GURU - ‘AN ALBUM OF THOUGHTS’
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(Guru teaches in ‘Mauna’, in silence. To me this means that we need to understand the teachings by being with that Guru, by observation and by absorbing all that He is. Can there be a better way to teach? Can there be a better way to learn?

This is a collection of my personal thoughts, my experiences with/about someone who teaches me this way, a humble dedication to the most wonderful being, my Guru, Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani. Am so fortunate to have had the opportunity to be with him, to be able to observe him at such close quarters for over a decade now.)

The Classical Meaning of Guru (from the scriptures)

- **Guru** is "one who dispels darkness of ignorance". "Gu" means "darkness of ignorance" and "Ru" means "one who removes / dispels". He is *Jnaanamurthy* (embodiment of wisdom)

- Another meaning for **Guru** is "One who reveals the Guri (target) to the disciple". He does this by removing the darkness of ignorance, ie Avidya. *Guri* refers to the *fundamental* principle of every human being, the very basis of that very being, the soul.

- Another meaning of the word **Guru** is "one who is beyond attributes and forms". Gu stands for *Gunaatheetha* - one who has transcended the *Trigunas* (Satva, Rajas and Tamas); Ru stands for *Rupavarjitha* - one who is formless. The One who is beyond all attributes and forms is none other than the Supreme Self (the Brahmam) who resides within each one of us. Guru is that Purusha, who is beyond the effects of Klesha and Karma.

- “God became man, so that man can become God again”. Have heard this saying somewhere. That is what a Guru is all about

- **Guru** is Brahma, who is the Creator of the universe. **Guru** is Vishnu who is all pervasive and sustains all the creations in the universe. **Guru** is Maheshwara who commands and ordains everything in the universe, who transforms in the right manner. **Guru** is not one who merely teaches. A real **Guru** is Omnipotent, Omniscient and Omnipresent

Who is a true Guru?

Is he the one who teaches worldly education? Is he one who explores properties of matter? Then, is he one who teaches a mantra or Vedanta?

- People consider a person who imparts knowledge as a preceptor.
- One who has studied many scriptures and who has direct knowledge of Atman through experience- ‘Anubhava’ can only be enrolled as a Guru.
- The Satguru is an ocean of bliss, knowledge and mercy.
• He is the captain of your soul, steering the disciple across the ocean of samsara. He is the fountain of joy.

• He removes all your troubles, sorrows and obstacles.

• He shows you the right divine path.

• He tears your veil of ignorance.

• He transmutes your lower, diabolical nature.

• He need not teach anything. Even his presence or company is elevating, inspiring and stirring.

• The very company by itself is self-illuminating. Living in his company is spiritual education.

• Man can learn only from a man, and hence God, in guise of a man, teaches through a human body.

• You see the human ideal of perfection in your Guru. He is the pattern in which you wish to mould yourself.

• He is the gateway to the transcendental truth and consciousness.

• Guru can transform life in a moment, those divine energies can be found only in the living illumined souls, those shining brilliant lights who appear among us from time to time, whose brilliance guides and protects.

• Guru has utmost responsibility because all his students are observing, absorbing and watching over him all the time. They learn not only the scriptures and lessons, but also the rules and regulations of life and living. They learn everything through Him, through his actions. Hence he needs to practise whatever he preaches and teaches. That’s a practical lesson that the students start following in their life too.

• There is integration between the thought, word and deed and they live what they see in the teacher. The Guru teaches through personal example. The day-to-day conduct of the Guru is a living ideal to the disciple who is observant.

• Guru creates, transforms and gives new birth to a seeker.

• He is one with inexplicable gravitational pull, something truly magnetic.

• Guru is a presence that transforms the very chemistry of your being.

• The greatness of a guru is to show the sishya how capable he is. The greatness of a sishya is to live up to his capability and expectations. Guru helps improve the capability thereby facilitating progress.

• Compassion in words and actions, Guru helps every student find his solutions. Guru helps extract that “Extra” in anything and everything and help student become extraordinary.

• Guru guides the student with the application of the principles that are brought to surface by practices and experiences so that analytical knowledge and factual knowledge are synchronized and felt. This synchrony results in harmony.

• The relationship between a teacher and the student is that of deep love, reverence, surrender, and faith. (Atman Pranidhana)
• Guru helps us surmount the faults and weaknesses, he trains the Sadhaka and brings to the surface his unknown hidden gifts and skills (latently hidden in). He taps the pupil’s intelligence and instils in him the energy for greater application so that his mind, body, emotions and intelligence work in co-ordination to give him or make him reach the stage of bliss, under his constant careful vigilance.

• Teacher sets high standards and also points the way to bring the distant goal nearer.

• He teaches the student who is a toddler, to balance, to stand well, to walk and to leap.

• Guru also has the skill to know the needs of his students which even the student can’t assess for himself.

• He is firm and extracting and draws/brings out the best in his pupil.

• The quality of a teacher is to uplift the student to acquire artistic insight and vision to soar towards his goal of self-perfection and mastery.

• He encourages the student to think and feel for himself, to explore and experiment, to delve deeply into the concepts and philosophy of life.

• Guru teaches self-discipline and the right application of the various concepts in the right way at the appropriate time.

• Teacher helps the student to face and overcome the stumbling-blocks from all the spheres of his existence, which leave a magnified influence of one over the other.

The Need for a Guru

Guru is absolutely necessary for every aspirant in the spiritual path. To light a candle, you need a burning candle. An illumined soul alone can enlighten another soul. For example, only the man who has already been to Bangalore will be able to tell you the road leading to it. In case of the spiritual path, it is more difficult to find your way. The mind misleads you very often. Guru will be able to remove pitfalls and obstacles, and lead you along the right path. He will tell you: “This road leads you to Moksha; this one leads to bondage.” Without this guidance, you might want to go to Bangalore, but find yourself in Delhi!!!!

• It is only the Guru who will find out your defects. The nature of egoism is such that you will not be able to find out your own faults and defects. A man cannot see his own errors just as he cannot see his own back.

• The aspirant who is under the guidance of a Master or Guru is safe from being led astray. Satsanga or association with the Guru is an armour and fortress to guard you against all temptations and unfavourable forces of the material world.

• The aspirant must have a pure mind. He must have ethical perfection. He must be intensely virtuous. He must be above body-consciousness and he alone progresses.

• Initiation does not mean mere reciting a Mantra into another’s ears. The Guru will find out by close study of the aspirant - his tastes, temperaments and capacity, and decide the most suitable path for him, motivate and initiate him in that path.

• The aspirant’s self-surrender to Guru and Guru’s grace are interrelated. Surrender draws down Guru’s grace, and grace of Guru makes the surrender complete.
Duties of a Disciple

A true disciple is he who follows the instructions of the Guru implicitly and propagates his teachings. The disciple is concerned only with the divine nature of the Guru. True disciple-ship opens the vision. It kindles the spiritual fire. It awakens the dormant faculties. It is most necessary in one’s journey along the spiritual path. A thirsting-hungry disciple should be ever alert in the service of his Guru.

- A sincere disciple serves the Guru without waiting for an invitation. Serve your Guru humbly, willingly, unquestioningly, unassumingly, ungrudgingly, untiringly and lovingly. The more you spend your energy in serving your Guru, the more divine energy will flow into you.

- Obedience to Guru is better than reverence. Only the disciple who obeys his Guru can have command over his lower self. Obedience should be very practical and wholehearted. True obedience to Guru neither procrastinates nor questions.

- A hypocritical disciple obeys his Guru from fear. The true disciple obeys his Guru with pure love for love’s sake.

- Learn to obey and then alone can you command. Learn to be a student and then alone can you become a teacher yourself.

- Constantly scrutinise your inner motives while serving the Guru. Service should be without expectation of name, fame, power, wealth, etc.

- The disciple should never rest satisfied with the transmission of power from the Guru. He will have to struggle hard in Sadhana for further perfection and attainments.

- A true disciple is concerned only with the divine nature of the Guru. Always remember that though the nature of a teacher maybe unfathomable, judge him not and measure not his divine nature with the inadequate yardstick of your own ignorance. Faith and trust in the Guru is the most important prerequisite for progress.

Guru-Kripa - the grace of the Guru is very necessary. That does not mean that the disciple should sit idle. He must fulfil his dharma, must take all the dedicated efforts in his path towards evolution. The work must be done by the student, who has to undergo sincere Sadhana for purification and self-realisation. But now-a-days, people want a magic pill to push them into that state, no one wants or has the patience or the time for sadhana.

Stick to one Guru and follow his instructions and teachings. Listen to all, but follow one. Respect all, but adore one. Gather knowledge from all, but adopt the teachings of one. Then you will have rapid spiritual progress. Never make a cocktail of this please.

Hari Om Tat Sat