Life contains so much irony, doesn’t it? Seeing this, how can we move through our days and nights without a smile on our lips! An incredible irony hovers around the common phrase used to close most “business letters” _ SINCERELY YOURS ! or “YOURS SINCERELY”. What a laugh! More often than not the writer of the letter is some business person out to cheat us! The word “sincere” no longer means “sincere”. It has become a mere formality.

Yet what a word! What a power is packed in it! The word “sincere” apparently derived from the Latin “sine” which means “without” and “cere” which means “cracks”. It was used in ancient times by de alers in granite and marble stones. Unscrupulous traders would “fill in the cracks” in the marble or granite with wax, thereby duping the buyer into thinking the product was “without cracks”. The honest traders would show their wares as they were, with all imperfections. Hence, their approach was termed “sine-cere” or “sincere” or “without hiding the cracks!”

A sincere person is one who does not hide the flaws or cracks in their nature. They make no pretence. They do not attempt to deceive others. They are clear, straight forward and honest in their dealing with others. They stand by their word and their commitment to an honest exchange. They do not deceive others and do not deceive themselves. To their own selves, they are true, and hence it follows “as the night the day, they can’t be false to any man”. They are sincere to purpose, to life, to others, to God, to Sadhana- to everyone and everything. This is an essential spiritual quality which must be cultivated for those who walk the Yogic-spiritual path. For perfection in every single one of the five Yamas and five Niyamas, sincerity is an absolute must. All religions extol this virtue.

A synonym for sincerity in Arabic is IKHLASS.

An entire Surah chapter of the Quran, is titled “ikhlaas”. The meaning of sincerity is that one’s deeds are for God alone, and not worldly gain or for the sake of making an impression on people.

The Sufis had much to say about sincerity.

_Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq of the ninth century said, “to preserve in an action until it becomes sincere is more difficult than performing the action itself, and sincerity of action lies in this that you should not desire any-one to praise you for it except God Almighty, and intention supersedes action. Verily, intention is action itself”._

”Sincerely Yours” by Ammaji, Yogacharini Smt. Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani
Sufis Masters say that as long as you notice your sincerity, you are in need of sincerity. How, then, do we know if we are truly being sincere? Dhul Nun Misri, the ninth century Egyptian mystic said, Sincerity has three signs – when the praise and blame of the common folk become equal in your eyes when you become oblivious of your good deeds as you are doing them, and when you forget about your reward for your good deeds in the here-after.

Let us give the great mystic Rumi the last word on the subject.

You should be sincere in all your deeds. So that the Majestic Lord may accept them. Sincerity, is the wing of the bird of the acts of obedience. Without a wing, how can you fly to the abode of prosperity.

“Sincerely Yours” by Ammaji, Yogacharin Smt. Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani