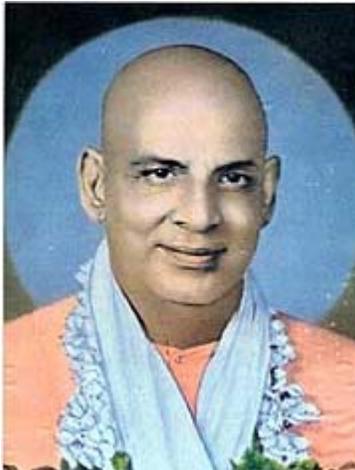


STUDENTS, SPIRITUAL LITERATURE AND SIVANANDA

By

SRI SWAMI CHIDANANDA



**Sri Swami Sivananda
Founder of
The Divine Life Society**



**SERVE, LOVE, GIVE,
PURIFY, MEDITATE,
REALIZE
So Says
Sri Swami Sivananda**



Sri Swami Chidananda

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

Swami Sivananda's name has become synonymous with the dissemination of spiritual knowledge. Illustrious author of over 300 books, Swamiji has endeared himself to all humanity through his catholic teachings spiced with love and understanding. Swami Sivananda takes a special interest in the younger generation. During his all-India tour in 1950, he gave preference to schools, colleges and universities for lecturing and demonstration of Yoga exercises. Unlike platform orators, Swamiji does not rest content merely with saying that the youth is the hope of tomorrow; he works day and night to mould the younger generation into future citizens. "Students are moulded to the education they receive," says Swamiji. At a time when education in this country has lost much of its meaning by its being devoid of man-making spiritual content, Sivananda Literature comes as a God-sent boon to the student community. No one, perhaps, is better qualified to advise the students and command their love and reverence than Swami Sivananda, because Swamiji speaks not as a Master, but as a friend and well-wisher. Says he: "I speak as your humble Sevak and 'Hitakankshi'. Whatever I say, I say by way of friendship and you have to act upon it after hearing me. Please accept this as a gift and make it your own." Gurudev's gift, not only to youth but to the whole mankind, is his literature, sweet and sublime, vast and luminous—the Divine Literature in commemoration of which the Sivananda Literature Festival is being celebrated today (July 20, 1959) throughout the whole world.

Millions the world over have benefited materially and spiritually through the study of Swamiji's life-transforming works. Thousands have personally visited the master and have had the benefit of his Darshan and personal instructions. One such blessed soul is Sri Venu (son of Sri S.K. Guptaji, Executive Engineer, Patiala). Soon after the schools closed early this summer, Sri Venu came straight to Shivanandanagar to 'enjoy' his vacation with Satgurudev. An unusual way, indeed, for a modern student to enjoy his vacation! Asked what brought him here, Sri Venu was quick to reply: "I find peace in the atmosphere here." A robust intelligence and an innate cheerfulness coupled with the seriousness of a Sadhaka and an unshakable faith in his Satguru and his teachings made it possible for this young student-disciple of Swamiji to make remarkable progress in the study and practice of Yoga and Vedanta during the short spell of two months he stayed in the Ashram.

On the eve of his return home, Sri Venu heard of the Sivananda Literature Festival. The idea of a 'Literature Festival' was novel to him and it evoked in his inquisitive, youthful mind a series of questions pertaining to the study of literature, the choice of books, the benefits of Svadhyaya and so on; and, he approached Swami Chidanandaji to know more on the subject. The following pages record the conversation that followed, a conversation that abounds with useful and practical suggestions for students by Swami Chidanandaji. Added at the end is a Select Bibliography for students of Sivananda Literature.

The credit of sponsoring this beautiful publication goes to Swami Brahmajnanananda (Rudrani Mataji) and Sneh Gandotra Mataji of Dehra Dun.

—THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY

BE THOU A RADIANT TORCH-BEARER

(Message from Parama Pujya Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj of Rishikesh for the celebrations of the Sivananda Literature Festival at Patiala, Punjab)

Children of Immortal Light!

Om Tat Sat. Sat Shiri Akal. All glory to the Supreme Paramatman, who is the Light of this universe, the inner Light that shines in your heart and the great Light Atmajnana that illumines the Jiva and bestows to it freedom and Immortality.

It is with immense joy that I send this holy message upon the happy occasion of this festival that you are all celebrating to honour and glorify spiritual literature. I rejoice to be in your midst in spirit and take part in this holy Utsav. The spiritual and Dharmic literature of every country and race is its most treasured and greatest wealth. The beloved culture and civilisation of each country is based upon the noble ideals expounded to it in its scriptures and its spiritual literature. This literature therefore forms the most important heritage of the country. The life of the people gets its strength and inspiration from this fountain source of its culture. Without such spiritual literature, darkness will prevail on the earth. Dharma and spiritual books are like God's own light in this world of man.

Spiritual books show the path of light. They guide you along the way of righteousness and Dharma. They lead you to happiness, peace, true prosperity and success. They are a treasure-house of invaluable teachings that bring about supreme blessedness and joy in your life. They contain words of power that lift you to noble heights and transform your lives. They inspire you to help you to overcome weakness and evil, and fill your life with virtue and goodness. They make you an ideal person full of goodness, purity, truth, faith, devotion and Paropakara. They contain spiritual force and Divine power. They are God's boon to humanity. They are the greatest need of today when the world is suffering due to its going to wrong path and neglect of faith, devotion and worship.

This Festival which glorifies and honours such holy literature and spiritual books serves an important and significant purpose. It draws the attention of all people to this treasure that they have within easy reach. It introduces them to their real friend-in-need and companion in life who will always guide them from day to day giving strength and consolation and light. It also effectively awakens them to the rich heritage that they possess and the great and lofty use they can make of it and attain true peace, happiness and success in life. A festival like this is therefore a rare blessing and a unique good fortune to all citizens of the place. It brings a new light and a new uplifting and ennobling power into their lives.

Young Sri Venu is heralding a new dawn in the city of Patiala and causing a unique awakening through this literature Festival. Venu is a worthy son of a most worthy father. Sri S.K. Guptaji is an ideal Grihastha-Sadhaka and "like father like son" is proved true in regard to Venu who is a philanthropist and saint in the making. He is keenly interested in leading an ideal student-life and in spreading the sublime Gospel of Divine Life and Ideal Sadachara amongst all the student-world. This is a noble attitude indeed. May God bless him with all progress, prosperity and success! He has the inspiring example, practical guidance and the blessings of his noble father.

Blessed Children of Divinity! beloved citizens of Patiala, arise and awake unto this new spiritual dawn! Behold the sun of DIVINE LIFE upon the joyous horizon. March rejoicingly upon the path of Yoga and Vedanta which leads to infinite happiness. Embrace spirituality. Practise Purity. Develop nobility. Do Charity. And attain Divinity. Draw inspiration from the saints and sages by regular daily study of their spiritual books. Read spiritual literature systematically without fail just as you take food daily. Such reading and daily study will prove to be your most profitable occupation. It will enrich your lives here with peace, poise and joy. It will bestow the highest Wealth of all wealths by conferring upon you divine realisation!

May Peace and Bliss be unto you all!

1959

Sivananda

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STUDENTS, SPIRITUAL LITERATURE AND SIVANANDA

1. Spiritual Books And Their Benefits

Ques: What is meant by ‘Spiritual Literature’, Swamiji? What benefits can students derive by studying such literature?

Ans: By ‘Spiritual Literature’ is meant not only standard works like the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and the Bhagavad Gita, but also all those writings of saints and sages, all those works by men of Godly wisdom which uplift the reader, help him to lead a better life and take him nearer to God. By reading such literature, students will derive wonderful benefits. The elevating ideas contained in such literature will inspire them and make a lasting impression on their adolescent minds so that their whole mode of thinking and living will be shaped on a noble, divine pattern. They will develop the ability to think rightly and act rightly.

Secondly, study keeps your mind occupied. You should never be idle. Haven’t you heard the saying, “Idle brain is devil’s workshop”? If you sit idle or if you read the wrong type of literature like novels and comics, your mind will be assailed by a whole host of debasing thoughts and these will go on developing. Bad thoughts will lead you, in course of time, to bad ways of living and you will become miserable. That is why you should always read elevating, noble literature.

Thirdly, constant study develops your mental capacity and power of grasping finer ideas. You will develop a high degree of concentration which will help you in whatever profession you may choose in later life.

Fourthly, you must remember that books are a mine of knowledge and knowledge is power. For instance, by reading books like “First Aid” and “Home Remedies,” you can equip yourself with useful knowledge and serve poor people in distress.

Further, books containing noble thoughts, ideas and living lessons from inspiring lives are in the nature of invaluable food for thought. They provide ethical and spiritual nourishment to all persons, old and young alike. Thoughts and ideas mould a person’s character. You all know the great law that as a man thinks so does he become. Thus, by regularly reading pure and great books written by noble and godly persons, the mind is filled with pure and sublime ideas. These help to transform you into noble persons with lofty character and godly nature.

Thus study of such books becomes the basis of a noble and glorious life.

2. Holy Authors

Ques: Who is authorised to write Spiritual Literature?

Ans: Not all are authorised to write Spiritual Literature, for if they would say something wrong, there is the danger that the reader might be misled into following the wrong advice. You must remember that with the masses the printed word goes for Biblical Truth. It is only the God-realised Sage, who has all the weight of Divine Authority behind him, who is competent to

write spiritual literature. It is also permissible for advanced Sadhakas, those who practise what they say, to write about spiritual matters.

Apart from this type of spiritual literature, there is however the permanent treasure-house of divine wisdom in the form of the great scriptures which are the wealth of all mankind. The Upanishads, the Gita, the Bible, the Koran, the Gathas of Zarathustra, the Ramayana, etc., form such lofty literature to which everyone can turn for daily inspiration and draw strength, light and guidance.

Sages of personal spiritual Realisation and practical Wisdom like our Sat Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj are the most eminently authorised persons to write spiritual literature.

3. Transforming Power Of Daily Study

Ques: How do spiritual books transform the life of a man?

Ans: Spiritual books transform the life of a man by imparting true knowledge and opening his eyes to the true purpose of life. Let me explain what I mean.

These days, even when a man passes his M.A., he is ignorant of the real purpose of life. He takes a degree merely to get a petty job and an income. Then, he marries and begets children. Some people, dissatisfied still, divorce their first wives and marry again. The foolish man thus searches in vain for happiness in wealth and women, without understanding that both wealth and women are perishable. Spiritual books tell such a person that lasting happiness cannot be had in perishable objects but can be had only in God. They will point out that real life consists not just in eating, drinking and sleeping. Even animals perform these functions. Man has a far higher purpose in life. It is man's privilege to seek and achieve perfection through God-realisation. Spiritual books, by pointing out to you the purpose of life, by pointing out what is right and what is wrong, by suggesting various practical means of moulding your life on the pattern of great spiritual heroes, help you to shed vices, develop virtues and build up a noble personality.

They teach you to make a success of your life by living for the true goal of existence. They endow your life with a rich meaning and save you from the temptations of petty and base things by constantly keeping before your vision the inspiring picture of a high ideal. These spiritual books contain words of authority and power derived from a higher source and this infuses the sincere reader with inner strength and provides him with a powerful urge towards a progressively nobler and better life. Thus, though silent, they are yet dynamic life-transformers. Throughout the history of this world, spiritual books have played a distinct role in moulding the characters and personalities of great leaders of mankind, in all fields of life. Sivaji, Abraham Lincoln, Gandhiji are some of the standing examples. The influence exerted by great books upon the lives of men is an undeniable positive factor in human progress.

4. Moulder Of Students

Ques: How far will Sivananda Literature help to mould students' thoughts?

Ans: Spiritual literature always helps and elevates—not only students, but everyone. The mind needs food just as much as the body does. If cattle are fed on good prepared food in the cow-shed, they will no longer go out to graze on rubbish. Even so, if the mind is fed on good thoughts contained in spiritual literature, they will no longer entertain a taste for cheap literature.

You must, however, notice one point. While spiritual literature always helps, the extent to which it benefits a man depends upon the man himself. You will be benefited to the extent to which you already possess a moral character, have a liking for spiritual subjects and have faith in the book and its author. What is true of spiritual literature, in general, is true of Sivananda Literature also. In addition, Sivananda Literature has the quality of converting even sinners and atheists; this is because of the Divine powers of the writer. It is because Swamiji's appeal is forceful, His style is simple. He directly addresses the reader and thus touches his heart with his rousing divine message. He shows practical ways and means of overcoming impurity and evil and becoming divine. He infuses confidence, optimism and inspiration into you. He speaks to students from their own level and counsels them as their friend and well-wisher. He always takes the positive course of encouraging them and infusing new hope and optimism into them. He seldom takes the condemnatory attitude. Hence his books appeal to the youth and are effective in moulding their thoughts and conduct.

5. Real Wealth Of Mankind

Ques: Is it true that Swami Sivananda's works have enriched the world's spiritual literature?

Ans: Absolutely. Gurudev's works are so many gems added to the spiritual literature of the world. Swami Sivananda, being a God-realised Soul, whatever flows out of his pen turns out to be spiritual literature of the highest order. Sivananda Literature has come as a God-sent gift at a time when the world is passing through a severe crisis in values. You will appreciate that Gurudev's message of "Serve, Love, Give, Purify, Meditate, Realise," beautifully amplified in his numerous works, is a valuable addition to the spiritual values of the world's religions.

The especial way in which Swami Sivananda has enriched the world's spiritual literature is through his simple and lucid presentation of even abstruse and subtle philosophical truths, by his interpretation of the true spiritual import of religious teachings in a manner suitable to and acceptable to the modern man and by his bringing out the fundamental essentials of spirituality from amidst a vast mass of non-essentials. He has given the gospel of practical religion, active Dharma and the universality of the Divine Life underlying all religions and scriptures.

Some may say, "There are already many religious and spiritual books. Where comes the question of additional enrichment of existing literature?" But, the fact is that Swamiji's excellent spiritual literature has come as a direct God-sent gift to meet one of the greatest needs of our modern times. Perhaps at no time in the past has mankind stood in greater and pressing need of literature like Gurudev's writings. Almost all religious literature in their original are archaic in style; moreover, they are written many a time in obscure and allegorical language whose meaning is not immediately perceptible. Thus, they are not of much effective use to the vast mass of mankind. Moreover, the traditional method of presentation of ethical and spiritual truths was such that the

essential teachings were surrounded and almost buried under a whole mass of non-essential, and sometimes irrelevant detail, that to the normal reader they were inaccessible. These non-essential details swelled the size of the scripture to such an extent that the very size frightened the ordinary man away from their perusal. Modern man had hardly time even for his routine personal hygiene, food and rest etc. Such being the situation, Swami Sivananda has enriched the spiritual literature of the world by culling out the most precious essence from the ocean of scriptural writings and presenting them to modern mankind in a modern language, in simple style and in a direct and forceful manner, peculiarly all his own. Also, his writings spotlight the practical aspects of religion and spiritual science. Thus, his books tell you not so much what you should believe in or what you should merely know, but they tell you in an emphatic and a powerful manner what you should be, what you should do and how you should live your life. His writings expound practical spirituality and living religion. This is one of the special reasons why Swamiji's books constitute a distinct enrichment of the world's spiritual literature.

6. Books To Begin With

Ques: What books should I take up to begin with, Swamiji?

Ans: Always choose those books which inspire noble feelings in you, which bring new, uplifting ideas to your mind. By reading a book, you should always become better. The book should always take you higher and higher, in every way. Again, read those books which add to your fund of real, useful knowledge. Read the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. They are full of morals and inspiring stories. Read abridged editions, if you have no time for the originals. Read some of the books written by Guru Maharaj. He gives the essence of religion in simple language. As you know, he has written many books specially for young boys and girls. Read his "Ethical Teachings," "Sure Ways for Success in Life and God-realisation," "Practice of Brahmacharya," "Students' Success in Life," "Divine Stories," "Divine Life for Children," "Gita for the Young," "Gita Essence for Children" etc. Study his works on Mind Control and the Cultivation of Virtues. You will be immensely benefited.

7. Secret Of Svadhyaya

Ques: What is the benefit of reading books like the Ramayana and the Gita, again and again, every day, Swamiji?

Ans: I shall tell you why repeated Svadhyaya or study of spiritual literature is necessary. You will understand it better if I give you an illustration. Take a nail and try to hammer it somewhere, in one stroke. The whole of the nail will not go in. You will have to hit it repeatedly, several times before it gets in well. Also if you wish your body to grow or a plant to grow you don't simply feed or water it once and sit quiet. You have to take nourishment daily. You water the plant daily. You do this day after day without fail. Similar is the case with study of spiritual literature. It is only by daily reading that the ideas will get deeper and deeper into our mind. The mind will be gradually purified. Study of sacred scriptures like the Gita set up beneficial vibrations and thought-currents in your mind. They will shape your life nicely and you will also gradually become a hero like Arjuna or Bhishma or Hanuman by constantly dwelling on their noble virtues. Even if you read these holy scriptures without understanding their meaning, the atmosphere wherein you

read them will be purified—just as a cheerful atmosphere is created when you meet your friends and exchange some words of greeting which may not have any significant meaning. Reading of scriptures is always good and when it is done with a knowledge of the meaning, the benefits are increased manifold.

Moreover, as you breathe fresh air regularly, constantly and continuously in order to sustain your Prana and similarly eat food daily month after month, and year after year in order to nourish your physical body, even so you must understand that the moral and the spiritual being of man need to be given their own nourishment. Devotional and spiritual practices are the indispensable nourishment for our soul. They form the essential spiritual sustenance to the inner being. Man is not merely a physical body and animal activity. He is an ethical being and his essential nature is Divine Consciousness. To nourish these latter, higher aspects, to develop and strengthen them and to attain perfection the inner spiritual life is very necessary. Svadhyaya or daily reading of spiritual books forms an important and indispensable item in this inner spiritual life. By such reading and study, there is a daily intake of noble, pure, elevating and inspiring spiritual ideas. These ideas are an effective safeguard to prevent the mind succumbing to temptations or sliding down from its true ideals. They help most effectively to keep the heart and mind ever uplifted and highly pure and in an inspired state. They infuse the person with moral and spiritual strength, make life sublime and ultimately lead to all-round perfection in life.

8. Advice On Study

Ques: Swamiji, how many hours daily would you advise me to devote to the study of spiritual literature?

Ans: Obviously, students cannot devote much time for reading outside of their own school texts. While a retired man can possibly spare six or seven hours for daily Svadhyaya, you might try to set aside at least a couple of hours every day for this purpose. Of course, you will be able to read more in your holidays. On the other hand, during examination time, you need not worry about Svadhyaya, but may confine yourself to your daily prayers. In these matters, you must always use your individual discretion, because you know your circumstances best. But, however, you must adhere to this main principle, namely, that some fixed time must be set apart for the daily reading of elevating, inspiring and ennobling spiritual literature. The length of time may, of course, be adjusted to suit different periods of the year.

9. Suitable Time

Ques: What is the best time for studying spiritual literature?

Ans: Early morning, and at night after supper, is the best time for reading spiritual books. In the morning hours, our minds are fresh and free from struggling thoughts. At that time, we can concentrate our minds wonderfully on whatever we read. On the other hand, if you start reading in the evening, a number of thoughts and worries arising out of your day's life will come to the surface of your mind and you will not be able to concentrate on the book in hand. Therefore, always make it a habit to get up at 4 a.m. in Brahmamuhurta and start your day with some prayer, some Asanas and Pranayama and some reading of spiritual literature. What we read in the early morning hours will be

so deeply absorbed in our minds that we will be guided throughout the day by the noble thoughts. The whole day will thus be converted into a continuous Brahmamuhurta for us. A little reading before you retire at night (perhaps after your homework with school texts) will enable you to go to bed with a mind filled with sublime ideas and divine feelings.

10. Avoid Night Reading

Ques: Some people say, Swamiji, that we should not study at night. Why?

Ans: Of course, it is advisable to avoid reading at night for the following reasons:

(a) Artificial light is not so good for the eyes as sunlight.

(b) The mind cannot concentrate on the book when one is feeling sleepy. The early part of the night is the time for sound sleep and if you sit reading at that time, you will spoil your health and, moreover, will be unable to get up at 4 a.m. for the precious Brahmamuhurta Sadhana.

(c) The matter which you read at night time is likely to disturb your sleep in the form of dreams. In study, the mind tends to become alert and this keeps sleep away.

(d) At night, the mind is filled with the thoughts of the day's life just ended and the mind will not be able to shoulder the additional burden of new ideas and store them up effectively.

While these are the reasons why one is advised not to study at night, people who, for unavoidable reasons, do not get any other time for reading, should certainly do some Svadhyaya at least at night time.

11. The Best Place

Ques: Where should we sit to study holy literature?

Ans: Holy literature, sacred scriptures should be studied also in some holy, sacred, quiet place. A temple, the banks of a holy river and so on or at least just a quiet spot free from the material din and bustle like the cool shade of a tree or some other lonely place are suitable for such study. The atmosphere in a sacred place like the temple is pure and exercises a beneficial influence on our thought-vibrations. We will understand the books better, because our mind will be free from wrong and impure thoughts while seated in such a place. The place that we choose should also be, as I said, quiet. Then only, we will be able to concentrate on the book in hand and assimilate its contents nicely. Of course, it is not possible for all people to command the convenience of a nice place; they may choose some quiet corner in their own houses for the purpose of Svadhyaya.

12. Question Of Asana

Ques: Swamiji, what Asana will you advice me to sit in while studying spiritual literature?

Ans: You may sit in the same Asana as you sit in for Japa and meditation. You need not take to a new Asana, because you will not be able to concentrate on your studies till you learn to sit comfortably and for a long time in the new Asana.

If you sit for reading soon after taking your food, you may with advantage sit on Vajrasana for half an hour, since Vajrasana is excellent for improving digestion if practised immediately after meals.

Moreover, by sitting in the same Asana for all practices like Japa, Dhyana, worship, study etc., you are able to get prolonged practice of the Asana and thus obtain full mastery over the particular pose with ease and in a short period.

13. The Right Attitude

Ques: For deriving maximum benefit, what attitude of mind should the Sadhaka maintain while studying sacred literature?

Ans: Three things are necessary—Faith, Receptivity and Devotion. Faith is the most important factor. If a man studies spiritual literature with faith, he will try to live up to the lofty ideas and ideals contained in such literature. It is faith which makes possible what is otherwise impossible. Without faith, full benefits cannot be derived from the reading of any spiritual book. But, however, the very reading of spiritual books creates faith in those who might have formerly lacked firm faith in spiritual matters. Thus, though these three i.e., faith, receptivity and devotion may be said to be necessary to derive the fullest benefit from study of spiritual literature, yet they are not so indispensable as to render such study useless in their absence. Many a time, these qualities themselves emerge as results from study of spiritual books. Therefore, while such attitude of mind is desirable for spiritual study, yet even those devoid of such attitude should engage themselves in the study of pure and inspiring spiritual literature. The right attitude and the necessary faith and devotion will develop gradually. Have you not heard the well-known saying, “Those who came to scoff remained to pray”? Even so, those people who read sacred literature with curiosity and critical spirit in the beginning later on become devoted to their regular study. Such is the holy influence of sacred books.

During the time of study, an attitude of receptivity should also be maintained. Spiritual literature should not be read in a casual manner as newspapers are read. Spiritual literature should be read with attention, since the object of reading here is not just to while away the time in a pleasant manner but to absorb the teachings and mould our very lives on the pattern of those teachings.

Also, an attitude of devotion, an attitude of reverence for the book and its author should be maintained while we are engaged in Svadhyaya. Otherwise, our study may degenerate into mechanical, parrot-like reading. Feel the blessedness of such study. Be aware that you are enriching yourself thereby. Then you will derive maximum benefit.

14. Miscellaneous Study And Meditation

Ques: Is it true, Swamiji, that studying too many books disturbs meditation?

Ans: Yes. Study of too many books especially when they are books dealing with different subjects, is not favourable for meditation. Reading diverse books will fill the aspirant's mind with too many ideas and they will be revived at the time of meditation. Thus, control of mind will become difficult. As you know, for good meditation, one-pointedness or Ekagrata is the most essential thing. By reading a large number of books, this one-pointedness is disturbed. The best thing would be, therefore, to stick to a few select books at a time and fully assimilate and absorb the teachings contained therein.

15. Whole-Timed Dhyana

Ques: When should an aspirant give up studying books?

Ans: An aspirant should give up studying books when his mind becomes wholly inward, when evil Vrittis like anger, desire, fear, greed and lust no longer trouble his mind. Svadhyaya should never be given up all at once. First, the period of Svadhyaya should be gradually lessened. Then, the aspirant should take up just a few books and assiduously cultivate the teachings contained therein. The emphasis should now shift from theory to practice. When the aspirant has, by steady effort, brought the highest spiritual teachings into practical life, when his mind becomes completely attuned to God and remains in God always, he can give up the study altogether. Books are of no more use to such a person, since he has already absorbed the best in them. Such an advanced Sadhaka will have to engage himself mostly in Dhyana or meditation till he finds God.

16. Best Books Of Swami Sivananda

Ques: What books of Gurudev do you like most, Swamiji?

Ans: It is very, very difficult to say. It is like this. If you are given many dishes to eat—some sweet, some salty and others of Khoya, you may choose one from each variety but cannot possibly say which particular piece is the best. Each has a delicious taste of its own. Similar is the case with Swamiji's books. Instead of asking me in a general way, if you ask me what book of Gurudev I like best on a particular topic, I may be able to single out a particular book from a number of books written by Gurudev on the same topic. All the same, I may tell you that two books of Gurudev have captivated me the most. They are: "Spiritual Lessons" and "Mind, Its Mysteries and Control."

17. Colleges And Spiritual Literature

Ques: Have Swamiji's books been introduced anywhere as texts for college students?

Ans: Yes. Three books—"All About Hinduism," "World Religions" and "Essence of Vedanta"—are textbooks for students in California. In India, a school in the South has introduced "Sure Ways for Success in Life and God-realisation" as a textbook. I would personally like to see more schools introducing Gurudev's works as texts, because his works are man-making and life-giving. It is true that nowadays boys prefer stories to treatises on God, but then Swamiji has written the books "Spiritual Stories," "Philosophical Stories" and "Divine Stories" which are so much liked by boys and girls. These, at least, can be introduced in our educational institutions as texts.

18. Books For Modern Students

Ques: Which books of Guru Maharaj would you recommend for the modern college boys?

Ans: I would say that the college students should read as many books of Swamiji as possible. Sivananda Literature will enable them to overcome fear, anger and other vices, to develop a strong will and to understand the true aim of life. While Gurudev has written nearly 300 books, the students should try to study at least the following which contain the cream of Swamiji's 'Upadesa' to boys and girls:

1. Sure Ways for Success in Life and God-Realisation.
2. Students' Success in Life.
3. Practice of Brahmacharya.
4. Ethical Teachings.
5. Mind, Its Mysteries and Control.
6. Moral and Spiritual Regeneration.
7. Inspiring Messages.
8. How to Cultivate Virtues and Eradicate Vices.
9. Conquest of Anger.
10. Conquest of Fear.
11. First Aid to the Injured.
12. Spiritual Lessons.
13. Sivananda Upadesamritam.
14. Bhagavad Gita for Students.
15. Ethics of the Bhagavad Gita.
16. World Peace.
17. World's Religions.
18. Precepts for Practice.

Some of these books have to be possessed by all students as their own personal copy. The rest of the books in the list may be taken up for group study. Students must form study circles. Such study circles should take one book at a time from some common library and study through it in a series of daily sittings and thus finish that particular book. Next, another book could be taken. Thus, in the course of a year or two, during their college career, they would enrich themselves immensely through such spiritual studies, simultaneously with their academic studies.

19. An Important Question About "Upadesa"

Ques: What, in essence, is Gurudev's 'Upadesa' to students?

Ans: Well, I cannot possibly catalogue in detail Gurudev's advice to students and young people; but, I shall certainly try to tell you his more important teachings.

(a) For students, the primary concern should be their studies.

(b) They should obey their parents and teachers and respect their elders.

(c) They should strictly avoid bad company, because a man becomes what his friends are, It is better to remain alone than to mix with bad company.

(d) Students should exercise self-control, maintain self-discipline and display self-confidence. These are virtues which will not only stand them in good stead in their school and college days, but will also lead to success in every walk of life later on.

(e) Students should live a simple life and should adhere to the best in their national tradition and culture and give up imitation. It is regrettable that our students should take to Western dress and modes of living, neglecting our own glorious culture bequeathed to us by our forefathers.

(f) Students should serve the poor, the sick and the illiterate. This will develop in them virtues like selflessness, mercy and tolerance and enable them to mature into citizens worthy of their great country.

(g) Students should, of course, be regular and punctual. The time of youth is most precious and *should never be wasted*.

(h) It is important that students should take the greatest care of their health by taking Sattvic food, doing Asanas and exercises, playing games and so on. The playground is as important as the school desk for young boys and girls. “Work while you work and play while you play, for that is the way to be happy and cheerful.” Students must be established in moral purity and Brahmacharya.

(i) Students should always remember God. They should pray daily. They should start and end every piece of work with God’s name.

Do not go away with the feeling that Swamiji Maharaj is very strict with students. Almost all that I have said will be applicable to others also. In fact, Swamiji—if at all he exercises partiality—exercises it in favour of young men and it is out of overflowing love for them and regard for their welfare that he gives all this advice. Therefore, it is but fair that you should strictly obey his teachings.

Get by heart Swamiji’s “Song of Eighteen ‘ities” and you will have the essence of his teachings to young people in a few words.

20. Sivananda And World Peace

Ques: Has Gurudev touched on the subject of world peace in his writings? How far has Sivananda Literature helped the cause of world peace, Swamiji?

Ans: Oh, yes. Gurudev has not only touched on the subject of peace and amity among nations in his many writings, but has written an exhaustive book itself on the subject. The title of the book itself is ‘World Peace’. Swamiji is in continual touch with a number of organisations which are dedicated to the cause of world peace and are working for it. Swamiji sends a free supply of his non-sectarian literature to these organisations and also stirring messages on special occasions. In this way, his message of peace is broadcast widely the world over.

Swamiji's message of peace, love and harmony based on spirituality and Divine Life is particularly appreciated in Europe, Japan and other places which suffered heavily during the last war. Besides influencing people through his literature, Swamiji himself calls them together now and then so that a solution for this and similar problems could be sought through personal understanding. You may be aware that a World Philosophers' Congress is scheduled to meet in Sivanandanagar in the course of the next few months to discuss, among other things, the vital topic of world peace and seek a spiritual solution thereto. All the teachings of Swami Sivananda constantly emphasise the ideals of Ahimsa, brotherhood, universal love, selfless service, compassion, goodness and forgiveness. They advocate in rousing terms the ideal of virtuous living, harmony and cooperation amongst all mankind. Thus, his teachings pave the way for Peace and goodwill.

21. A Glorious Event Explained

Ques: Can you tell me, Swamiji, what you people mean by "Sivananda Literature Festival"? I have never heard or read of such a thing in the history of the world.

Ans: Well, it is difficult to say whether the idea of a Literature Festival is entirely new. I think in England, they pay an annual tribute to Shakespeare by holding a festival at Stratford-on-Avon. In any case, the Sivananda Literature Festival which is an occasion to celebrate the foremost life-work of our beloved Master has a momentous significance in the context of the spiritual ignorance through which the world is passing through. Sivananda Literature, as you know, has produced a "Navina Jagriti" or a *new awakening* in the world. The Sivananda Literature Festival is, therefore, a fitting occasion to recollect the teachings of Gurudev and spread them far and wide. It is also an occasion to pay our humble homage to Gurudev's sacred literature, every word of which vibrates with the power of the master. During the Festival, we shall have, among other things, an exhibition of Swamiji's literature—books and magazines published in India and abroad—and also offer Puja to Swamiji's books, just as we worship books in general on the occasion of Sarasvati Puja.

Swamiji's noble literature has been and is continuing to be a great force in shaping the thoughts and ideals of the peoples of this modern era. Herein lies its significant greatness.

22. Sivananda Literature Festival

Ques: How can I celebrate this Festival in my own place—Patiala—on a grand scale? Kindly advise me in detail.

Ans: Yes; it is a wonderful idea. You can celebrate this Festival on the Guru Poornima Day (20th July, 1959) to coincide with the celebration of the Festival here. I would suggest the following programme:

Get up at 4 O'clock in the morning, worship Gurudev's picture and do some Japa. After that, gather the neighbours and take out a Prabhat Pheri doing Bhajan for the health and long life of Gurudev. At about ten, have a meeting with the people of the neighbourhood. At this meeting,

distribute pamphlets and tracts by Gurudev. Do Bhajan. Tell the people all about the Festival and its significance. Get some others to speak also.

Then, have Puja. Arrange the works of Swamiji nicely. Choose some select books like the Ramayana and the Bhagavad Gita and offer worship. In the centre of the books should be Swamiji's big photo. Puja over, distribute Prasad.

During the day, feed the poor. Give charity.

In the evening, invite a select group. Call the gentry to witness the exhibition of books and to hear about Gurudev's wonderful mission of Jnana Yajna or dissemination of spiritual knowledge. Send the invitation cards in advance. Here again, distribute Swamiji's literature and have a number of speakers to deliver lectures. Distribute the 'Programme' for the evening function and Gurudev's message for the occasion among the audience before the function starts. In this way, you can celebrate the Festival nicely. I wish you all success.

23. Glory Of Jnana Yajna

Ques: Why is it that of all Yajnas, Jnana Yajna or dissemination of spiritual knowledge is considered as the highest?

Ans: When you go to the shop, why do you choose a German article though the same article made in France or Japan may also be available? It is because you know that the German article will give you lasting service whereas the others may give trouble at any moment. In other words, the German article will be permanent, while the French or Japanese may not be so. Naturally enough, you prefer a permanent thing to a temporary thing.

In the same way, there are different kinds of Yajna, different kinds of charity. We serve people in different ways. We give money to the poor; we feed them; we give them clothes to wear; we give them medicines and nurse them. All these we do for their physical bodies. After a few years, the physical body will turn to ashes. And the persons whom we served will again be born and suffer the cycle of births and deaths. Our service helps them only for a short while, in a particular birth.

Jnana Yajna stands altogether on a different footing. You impart spiritual knowledge to a man. After acquiring this knowledge, he strives for God and acquires Mukti. When he gets Mukti, he gets everything. He cannot aspire for more. That is why dissemination of spiritual knowledge is rightly considered as the highest Yajna. Spiritual knowledge is food for the Soul which is permanent while the gift of food etc., nourish only the physical body which is perishable. All other gifts reach but the passing and perishable aspects of the human being, while the gift of higher spiritual knowledge reaches the inner man the essential spiritual being within and makes for an everlasting result. Fruit of Jnana Yajna is imperishable.

24. How Swamiji Writes

Ques: Swamiji, you said—and other people also say—that Gurudev has written nearly three hundred books. Is it humanly possible, Swamiji, for an individual to write so many books? Kindly pardon me for entertaining this doubt in my mind regarding Gurudev’s ability. I cannot understand; that is why I ask.

Ans: It is true that Guru Maharaj has written 300 books. I once had a talk with Gurudev on this very subject. He told me that there was nothing to be surprised in this monumental out-turn. He says he has been writing regularly for the last thirty years. He has a time fixed for writing everyday and he adheres to it strictly. Also he is an extraordinarily rapid writer. His speech is unusual and astonishing. When he sits at his desk, his pen is moved by inspiration. Unlike most of us, he does not have to wait for moments of inspiration. Thus, he has been able to write about ten books annually. Of course, we cannot do so; but, considering the attainments of Guru Maharaj who has God’s grace always with him, there is no cause for surprise in the perpetual flow of Sivananda Literature. I hope your doubt is cleared now.

25. Need For Spiritual Books

Ques: Swamiji, I have just one more question to ask. Here again, please do not misunderstand me. My doubt is genuine. Could you kindly tell me why Swamiji should write so many books?

Ans: Oh, yes. I can clear your doubt. You know that in this world no two persons are alike. If there are crores and crores of men, women and children in this world, there are crores and crores of temperaments and needs also. Each aspirant has his own doubts. Each aspirant has his own tastes. Each Sadhaka has a different need to be fulfilled. The worries, the botherations, the fears of people are not always the same. Our Gurudev’s mission in life is not to satisfy just this person or that, but everyone. Gurudev is full of cosmic love which means love for all. He wants to serve everyone. See how many kinds of books he has written! He has written books for the Brahmachari and the Grihastha, for the ordinary man and the sophisticated. He has written specially for women and for children. He has written specifically for people in the West as in “Yoga for the West.” For those who want to amass wealth, he has written, “How to become Rich.” For those who cannot control their temper, his book “How to Control Anger” will be a great boon. For those who suffer from physical ailments, our Gurudev has written masterly treatises on Constipation, Blood-pressure, Diabetes and so on. Gurudev has left no stone unturned to help as many people as possible, in as many ways as possible, through his literature. He has written voluminous commentaries for full-time Sadhakas and pocket books for busy office-goers. I can go on explaining like that. I hope your doubt is now destroyed!

DIVINE LIFE FOR JUNIORS

(Sri Swami Sivananda)

1. Faith

Have perfect faith in God. Have faith in the holy scriptures and in the words of the wise. Have faith in your own self. Have faith in the Grace of the Lord and in the power of the Divine Name. Pure faith can work wonders.

2. Obedience

Obey your parents and teachers. Obey your brothers and sisters. Obedience is higher than reverence. You will shine as a great man. You will get success in all you do. You will be prosperous and happy.

3. Keep Good Company

Keep good company. Give up the company of bad children. They will spoil your character if you are not careful. Do not smoke, gamble or play cards. Seek the company of the wise and of devotees of God. Sit silently, listen to their instructions and practise them.

4. Speech

Speak the truth. Speak sweetly. Speak softly. Speak with love. Observe silence. Do not speak ill of anyone. Think carefully before you speak. You will be peaceful and happy.

5. Adapt

Patiently listen to the words of others even though they are not interesting. Never fret and fume. Patient listening develops the will and wins the hearts of others. Understand well the nature of people.

6. Adjust

Do not be stubborn. Be willing to change. Adjust yourself in such a way as to be pleasing to others. Always react in a harmonious manner. Serve all and love all.

7. Cleanliness

Be neat and clean. Cleanliness is next to Godliness. Be neat in your dress. Have a daily bath. Do not let your clothes and books lie everywhere. A clean life indicates a strong mind and good discipline. It shows that you are refined.

8. Sincerity

Let the thoughts agree with the words. Let the words agree with the actions. Let there be harmony among the words, actions and thoughts.

9. Reverence for Life

Be kind and loving to animals, birds and all creatures that creep and crawl. Be merciful to them. Do not destroy the beautiful flowers and plants unnecessarily. You will then lead a rich and useful life.

10. Cheerfulness

A laughter a day keeps the doctor away. Be ever cheerful in whatever difficult conditions you may be placed. A cheerless mind is a diseased mind. Cheerfulness will let you tap the power within. It will turn failure into success.

11. Be Ever Busy

Be ever as busy as a bee. Keep the mind occupied in some useful work. Keep the company of good friends. An idle brain is the devil's workshop. Do not join idle company. Stick to a daily routine. Develop the power of observation. You will have a wonderful memory and willpower.

12. Time

Time is valuable. It is more precious than money. Money can be earned again if lost, but if time is lost it cannot be regained. A moment once gone cannot be called back. Life is but a collection of small moments. You will become a great person if you utilise your time in a useful manner.

13. Conduct

Think deeply. Decide correctly. Act carefully. Speak truthfully. Move tactfully. Work diligently. Talk gently. Behave properly. Do not twist words and topics. Avoid cunningness and crookedness.

14. Charity

Give, give, give. This is the secret of abundance. Give willingly to charity. Share what you have with others. This will purify your heart and lead to the vision of God. You will earn undying name and fame.

15. Health

Go to bed early and get up early. You will be healthy and strong. Eat only those things that are good for your health. Do not overeat. Exercise daily. Let nature heal you. All diseases begin in the mind. Be always cheerful. Good health is the best of all possessions.

16. Be an Ideal Child

Be simple. Be humble. Be gentle. Be honest. Be sincere. Be bold. Be cheerful. A positive attitude always brings success in any task. A negative approach brings failure. Shine like a saint.

17. Self-analysis

Just before retiring to bed, think of the mistakes you committed during the course of the day. Ask God for forgiveness. Benjamin Franklin kept a daily diary and correction register. You can do the same. You will remove all your weaknesses and shine like a star.

18. Study

Together with your lessons you must study daily the Gita, the Bible, the Koran, the Upanishads and other holy scriptures. Put into practice what you have learnt. You will progress in your spiritual life and shine gloriously.

19. The Divine Name

The power of the Divine Name is marvellous. Repeat His Name at all times, even while you study, play and work, while you eat and rest. Choose any Name, like *Sri Ram*, *Om Namah Sivaya*, Jesus, Allah, and repeat it always. The Lord's Name is the source of all inspiration and strength. Cling to it. It is the best medicine for any disease.

20. Service

Serve the poor and the sick. Serve the needy. Serve those in sorrow and distress. Serve birds and animals. Serve with kindness, love and sympathy. Service is worship of God. In serving others you serve God. This is the highest religion.

21. God

God is love. God is truth. God is peace. God is knowledge. God is power. God is bliss. He dwells in your heart. He is your true friend and guide. He is your real father and mother. Realise Him and be forever happy and peaceful.

22. Prayer

Pray, meditate and chant God's Names daily. Pray to Him with a heart filled with devotion and love. Pray to become a good boy or girl. Take complete refuge in God.

23. Simplicity

Be artless. Be simple in your speech. Do not twist words and topics. Be plain. Avoid cunningness and crookedness. Be simple in dress. Be simple in your food.

24. Become a Hero

Do not be timid. Be courageous. Be bold. Be cheerful. Walk like a lion. Talk boldly. Do not be shy. Be ever active. Have faith and trust in God.

25. Be Moderate

Play less, study more. Sleep less, pray more. Preach less, practise more. Hoard less, give more. Talk less, listen more. Sit less, serve more.

26. Be Considerate

Remove thorns and glass pieces from the road. Learn first aid. Become a scout or guide. Help mother in the kitchen. Clean the house. Wash your clothes yourself. Help the blind and the dumb. Help your mates. Make them understand what you have learnt.

27. Be Tolerant

Respect all religions. All religions lead to the one God. Respect all saints and prophets. They are all messengers of God. The essentials of all religions are the same. Remember this point well.

28. Serenity

Be serene and calm under all conditions. Cultivate this virtue again and again. Serenity is like a rock; waves of irritation may dash on it but cannot affect it.

29. Only One God

There is only one God. But His Names and forms are endless. Call Him by any Name and worship Him in any form that pleases you. You are sure to see Him and get His Grace.

30. See God in All

Your father is your visible God. Your mother is your visible God. The teacher is your visible God. The guest is your visible God. The poor are your visible God. The whole world and all creatures in it are forms of God. Therefore, love, serve and respect all.

31. Surrender

Surrender to God is the highest prayer. Whatever has happened has happened by the will of God. What is happening is happening by the will of God. What is to happen will happen by the will of God. Therefore, worry not, fear not. Be not anxious. Be not nervous. Trust in God and be ever happy and peaceful.

ESSENCE OF DIVINE LIFE

(Sri Swami Sivananda)

To speak the truth at all events, to speak sweetly with love, to practise non-violence and continence, to behold the One Lord in all beings, is Divine Life.

Love, truth and purity form the foundation of the edifice of Divine Life.

Character and devotion are the bricks and mortar, with which you have to construct the walls of the Temple of Divine Life.

The Temple of Divine Life has four pillars, viz., meditation, purity, love and righteousness in action.

Through the means of service, love and meditation, Divine Life is lived.

The secret of Divine Life lies in the spirit of service and sacrifice.

No philosophy or religion in the world can teach anything better than: "Serve, love, give, purify, meditate, realise. Be good; do good."

Purify your heart. Purity is the very essence of religion. Mortifying the body is not Divine Life. Physical nudity and matted locks have nothing to do with Divine Life.

Divine Life is not a rejection of life and its activities, but a transformation of it into the Divine Being.

The path of duty is the path of righteousness, and the path of righteousness is the only path of everlasting peace and happiness.

Aspire ceaselessly to live in the Divine. Strive ceaselessly to realise the truth.

Work untiringly for the good of others.

To have faith and devotion, to serve the preceptor and the saints, to practise meditation, and to attain Self-knowledge is indeed a supreme blessing.

Without self-restraint there is no Divine Life.

Do not mix much with people, but be friendly to all.

Children of Immortality! Arise, awake and lead the Divine Life of truth, purity, love and goodness.

Be merciful to all. Be kind to all. Love all. Renounce sensual pleasures. Meditate on the Supreme Being. This is Divine Life.

The world is a composite whole. Do not entertain the spirit of separateness. In your heart and mind, be one with all.

The individual soul has to merge in the Cosmic Self. Human life has to transform itself into Divine Life. This is the Goal.

Find out your centre. Dwell always in this centre. This centre is the Atman, your innermost being.

Realise your real nature. Realise your Atman. A lion should not bleat like a lamb.

Do not be pessimistic. Do not be negative in your approach. Be always optimistic and positive.

Your only duty is God-realisation. All other duties should only serve as a means to this final goal.

Put aside sorrow and grief. Identify not yourself with the perishable body and mind. You are the immortal Atman. Why should you grieve, when your real nature is joy eternal?

To get established in the Self, to do charitable and noble deeds, to be pure at heart,—this is indeed a supreme blessing.

Spiritualise your activities. Dedicate all your actions as an offering to God. Practise detachment and self-surrender. Live in God. Awake from the slumber of ignorance. Be dispassionate. Learn to discriminate. Meditate. Sleep no more! Behold the dawn of wisdom in your heart.

Lift the veil of human imperfections. Behold your real divine nature.

Seek first the spiritual kingdom within you.

Realise fully the message of the unity of life and the divine purpose behind it.

Stick to the fundamental principles of a noble life. Re-orient them to suit the changing times and conditions.

Never compromise on your fundamental principles.

Unfold all the latent potentialities of your soul through leading the Divine Life.

Escape from the world is not the solution, but freedom from worldliness.

Live in agreement with Nature. Use your discriminative faculty. You will be happy, healthy and wise.

Swerve not from the path, whatever be the distractions and unfavourable circumstances which you may have to face. Be rooted in the ideal. The struggle may be difficult in the beginning, but later you will reap a rich harvest.

Allow not wealth to harden your heart. It should be utilised for the good of others.

Be a servant of the poor, a lover of the poor, a devotee of the poor, a brother of the poor, a helper of the poor, a healer of the poor. Your life will be blessed.

The greedy, the proud and the covetous have no peace. The contented and the humble enjoy the blessing of peace.

Give; charity creates the feeling of oneness.

Give a little of cold water to the thirsty; give a few grains of food to the hungry; speak a few kind words to the afflicted. The Lord will bless you.

Seek to live with all in love and kindness, for who knows where or in what guise will the Lord Himself come to you?

Be a friend to the animals; serve the animals. The Lord dwells in all creatures.

If you can always remember that God is watching all your thoughts and actions, you will not entertain evil thoughts or do evil actions.

Whatever you eat or drink, or whatever you do, offer it first to the Lord.

Cooperate with the divine forces, and work for the promotion of peace and harmony.

Be not dogmatic and fanatic; be catholic, broad minded, tolerant and all-inclusive.

If the brute in you triumphs, love will have no scope to flourish.

Trust in the love and wisdom of God. You will be free from fear and worry.

A man of discrimination is always careful, vigilant and circumspect. He always watches his thoughts carefully.

Repentance is asking for the forgiveness of the Lord with real tears of grief and imposing some discipline on oneself in the form of Tapas.

By feeling the Lord's presence everywhere, you can become fearless, and enjoy infinite peace and bliss.

Rise above all sects, cults and creeds. Sectarianism is the antithesis of spiritual life.

The sure way to Perfect Life is pointed out in the Gita. The message of the Gita is the Yoga of Synthesis, with special emphasis on any one of the particular aspects of Yoga chosen according to the temperament of the aspirant.

Disseminate the message of equality, unity and cosmic love.

Dissemination of spiritual knowledge is the noblest form of service to humanity.

Spiritual enlightenment can only come from those who have attained such enlightenment within themselves. The blind cannot lead the blind. One who has seen the Light, alone, can show the Light to others.

Only he is called great, who is merciful, who is endowed with self-restraint, righteousness and wisdom, who radiates joy and peace, who sheds divine light and works to lift up people from the quagmire of Samsara.

The perfect man is a beautiful combination of the head, the heart and the hand.

As the rivers flow into the ocean, so may you flow to the Absolute, the ocean of bliss immortal, where there is no diversity, no disharmony, no imperfection.

Two letters lead to death; three letters lead to immortality. *Mama* (mine) leads to death; *Na-mama* (not-mine) leads to immortality.

Desire nothing. Fear nothing.

Sparks of the Divine Flame! Back to the Divine Flame! Be one with the Divine Flame.

Meditate on this formula: "Nothing exists; nothing belongs to me; I am neither body nor mind. The Immortal Self I am."

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR KARMA-YOGIS

(Sri Swami Sivananda)

1. See God in every face, in everything.
2. Repeat mentally or silently or with the breath the Name of the Lord such as Hari Om, Sri Ram, or your Ishta-Mantra or Guru Mantra even when you work in the office. A strong habit of repetition of the Mantra will soon be formed.
3. Give up meat, hot curries, onion and garlic. Take Sattvic food, milk, fruits, bread, Chapatis, vegetables, pulses, etc. Eat simple food. Wear simple clothing. Practise celibacy or moderation.
4. Feel that God is the Inner Ruler who manipulates your mind, body and the Indriyas. Therefore give up the thought: "I am the doer," Feel: "I am Nimitta or instrument in His hands. God works through my hands, eats through my mouth and sees through my eyes."
5. Do not expect any fruits for your actions, not even approbation, thanks, gratitude, appreciation, applause, return of salute or smile, etc.
6. Offer all actions, their fruits, body, mind, Indriyas and soul as flowers at the Lotus-Feet of the Lord as Isvararpana.
7. Never, never say: "I have helped that man." Feel and think: "That man gave me an opportunity to serve. This piece of service has helped me to purify the mind. I am extremely grateful to him."
8. Feel that the world is a manifestation of God. "*Harireva Jagat, Jagat eva Hari. Sarvam Vishnu mayam Jagat.*" Serve with Narayana Bhava. Feel that you are serving God in all beings.
9. Discipline the Indriyas. Control them. Develop alertness, decision, discrimination, discernment, forgiveness, patience, mercy, cosmic love, tolerance, equal vision, etc. Have a balanced mind. Be calm, cool and serene always.
10. Combine Bhakti or Jnana with Karma-Yoga.
11. Serve poor, sick people. There is no Yajna greater than this. Serve everyone with Bhava, Prema and full Sraddha. Serve the Lord in all. Serve your country and society. Serve your parents, brothers and sisters, Sadhus, Sannyasins, Bhaktas and Mahatmas, spiritual teachers with full heart and devotion. Shampoo the legs of sick persons. Feel that you are touching the body of the Lord (Virat). Feel that the energy of Hiranyagarbha (cosmic energy) is flowing through your hands. Tap the very source, the store-house of Cosmic Energy.
12. Be good and do good. Become an embodiment of goodness. Keep the body strong and healthy. Note in your spiritual diary the number of good and evil actions.

ADVICE TO STUDENTS

(Sri Swami Sivananda)

1. Get up at 4 a.m. Never sleep at sunrise. Study your class lessons thoroughly every day.
2. Be regular in diet, games and physical exercises.
3. Serve and respect your teachers, parents and elders.
4. Love your equals and inferiors as also your servants.
5. Never quarrel with co-students.
6. Talk little, speak politely, gently, sweetly and lovingly.
7. Preserve semen (vital fluid) very carefully. Never waste even a drop of this precious energy through any unnatural means.
8. Through *Brahmacharya* or celibacy you can conquer the whole world.
9. A true Brahmachari attains success in all undertakings.
10. Serve the sick at home as well as in your neighbourhood.
11. Be obliging to one and all.
12. Develop good character, memory and health with great care.
13. Pray to God daily for fifteen minutes as soon as you get up from bed and before you go to bed.
14. Develop concentration and deep thinking.
15. Do at least one act of selfless service every day.
16. Never neglect the study of Sanskrit.
17. Study by heart one sublime verse from the *Bhagavad Gita* everyday.
18. Never attend cinemas.
19. Give up smoking and other bad habits.
20. Never waste your time. Be always busy. Avoid useless company.

If you put into practice the above instructions, I assure you an excellent career and grand success in your life. You will become a dynamic personality. Beloved Nectar's Sons!

SOME YOUTH AND STUDENT RELATED BOOKS

This is an addition to the list of books mentioned in reply to question No. 18 in this booklet

1. How to build character—Swami Budhananda, Advaitashram
2. Letter to A Student—Swami Purushottamananda, Ramakrishna Math, Bangalore
3. Secret of Concentration (*For Students*)—Swami Purushottamananda, Ramakrishna Math, Bangalore
4. Student Power “Its Use and Abuse”—Swami Harshananda, Ramakrishna Mission
5. Success in Life (*A Young Person's Guide*)—Sri Swami Chidananda, Sivanandashram

NATIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE CITIZENS OF INDIA

1. **Patriotism:** Our Motherland should be our first and highest consideration. Welfare of the nation is our own welfare. Therefore, let us willingly be ready to offer up even our own life for our country. Let us inculcate in our children and members of our family love for our country, the spirit of patriotism and service to our country and our fellow citizens.
2. **Duty:** Our first and foremost duty is to God and to Righteousness. Leading a righteous life is the best and most valuable service of our Nation.
3. **Character:** Character is the greatest wealth. A pure, incorruptible citizen is the greatest asset of our Nation. This is vital and indispensable. Therefore, good character is to be given top priority value; upon this depends our nation's welfare and its future stability.
4. **Health:** Health is the basis of success. Health is wealth. Next to character, it is the greatest national asset. As citizens, building up character and safeguarding health, should be our primary duty to the Nation.
5. **Virtue:** Let us join hand and eradicate the evils of gambling, liquor-drinking, drug-taking, tobacco-smoking and betel-chewing. Let us eradicate the evils of bribery, corruption, selfishness, immorality, dishonesty and misconduct. Disloyalty to our Nation is crime and unpardonable sin.
6. **Public Property:** O Citizen! We are custodian of public property. Let us not spoil, misuse, steal or destroy National property. Let us preserve it with love and care. Let us keep our country neat and clean. This is your sacred duty.

7. **One Family:** All our citizen are brethren. Let us feel this fraternity. Let us all love each other and one another and be united because, we are one family.

8. **Religion:** We must have equal reverence for all religions, creeds and faiths. Let us love as our own brother the followers of our faiths. Let us treat others as we wish to be treated by them.

9. **Non-violence:** At all cost avoid every type of violence and hatred for, this is a blot on the fair name of the Nation. It is soul-killing and cause great harm to our country's welfare and development. It is totally opposed to our Nation's ideal.

10. **Economy:** Let us adopt simple living and high thinking. Let us not be extravagant. Let us avoid waste. Let us practise frugality. Let us share what we have with our less fortunate fellow citizens. This is National virtue that our India needs today.

11. **Law:** Let us respect the rule of law and uphold social justice. In this lies the guarantee of our welfare and orderly progress towards better India.

12. **Ahimsa:** Non-injury is our highest virtue (Ahimsa Paramo Dharmah). Compassion is a divine quality. Protection of animals is our sacred duty. This is India's special teaching. Let us be compassionate towards all creatures. Thus be a true Indian. Try to become an embodiment of kindness compassion and goodness in your every day life.

13. **Ecology:** Man and Nature are inseparable. Man and his natural environment are inter-related and mutually interdependent. Everything in Nature contributes to our protection and nourishment. Let us, therefore, protect our natural environment. Helping in maintaining the ecological balance is our duty. It is indispensable for our safe living and highest welfare. Polluting of public places and polluting of air and water of the country is a national crime. We must make amends of our past lapses.

14. **Unity:** The more united the people of a country, the greater is their ability to withstand all obstacles and dangers. United we stand, divided we fall. This is particularly true about today's India. Therefore, let us live in close harmony and loving goodwill with all our countrymen. Love of our country means love of our countrymen. This is the most invaluable service a Citizen of India, can offer to our Motherland.

15. **Education:** The process of education should incorporate within it the imparting of the basic knowledge of India's great culture, its lofty ideals and noble values and principles of living. Our education has to be oriented for enriching and enhancing the quality of life of our youth and students.

THUS, SHINE AS A TRUE CITIZEN AND SERVE YOUR COUNTRY BEST, BY THE
VERY MANNER OF YOUR LIFE AND CONDUCT.