**WORSHIP**

***To be in company of God in one way or the other***

Our soul is a part of God. That is why we are sons and daughters of God and therefore we should be like God!

But do you feel silly saying that you are like God because of what people might think of you when they hear you say that? Why is that? It is because, as Gurudev says, we are Devtas who have forgotten their identity and have picked up bad sanskars (habits) through many lifetimes (birth as a human being is granted to us after going through a cycle of various births as different creatures). For this reason, we have adopted animal instincts.

What do animals do? They just eat and take care of their families. This is a form of Selfishness.

Thus, we are a mixture of good and bad qualities. The purpose of life is to remove the bad sanskars and increase our divinity as much as possible.

Swami Vivekananda said: Each soul is potentially divine. The Goal of life is to manifest divinity.

In other words, we have to remove our bad qualities and improve our good ones.

How can we remove our bad qualities and improve our good qualities? The answer is by incorporating U-S-A into our daily routine.

“U” stands for Upasana (or worship). “S” stands for Sadhana (or self-discipline and spiritual practice). “A” stands for Aradhana (or selfless service).

# Upasana

To be able to do selfless service and develop self-discipline, we need energy and protection from God. We can get these by being near God (upasana) or sitting near him. Just like when you sit near a fire, you feel warm, or when you sit near ice, you feel cold, if we be near God, we can develop divinity like God. For example, Arjun became divine because he chose to be near Lord Krishna while Karna became bad in the company of Duryodhan.

How can we do Upasana? We can do Upasana by doing the following:

* Sandhya pooja (performing pooja in the morning and evening- Some people do 3 times- Morning, Noon and Evening)
* Mantra jap (doing a mala of mantras)
* Mantra lekhan (writing mantras)
* Meditation
* Prayers
* Studies

# Sadhana

Sadhana means spiritual practice. Gayatri Sadhana is a very powerful and beneficial way for devotees to achieve spiritual goals and knowledge. Gurudev did Sadhana by chanting the Gayatri Mantra over 57 million times in his life and achieved immense spirituality by doing so.

**The Legend of Kalidas**

Once, some wise men passed by and observed a man standing on the limb of a tree and sawing off the limb while standing on the wrong side of the saw! That is, when he had successfully sawed through the branch, he would himself fall down a considerable distance — along with the branch he was removing.

The wise men were seeking a particularly stupid man so they could play a cruel trick on their arrogant princess. They had determined, after receiving considerable abuse from her, to find the stupidest man they could get their hands on and present him to the princess as an extremely wise man, a "fitting" candidate to marry her.

They took Kalidas to the palace and presented him as a great sage who was observing a vow of silence, and told the queen he could only communicate through gestures. The princess interrogated Kalidas and the responses of his fingers and fists, as interpreted by the wise men, made him seem the wisest man in the kingdom.

Delighted, the princess married him. Shortly after they entered the marriage chamber Kalidas uttered something and the princess, with horror, discovered she was married to a fool. She kicked him out of the bed chamber and palace. She called him a camel and other such names.

Kalidas was miserable. He determined life was not worth continuing — especially his life. He went to the river to drown himself. But once there, he observed that the rocks beside the river had been worn down by the washerwomen who scrubbed and pounded the clothes on the stones of the bank. Kalidas hesitated a moment in his desire to kill himself and studied the hollows worn in the stone banks by the washerwomen.

"If merely washing clothes can wear down something as hard as stone, surely my thick, numb, stupid mind can also be worn through," he said.

Kalidas prayed that this possibility be so. He prayed to the Lord, thinking of the Lord as his divine mother. She appeared to him and bestowed a blessing on his thick head. His stammering tongue was freed, his mind became clear, and his deep heart became unblocked. He became the most brilliant poet in Indian history.

To do sadhana, once should focus on the rising Sun and recite the Gayatri Mahamantra while imagining the presence of Goddess Gayatri in the center of the Sun. When chanting the Mahamantra, you should not have bad motives and you must wish good for others.

**Gayatri Mantra**

*Om bhur bhuvah swah tatsaviturvarenyam bhargo devasya dhimahi dhiyo yonah prachodyat*

**What does Gayatri Mantra mean?**

*May the Almighty illuminate our intellect and inspire us towards the righteous path*

**What does Gayatri Mantra give us?**

* Hrim (Goddess Saraswati)
* Shrim (Goddess Lakshmi)
* Clim (Goddess Durga)
* Dvijanam Brahmanatva: Changes your way of thinking. Instead of looking at your own problems, you will start worrying about other people’s problems and pain. This will give you peace in life
* Aayuhu: Gives you long and healthy life
* Pranam: Gives you more vitality (more divine qualities, more maturity, more resistance to bad stuff, immunity to diseases, gives you better memory and concentration, gives you peace and clarity of mind, gives you better friends)
* Prajam: Protects children
* Pashum: Gives you good wealth
* Kirtim: Gives you more respect
* Dravinam: Gives you money from honest ways which is used for good purposes
* Brahmavarchasam: Gives you salvation and supernatural powers

**Sandhya Pooja**

This is Pooja done during Dusk and Dawn. Through observation and practice, our seer sages had found that during transitional times of the day, the flow of divine energy is prominent in the atmosphere. If someone does a little Upasana during this time, he/she will achieve great benefits. Therefore it is very important to do some kind of Upasana during dusk and dawn.

Param Pujya Gurudev, suggested the following Gayatri Sadhana:

1. Pavitikara : Clean yourself with the power of mantra from outside
2. Aachman: Purify your mind, speech, and emoptions with the power of mantra
3. Shikha Badhan: Pray for God’s energy to enter through our mind and brain
4. Prithvi Poojan: Show respect to mother earth
5. Nyas: embrace divine powers in all important organs of our body
6. Pranayam: Attract vital powers into our body
7. Meditation: Meditate on rising golden Sun
8. Mantra Jaap: Recite Gayatri Mantra either 24 times, or do a mala