

Discussion with P. P. Kaka Maharaj December 2011

On December 16th, 2011, Dilip Kamat, the editor of Self Awakening, our quarterly e-newsletter had the good fortune to spend several hours with P. P. Kaka Maharaj at his home in Nashik, India and to engage him in a discussion on Maha Yoga. We were joined by P. P. Prabhune Maharaj and Shri Nikhil Prabhune, both from Nashik, India. Despite his advancing age, P. P. Kaka Maharaj continues to remain as enthusiastic as ever about communicating with Sadhaks and in spreading the message of Maha Yoga to everyone on this earth. Following are translated and edited excerpts from that discussion.



P. P. Kaka Maharaj at home

Editor: Thank you Dear Gurudev for this opportunity to talk to you about Maha Yoga on behalf of the readers of Self Awakening, our quarterly e-newsletter. We have now had similar discussions three times before in which you spoke about your own life experiences, your advice to Sadhaks on Maha Yoga, Shaktipat Deeksha and Sadhan, and how Sadhaks can better integrate Maha Yoga in their day-to-day lives. Those discussions were very well received by readers of the e-newsletter who found inspiration and guidance from you on many of the questions they have on those topics. This time I would like to talk to you about your aspiration to make Maha Yoga relevant not just to individuals but also to families, communities, nations and to the entire world.

Gurudev: I am glad that the discussions thus far have been helpful to Sadhaks. The topic you are suggesting, which is to make Maha Yoga relevant on a global scale is one which I have been interested in for a very long time. And it is particularly timely, given the Mahayoga Global Meet we have planned for May 1st to 3rd of 2012 to be held in Pune, India. Dr. Vijay Bhatkar, a Maha Yoga Sadhak who is also an eminent computer scientist and founder and Executive Director of the Center for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC) in India, has kindly agreed to lead the Global Meet. (Editor: CDAC is the force behind the PARAM family of supercomputers in India). So we are indeed fortunate to have such an eminent person be in charge of leading this effort. I hope Sadhaks from all over the world will attend.

Editor: I hope so as well. But I was wondering what prompted you to convene such a Global Meet in the first place.

Gurudev: Well, ever since I began the study of Maha Yoga many, many years ago, I have been influenced by the writings of Dnyaneshwar Maharaj (13th century Yogi) who wanted to bring the science of Maha Yoga to everyone, including the common man. For a long time, however, Maha Yoga was introduced only to people who were considered to be “deserving”, i.e. righteous, knowledgeable about the scriptures, wise, etc. But, what about the common man, doesn't he deserve to be informed about Maha Yoga as well? What I found was that it did not matter much whether I thought a person was “deserving”, whether he was knowledgeable about the scriptures, what religion or caste he belonged to or anything else. The key question to me was whether or not Maha Yoga practice worked for everyone regardless of gender, age, caste, creed, religion, race, status in life, education, etc. And I found that it worked just fine for everyone, regardless of any of the apparent differences that we humans tend to focus on so much. So, I have been working on, for quite some time now, to introduce Maha Yoga to the entire world.

Editor: I suppose that is what prompted you to go on a tour of the UK and the US in 2007.

Gurudev: Yes, but I began this effort in my own small way over 25 - 30 years ago. I think it was in the early 1980s that I sent out a letter to the heads of state of 80 nations of the world, briefly introducing them to Maha Yoga and urging them to take it to their citizens. It was somewhat crazy in retrospect, since I did not get a response from anyone, but I felt it was my duty to try regardless.

Editor: Well, it seems like you have been motivated to make Maha Yoga global for a very long time.

Gurudev: Yes, what has motivated me is the fact that Maha Yoga is extremely simple, even a little child can understand it and experience it and so can an elderly person. Anyone can practice it because the basis of Maha Yoga is the Prana Shakti, the Universal Life Energy, which pervades us all. The air we all breathe is a gross manifestation of this very same Prana Shakti. Nobody can deny the fact that we all need air, and the air we breathe is the same for each and every one of us, regardless of where we live. As Dnyaneshwar Maharaj said, “*He Vishvachi maze ghar*”, or “This world is my home”, and we are all members of one family. That is what I believe, and that is what Dr. Bhatkar has emphasized in his invitation to all seekers around the world in the invitation announcing the first Mahayoga Global Meet.

Editor: I was wondering what your intent is behind making Maha Yoga global. Is it to make the world a better place?

Gurudev: I don't really have such grand aspirations. All I am concerned about is the fact that since each and every one on this earth is eligible to practice Maha Yoga; I

simply want them all to become aware that this treasure is available to all of them. I can inform everyone what Maha Yoga is all about and the peace and happiness it can bring to all, and I can request everyone to practice it. It is up to them to practice it or not, but all I can do is to just inform them about it. So that is what I have been doing all these years, and now there are thousands of people all over the world who have practiced it and have actually experienced the sense of oneness, the calm and bliss it creates within the Sadhak (aspirant).

Whenever I get an opportunity to be with people interested in seeking peace of mind, I don't like to give them long talks on Maha Yoga. Instead, I just ask them to sit in a relaxed posture, close their eyes and observe their breath. When they do that, Maha Yoga simply "happens". It does not get "done". As soon as they close their eyes, the Prana Shakti within them automatically begins to rise and go towards the top of their heads. They actually begin to experience the Prana Shakti that pervades us all.

And the second thing is that since we all depend on the air around us, which is a gross manifestation of the Prana Shakti, we can think of it as if it were our common Mother. The air all over the world is the same; there are no national boundaries that separate the air in one country from another. We breathe in and out the very same molecules that others all over the world breathe. So it is with the Prana Shakti that pervades us all. She is the one Mother of us all. So, if all of us around the world have the same Mother, we are all brothers and sisters. That is why the invitation to the Mahayoga Global Meet emphasizes that we are all members of one family. And that is why I want everyone on this earth to realize that we are children of the same mother, the Chaitanya Shakti, or the Universal Life Energy which brings us all into existence.

So after closing their eyes, I tell Sadhaks to observe their breath and surrender to the Prana Shakti within them, which their breath represents. This is not surrendering to some stranger, but it is the same as surrendering to one's own mother, the Mother Energy which keeps us all alive. And which person on this earth will not want to surrender to his/her mother and have her lead him? We know our mothers always have our interest at heart; therefore we trust them and are willing to do anything for them. Sometimes our earthly mothers may not be aware of what is best for us, but Mother Prana Shakti is in fact one better. She knows exactly what we need for spiritual progress. So I tell Sadhaks that after they close their eyes and begin to observe their breath, they should surrender everything to the Mother Prana Shakti, their bodies and their minds. I tell them to surrender their bodies by being as relaxed as possible; to surrender their breath by letting the Mother Prana Shakti control the inhalation and exhalation of breath; and all their thoughts, so the mind begins to calm down. When a Sadhak has such an attitude of surrender to the Prana Shakti, Sadhan "happens"! It is not "done" by the Sadhak.

People all over the world are entirely capable of experiencing this type of Sadhan. Therefore, I think if we can make people around the world become aware of Maha Yoga, I am convinced that the entire world will want to embrace it. Of course people will continue to have differences among themselves related to material issues and will

likely continue to fight with each other. But I think such discord is similar to the fights that children have within families. Two children of the same Mother might fight with each other but the Mother will love them both. And because of the love they get from their Mother they will eventually realize that such fights are meaningless. Better to live in peace and harmony with each other.

Editor: That is correct; if everyone realizes that they are the children of the same Mother Energy, Prana Shakti, the world would be better off. But how can we get people from different nations, sometimes from nations that are at war with each other, to realize this important truth?

Gurudev: Well, we have to ask people whether or not it is possible for them to live without air; the air we all share, the air that is a gross form of the Universal Life Energy which keeps us all alive. Can anyone claim they can survive without air; can they even utter a single word without using the air which is common to us all? That's it!

Editor: But we find that some people of different nationalities and religions are often not quite open to even listening to what we have to say about Maha Yoga and its implications for universal brotherhood. What can we do in such situations?

Gurudev: Maha Yoga is not at all about religion. It does not matter what religion one was brought up in or what one follows, everyone can practice Maha Yoga. And they can do so without changing their religious beliefs.

Of course, if someone does not even want to listen to what Maha Yoga is all about, then there is nothing we can do. We cannot force people to listen to us. All we can do is to try to make those who are interested in spiritual progress and are not closed-minded, become aware that this very easy and straightforward path exists and is available to all.

And if they are open to sit quietly for a short time, say ten minutes, and follow the simple instructions I outlined earlier, they will be able to actually experience Maha Yoga Sadhan. It does not matter what nationality they are or what religion they follow. They will all be able to experience it. They do not have to do anything other than to sit quietly, close their eyes, observe their breathing, surrender to the Mother Energy, and simply observe what happens. Once they become aware of Maha Yoga and have experienced it, it is entirely up to them to practice it or to ignore it. All we can do is to try to make them aware that such a miraculous path exists and that we are all capable of experiencing its benefits.

(Editor's note: At this point, P. P. Prabhune Maharaj joined the conversation.)

Editor: Welcome to the conversation, Prabhune Maharaj. We have been talking about how important it is to make the world aware of Maha Yoga, but sometimes we encounter people with closed minds who are not even willing to listen to what we have to say. We have been discussing what can be done in such situations.

Gurudev: As I said earlier, if people don't even want to listen to us, there is nothing we can do. We must try to bring this great gift to everyone, but if some people do not want to receive it we have to leave it at that. It will take time. As some people become open to actually trying Maha Yoga, the word about the actual experiences of Sadhaks might spread and gradually, even those who are currently unwilling to listen might become open to listening, and perhaps even trying it out.

Prabhune Maharaj: What he (the editor) says is right. A couple of days ago when I had gone to give a talk on Maha Yoga at the Engineering College here in Nashik, I met a professor there. He had come to the talk somewhat intrigued by my engineering background. After my talk he came to me and said that designing software and teaching his students software design and the mathematics that underlies it, is his meditation and he doesn't need to sit for any other type of meditation. He asked me what I thought of his situation. I told him that he should keep doing what he enjoys and if he thinks that sitting for Maha Yoga meditation is a waste of his time he should not bother with it.

There are many people in this world with closed minds, so there is nothing we can do about that. Maha Yoga meditation does not happen unless one has an open mind. We cannot force closed minds to open.

Gurudev: That is correct. All we can do is inform those who are willing to listen to us that such an easy and effective path to inner peace and joy is available to them at no cost. It is up to them to try it and actually experience it. This path is not an intellectual exercise; it has to be actually experienced. Without that internal experience, it is not possible to understand it on a purely intellectual level.

Editor: That brings me to a related issue; why is Maha Yoga Prasar (spreading the word about Maha Yoga) so important? If some people do not even want to listen to what it is about, and some of those who do, might not even want to try it, then why bother with Prasar?

Gurudev: Because we want as many people as possible to become aware of the oneness of us all. That is the basis of the Advaita philosophy, and we would like as many people as possible to actually experience it. Maha Yoga is an easy way to experience this oneness, but we also accept all other religions and schools of thought that teach the oneness of all of us on this earth.

Editor: That is clearly an excellent reason for Prasar, the goal of having everyone on this earth experience a sense of universal brotherhood/sisterhood. But even in our Maha Yoga tradition, (which can be traced in recent times to P. P. Swami Gangadhar Tirth Maharaj in the mid-19th century), there have been some stalwarts who have not focused much on Prasar. They have had the attitude that there is no point in trying to get everyone to understand Maha Yoga and to experience it; whoever is fit for Maha Yoga will find out about it, and will meet the right Siddha Guru to get initiated

into it. They did not want to develop large followership; they were content just to initiate those who sought them.

Prabhune Maharaj: That is correct. Some have had the attitude: “Hame dal nahi badhana hai” (“we do not want to increase the ranks” in Hindi).

Gurudev: Yes, that was true to a certain extent; P. P. Swami Gangadhar Tirth Maharaj is known to have had only one disciple, P. P. Swami Narayan Tirth Dev, and there have been others in the past who were not engaged in Prasar.

Prabhune Maharaj: But even P. P. Swami Gangadhar Tirth Maharaj told his only disciple, P. P. Swami Narayan Tirth Dev that he has been given the amazing gift of Maha Yoga and that he expects it to spread all over the world. So even though P. P. Swami Gangadhar Tirth Maharaj himself did not conduct Prasar, he made it happen through the efforts of his disciple P. P. Swami Narayan Tirth Dev.

Gurudev: And further, my Guru, P. P. Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj was instructed by his Guru, P. P. Swami Shankar Purushottam Tirth Maharaj to go from Kashi in north India to the southern parts of India. Why was he so instructed? Only to spread the word about Maha Yoga to those regions. Once he arrived there he met Shri Vaman Gulvani who became one of his disciples and who we know as P. P. Gulvani Maharaj. As you know, P. P. Gulvani Maharaj was instrumental in spreading the message of Maha Yoga all over the southwest part of India and beyond.

Editor: I suppose Prasar has been the intent of all Siddha Gurus in our tradition, but some seem to have emphasized it more than others. On a related matter, some Maha Yoga stalwarts have given Shaktipat Deeksha (Maha Yoga initiation with the transfer of energy from Guru to disciple) only to those Sadhaks they consider as deserving, while others have given such Deeksha to most of those who have asked. Is there any concern that as we attempt to bring Maha Yoga to everyone on this earth, even “undeserving” Sadhaks might get initiated?

Gurudev: Our answer is that everybody who is mature enough to think for himself is eligible for receiving Shaktipat Deeksha. When a Sadhak asks for Deeksha and accepts the conditions for receiving it, the Deeksha process gets started. What happens after that is in the hands of God, i.e. the Chaitanya Shakti (Universal Life Energy). I just tell Sadhaks to sit for Deeksha and whether Deeksha happens or not and what types of Kriyas (automatic physical and mental activities) happen is entirely in the hands of God (Ishwari Shakti). Who am I to decide whether one Sadhak deserves to receive Deeksha but another one doesn't? It is between the Sadhak and the Ishwari Shakti. We do not ask or urge Sadhaks to receive Deeksha at all. We simply want to inform everyone what Maha Yoga is all about, and that it is available to all regardless of the superficial differences of religion, class, creed, gender, social status, caste, etc. that divide us. It is up to the individual to do with that information whatever he wants. We have no interest in increasing followership at all. We are just the messengers. It is the Ishwari Shakti which is the doer.

Prabhune Maharaj: Our principle for Prasar is very simple. We think we have found something good, something that brings calmness and bliss to all practitioners. And it does not require anything external for a Sadhak to practice it. It does not cost anything, nor does one need to forsake one's religion, career, family, etc. All we want to do is to share with everyone that this gift is available to all for the asking.

Editor: And you have to do this sharing without your ego getting involved, without any desire to build a followership. I think that aspect of Prasar is very important.

Prabhune Maharaj: That's exactly correct. One should not get involved in Prasar to boost followership or to boost one's ego. That is completely counter to the teachings of Maha Yoga.

It is interesting though, that over the past few years, the Mother Energy seems to have become more active and seems to want to increase the ranks of those who have had their Prana Shakti become activated. Even a Maha Yoga stalwart such as P. P. Swami Shivom Tirth Maharaj (who departed from this world a couple of years ago - Editor), who was quite selective in granting Deeksha throughout his tenure as a Shaktipat Guru, urged his disciples when he was bedridden to share the gift of Maha Yoga generously with Sadhaks.

Gurudev: It is as if someone has brought me several boxes of Pedhas (Indian sweets) and I want to share them with others. Is that a wrong thing to do? I don't think so.

Prabhune Maharaj: One other thing I would like to emphasize; we never urge or suggest to people that they receive Deeksha (initiation). In fact whenever I give talks on Maha Yoga I never talk about Deeksha. I only explain what Maha Yoga is all about and ask people to sit and try out the Introductory Approach to Maha Yoga (<http://mahayoga.org/introductorypractice.htm>). After the talk is over and the attendees have actually experienced the calmness that comes from having sat for the Introductory Approach, sometimes people gather around me and ask about what there is beyond the Introductory Approach. Only then do I let them know about Deeksha. But even then I simply let them know that such a thing as Deeksha is available. I never suggest that they should sign up for it or urge them in any way to seek it.

Gurudev: In fact, some people even show signs of the Prana Shakti having become activated even when they sit for practicing the Introductory Approach! The Introductory Approach is not formal Deeksha, but when a Sadhak practices it, often the Mother Energy becomes automatically activated. This has nothing to do with me. It is entirely between the Sadhak and the Prana Shakti.

There are also cases where Deeksha happens automatically. For example, we had a gatekeeper here who asked for and received Deeksha one day. When he returned home that day he had with him a piece of paper which began with the traditional note of reverence and respect for the Guru "Shri, Shri Gurave Namaha". When his wife saw the paper and simply read the salutation to the Guru she immediately began to have Kriyas (involuntary actions) and Deeksha happened. I did not have anything

to do with it. It was between her and the Prana Shakti. The Prana Shakti within her had gotten activated automatically and the Deeksha just happened. Ishwari Shakti, or the Divine Power, is the only authority which decides who gets initiated and who doesn't. Maha Yoga Deeksha is really an Ishwari Deeksha (Divine Deeksha); it is the Almighty's Deeksha, not mine. P. P. Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj used to refer to it as Bhagwati Deeksha (Lord's Deeksha); P. P. Gulvani Maharaj used to call it Devachi Deeksha (God's Deeksha). I have no idea what causes Deeksha to happen, all I know is that it happens. It "happens", it is not "done". My hope is that at some point everyone on this earth will be able to experience it.

Editor: In an earlier discussion you had described your role as that of a postman, simply delivering the mail that was sent to the Sadhak.

Gurudev: That is correct, I see myself as a postman, or someone who is delivering newspapers. I hope the person for whom the newspaper was intended to be delivered reads it; but if some others also read it and get something out of it, so much the better! I have absolutely no idea who reads the newspaper once it is delivered. It is between the reader and the newspaper.

Prabhune Maharaj: If P. P. Kaka Maharaj wouldn't mind, I would like to go back to the issue that was raised earlier about whether a Sadhak should be evaluated for being deserving or not before being granted Deeksha.

As Sant Tukaram Maharaj (17th century Indian saint) has said, "Loha Parisachi Na Sahe Upma, Sadguru Mahima Agadhachi". This means: the analogy of a Paris (touch-stone) turning iron (Loha) into gold falls far short of what happens between a Guru and a Sadhak; compared to a touch-stone, the true Guru's greatness is infinite.

It is one thing for the touchstone to turn iron into gold, but what if the material is copper instead of iron. A Sadguru (true Guru) not only turns iron into gold but he can also turn anything, even copper, into gold. There are Gurus who will wait for the copper to somehow turn into iron before they turn it into gold. But, P. P. Kaka Maharaj's approach is, "Why wait? I will let Deeksha happen even to copper or anything else. Regular Sadhan (Maha Yoga meditation) will convert anyone into iron, and when that conversion happens, the Sadhak will right away turn into gold!" His issue is, "Who am I to decide who is deserving of Deeksha and who is not; if someone comes to me and earnestly requests Deeksha I will grant it to him, and with regular Sadhan, when the time is right he will achieve self-realization".

Gurudev: That is why Tukaram Maharaj said "Yare, yare sare jan" (Come everyone). He did not say, "Only you come, not others". He asked the world to come with him. The whole world is "Deva-swaroop" (Godly form), because the Prana Shakti is in everyone.

Editor: Going back to the issue of Prasar. As Prabhune Maharaj had said earlier, we do Prasar but it has to be done without the involvement of our egos. But it often

becomes difficult for Sadhaks to keep their egos out of the picture. For example, if a Sadhak gives a short speech on Maha Yoga and has the audience sit for a few minutes to practice the Introductory Approach Sadhan, and a few people in the audience begin to experience automatic Kriyas. Even without realizing it explicitly, the Sadhak might get the sense that “Wow, it is because of me that these people are actually experiencing Maha Yoga”. Or a Sadhak gets questions from others about issues related to Maha Yoga and he gives answers to those questions that result in helping others spiritually and they thank the Sadhak for his advice. This might make the Sadhak feel, “Wow, I am actually helping others on their spiritual journey”. This sense of “Me” and “I” often arises in the minds of Sadhaks involved in Prasar. I can tell you that it happens from my personal experience as well. So, do you have any advice for those of us in the Sadhak community who are involved in Prasar on how we can minimize the involvement of our egos in this activity?

Gurudev: What you say is correct, but there is no easy cure for it. There are two ways to think about what happens in such situations. The first is “I am the doer” and the second is “the awakened Shakti (Mother Energy) is the doer”. If a Sadhak believes that he is the doer, there is no doubt that Prasar will only result in boosting his ego. But, if the Sadhak keeps the perspective that the Shakti is the doer; that his own actions as well as the Kriyas (actions) that the audience experiences are all the work of the Shakti and not his own, then his ego will not grow. If he begins to realize that Prasar is itself a form of Sadhan; that it “happens” because of the Shakti, and does not get “done” by him, his spiritual growth will not be negatively affected, in fact it will get accelerated.

But you are correct, it is difficult for many Sadhaks to realize that Kriyas happen not only when they sit for Sadhan but also in what happens outside of Sadhan. The awakened Prana Shakti can make all your actions seem like Kriyas if you have the right attitude and let her be the doer. It is very difficult to let go of one’s ego, but we should always try to remember that it is the Almighty’s power that is getting things done; we are simply the tools being used. It is the Shakti doing these things; not you, not you, not you!

Prabhune Maharaj: One thing we also have to keep in mind is the fact that the Shakti is not ours; it has been handed down over the millennia within our Parampara (Maha Yoga tradition and lineage). It is not the Shakti of an individual, but it is the Shakti that arises from Shiva. She is the doer, not any individual, nor even any of the stalwarts and Siddha Gurus in our or in any other Maha Yoga tradition and lineage.

Editor: Thank you both for that illuminating discussion on Prasar in the context of Sadhan itself. It should be clear to all Sadhaks that one’s surrendering to the awakened Prana Shakti need not be limited to the time when one sits for Sadhan, but should extend even to our day-to-day lives, including Prasar. When we are able to develop a sense that the awakened Shakti is the doer, not just during Sadhan but at all times, do we begin to lose our egos and progress toward self-realization.

Now I would like to get your thoughts on a different topic; that of how Maha Yoga has evolved over time and how it might evolve further.

As we are all aware, Maha Yoga was kept hidden for many centuries when India was under less tolerant rule. It was practiced by the chosen few and passed down from Siddha Guru to his disciples, who were also very limited in numbers. When it resurfaced in the middle of the 19th century with P. P. Swami Gangadhar Tirth Maharaj, he asked his disciple P. P. Swami Narayan Tirth Dev Maharaj to make it available to a broader set of Sadhaks. Over the years Maha Yoga has evolved to where it is no longer limited to renunciates (Sannyasis) but is also available to householders. And with P. P. Gulvani Maharaj's use of Sankalpa Deeksha (Deeksha by thought) to grant Deeksha to thousands of Sadhaks who requested it by mail, Maha Yoga has indeed become available to much larger audiences. In addition, Gurudev's (P. P. Kaka Maharaj's) initiative to make Deeksha available through internet-based requests, and the innovation of making the Introductory Approach to Maha Yoga available to Sadhaks without requiring the commitments associated with Deeksha have further expanded the availability of Maha Yoga to one and all.

Gurudev: That is all correct in terms of how Maha Yoga has evolved, but all these changes have happened not because P. P. Swami Narayan Tirth Dev Maharaj or P. P. Gulvani Maharaj or I made them happen. They happened because the Almighty wanted them to happen and we all are just vehicles for enabling the evolution.

Editor: That is a great example of what we had been discussing earlier; keeping the perspective that we are not the doers, but the Almighty Shakti is the real doer.

But regardless, we can all agree that Maha Yoga has evolved over the ages. Now, in the next step of its evolution, as we work as instruments of the Almighty to make Maha Yoga become more global and universal, we are beginning to encounter issues that many Sadhaks bring up in the context of living in these modern times. Not just in western countries such as the US and the countries in Europe, but also in Indian cities and towns, Middle Eastern countries, everywhere. And most of these issues are related to the difficulties Sadhaks have in observing the restrictions we impose as conditions for receiving Deeksha.

Gurudev: Yes, I am aware of this. The restrictions by themselves have no inherent value per se. They can be relaxed. The most important thing is the experience of connecting with the Almighty through the practice of Maha Yoga. The restrictions are there only to make the traversing of the Maha Yoga path easier for Sadhaks. That's all.

Prabhune Maharaj: In a way, by making available the Introductory Approach to Maha Yoga, we have already relaxed the restrictions. Practicing the Introductory Approach does not require a Sadhak to follow any restriction, and yet he is able to experience the blessing of Maha Yoga. In a way, the Introductory Approach can be considered as a "Deeksha in disguise".

Editor: That is correct, but we constantly hear Sadhaks complaining that they would like to receive Deeksha but are unable to commit to following the restrictions. And often we get questions from Sadhaks, who have received Deeksha and would like to follow the restrictions, but their living situation does not allow them to be strict adherents, and they feel guilty about it.

Prabhune Maharaj: Yes, we have heard of many situations when Sadhaks have great difficulty following the restrictions. P. P. Kaka Maharaj's advice to them is to try following the restrictions if possible, but if you can't that is okay. No reason to feel guilty about it. Sadhaks can consider following the restrictions as "desirable" rather than "essential".

Gurudev: Yes, if Sadhaks follow the restrictions, their progress will likely be accelerated. But if they cannot follow the restrictions then they need not dwell on it as there is no point in their feeling guilty. I agree that the restrictions can be considered as "desirable" rather than "essential". Those who are able to follow the restrictions should follow them because they will benefit from doing so. The restrictions are not "essential" to Maha Yoga happening; they are "desirable" for progress along this path.

Editor: That is indeed an important concept. I suppose it means that if more people are exposed to Maha Yoga, regardless of their ability to follow the restrictions, the better it is for their spiritual growth. So, why limit the number of people who can get access to this wonderful path by imposing strict restrictions which may be impossible for most people on this earth to follow in this day and age. Is there a chance that as a Sadhak goes down this path he might find it easier to follow the restrictions? Might such a change be possible?

Prabhune Maharaj: Yes, there have been instances when Sadhaks who couldn't live without the use of onion and garlic prior to Deeksha, now cannot even stand the smells. So sitting for Sadhan regularly is the most important thing a Sadhak can do. Everything else will be taken care of by the awakened Prana Shakti.

Editor: That's encouraging. I am sure many Sadhaks will benefit from this evolutionary step, and more will likely be willing to try Maha Yoga since they won't have to make commitments they would find difficult or impossible to follow. Now, going back to the Maha Yoga Global Meet which has been scheduled for May 1st to 3rd, 2012 in Pune; you had mentioned earlier that your intent was to spread the word of Maha Yoga to a global audience so everyone on this earth can become aware of its benefits and that it is available to all at no cost at all. But I was wondering, why bring people from all over the world to Pune to attend this event? Why not simply spread the word globally by other means such as the internet, etc.?

Gurudev: Well, we are spreading the word globally through the internet and by other means. But it occurred to me that instead of having our lunch all by ourselves why

not come together and have lunch together? Don't you think there is some enjoyment in all of us in the Maha Yoga community coming together? I thought we would get more of a community feeling if we had Sadhaks from different countries gather together, listen to stalwarts talk about various aspects of Maha Yoga, exchange ideas, share experiences, and sit for Sadhan together as citizens of one world.

I see the world as one community; the world as one family; "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam". "Vasudha" means the world and "Kutumba" means family. The world is really just one nation. The ocean may define one type of boundaries, but if one considers the fact that all of us on this planet share the same air and the air defines the boundary, then we all are citizens of one nation, members of one family, and children of one mother - the air which represents the Mother Energy or Prana Shakti. I hope the attendees will be able to experience this feeling when they participate in the Global Meet.

In addition, I hope participants from different parts of the world will be able to take their experiences and what they have learned at the Meet, to their respective countries and local communities and be able to spread the message of Maha Yoga to others. That way the number of people who have been informed about Maha Yoga will multiply several folds.

Prabhune Maharaj: Also, Sadhaks will have an opportunity to sit for Sadhan in the presence of P. P. Kaka Maharaj

Gurudev: That is not so important. The main point is that even though we all have our differences we are all really one; and an approach like Maha Yoga exists which can enable us to actually experience that oneness. We have no interest in creating a following; all we want to do is to have everyone experience the common energy which is the underlying principle on which the world and the universe exist. This has nothing to do with religion. In fact we dissuade Sadhaks to change their religion. The practice of Maha Yoga will only enhance the Sadhak's understanding of his own religion by enabling him to actually experience the Divinity he worships.

Editor: Thank you so much Dear Gurudev and Shri Prabhune Maharaj for your time and your patience in discussing these issues. I am sure readers of Self Awakening will greatly appreciate your guidance on Prasar and the importance of informing everyone on this earth about the Divine gift of Maha Yoga. It has been a personally rewarding experience for me to be in your presence and listen to your inspiring message.

Gurudev: I pray to my Gurudev for the uplift of everyone on earth, brothers and sisters of our common Mother!

Dilip Kamat
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