. And what comes in the way of exploration are these old habits. So if you can destroy the old habits without acquiring new ones, good; then there is no need to acquire new habits. But if you cannot, then you have to acquire new habits.

All these things – sitting in satsang or meditation, reading or transcribing satsangs, going to Shirdi – are new habits, that's all. And for those who are experiencing love, these things become expressions of their love and they enjoy them. For those who are unable to enjoy them, it is just acquiring new habits or spiritual practices. They may experience it differently, but in fact, it's all the same. So try to stop resisting. Stop throwing the help away.



DEVOTEE: What is the best way to weaken resistance to our expression of love?

GURUJI: I think it's not a question of resistance. When love wants to be expressed it seeks some concrete means. When there is no possibility of expressing your love concretely, then the memories of previous expressions return. If those were accompanied by some pain or disappointment, then those feelings are brought up as well. So it is not the weakening of resistance that is needed, but finding new concrete expressions. When new expressions are found and experienced, they slowly replace your old memories. Each person has to seek their own ways.



DEVOTEE: Guruji, is there a difference between doing work connected to the Guru as an expression of our love and sitting quietly meditating on him?

GURUJI: If you can sit quietly and meditate, it's good, do it, I never discourage it. The question is, can you do it? If you can, then that's my first preference. Because we can't do it, we engage in activities which strengthen the ego, which increase the sense of separation and kill the experience of love. That's why I ask you to try and express whatever love you are experiencing. Love becomes strengthened when you express it and experience it. So without your knowledge, that which is an obstacle in you slowly gets weakened and removed, because in love there's no space left for yourself. All the spaces are filled by your object of love and anything related to it. Don't try to understand what is happening by analyzing these activities and asking, "What is their purpose? How are they related to my goal? What kind of sadhana is this?" and so on. This kind of questioning is not helpful. Instead, just do it!

I don't use the term 'karma yoga' to talk about these things. I let people engage in activities connected to me solely because they love to do it, that's all. It's the same for me – I also love to do it for them. Just as you can't help but do this work, I also can't help helping you; there are no other reasons. I don't think, "Oh, he is such a deserving person, he has done so much for me. I have to do something for him." There is no calculation. If there's calculation, I don't call it love. It is something else – business! I am not a business man and I don't want people doing business with me.



DEVOTEE: Guruji, I have a resistance to the crowds when I come to festivals in Shirdi. How do I overcome this resistance?

GURUJI: When everyone is together, the power and intensity of the experience is greater. That is why the saints and scriptures recommend attending festivals. At other times it is like sailing when

there's no wind, but attending a festival is like sailing when the wind is favourable, with sails unfurled. With less effort you'll experience something because so many like-minded people are together and the Sadguru is foremost in everyone's mind. All the obstructions coming in the way of experiencing love will be easily removed. Just as you said, you have an aversion to crowds – that is an obstruction. And this obstruction will be removed, so you'll experience the love more – how you receive it, respond to it and experience it. But from Baba's side, the love and care are always the same wherever you are.



GURUJI: Resistance comes from longstanding habits. When Bhagavan spoke of his death experience, even he expressed a fear of death: first he was afraid something untoward was going to happen. Because he was Bhagavan, the resistance lasted only a few seconds; for us, it might have lasted a few years. [Laughter] But qualitatively it's the same, only quantitatively it may differ.

All I'm trying to say is, don't resist your expression of love. When love is spontaneously trying to express itself, don't suppress it with concepts you have loaded your brain with. "Oh, we shouldn't do it like this, we should do it like that, or only sit like this or talk like that." There are no standard forms of expression. At least try to stop your resistance toward your own expression. Then your expression becomes fuller and more natural until after some time it takes you over completely.



GURUJI: For many people, when their love is triggered, they often kill it with jargon and concepts they've learned from the sastras and other books, trying to give it a name. That's why I don't give it a particular name. I call it love, a strange familiarity, a pull, an attraction, a baseless and irrational feeling. [Guruji laughs] Good!

And what I see is that many people – especially those from the other side of the globe [Guruji laughs] – have a fear of involvement and of losing their individuality. That is their fear. They don't realize this fear is what is making them resist.



DEVOTEE: Guruji, I want to be burning, on fire with more devotion. What can I do?

GURUJI: First, let's realize what we want; doing is next. I think most people love the goal, no doubt about it. But they say, "Oh, my resistances, my patterns!" But what are those resistances? Just think about it. They seem so stupid. First, fear: fear of being deceived, fear of exploitation, fear of involvement or of too much involvement. "Oh, maybe we are too involved, it's not good. It's best to keep our distance." What will happen if you get involved? Exploited! But what is there in you that anybody could exploit? If you have so much, there is no need for you to come and sit here. You like this path and you are coming here, and if at all you need help, you will be helped, otherwise not. Or, if you think there's a better way, yes, happily go and choose that path. But do it, whatever it is! This fear of involvement and attachment is of no use. People come and say, "Oh, I love you, Guruji, I want to be with you always, but I have resistances, my pa-a-attns!" [Laughter] They have learnt those two words: 'involvement' and 'patterns'.

If you feel love, if at all you love me, the real love, love of the highest order, says, "Yes, exploit me! If anything at all is there, I am ready to be exploited." I have said a thousand times sitting here, I am ready to be exploited by you. Come on, exploit me! I'm not afraid of being exploited. [Laughter] If you have the capacity, the power, the talent, the ability to exploit me, exploit to the fullest. I'll enjoy

your exploits.

So if you understand this, you see how unreasonable, how ridiculous, how meaningless these fears are, this fear of commitment – no, ‘commitment’ is too strong a word – maybe ‘involvement’ is better. In what else will you be involved, in order to evolve? Without involvement, how will evolution come?



DEVOTEE: In opening my heart, I’m encountering scars from when I’ve been hurt before in love, and those memories make me hold back. Do I just wait and pray that these hurtful scars in my heart will be taken away?

GURUJI: First, you became aware of these scars when your heart was opening. How to cure or remove them? Love is the balm that will cure them.

DEVOTEE: Does the Sadguru trigger that love?

GURUJI: Yes. The one who opens and triggers it, he will also do the open heart surgery. [Guruji laughs] The opening is not your act. You can’t open your own heart and do the surgery.

The first song of the morning *arati*, written by Tukaram¹, expresses this connection of love with worthiness. He says, “Oh, Panduranga, my Beloved, I do not know whether I have love for you in my heart or not.” He doesn’t even know whether what he has in his heart is love, whether he is worthy or unworthy, whether he knows how to remember his Beloved’s name or not, whether what he is saying is simply prattle. He begs his Sadguru, “Whatever it may be, whoever I am, whether I am worthy or unworthy, whether I love you or not, please cast your gracious glance on me! Please give me your love!” Not, *can* you give me your love? But, give me your love!

So the concept of worthiness has no place when real love is triggered in your heart: you feel you have a right to have that love. It’s not our worthiness which makes him give it, it’s *his* worthiness which gives it. The whole concept of worthiness shifts. We don’t get love because we are worthy, but because the Sadguru himself is an embodiment of love, mercy, and compassion. Shift the focus from your worthiness to his worthiness, that’s enough.



¹ Tukaram – Medieval poet-saint (1598-1649) of the Varakari pilgrimage tradition to Pandharpur, Maharashtra, where Lord Vithoba (Panduranga) is worshipped as a form of Sri Krishna; five of his poems have been adapted into the *Shirdi Aratis*, the daily liturgy of hymns to Sai Baba.