

*Welcome*  
*to*  
*Sahaj Marg*



SHRI RAM CHANDRA MISSION



# Welcome to the Practice of Sahaj Marg Meditation

Shri Ram Chandra Mission, a non-profit spiritual organisation with its world headquarters at Chennai in India, offers the method of Sahaj Marg meditation to all those who are willing to try it and benefit from the practice.

This introductory handbook has been prepared to help you to understand and practice Sahaj Marg in the most effective manner. It is presented under three main headings that reflect the most important aspects of Sahaj Marg: the Master, the Mission, and the Method.

The effectiveness of any spiritual practice is measurable by the end result. In Sahaj Marg, the objective is oneness with God or the 'Self. Along the way, the system helps one to experience peace of mind, and to achieve a sense of balance in one's life. As a result, it also produces a positive change in one's outlook that is perceivable to one's self and to others. Sahaj Marg is unique in that it has a philosophy and practice that go hand in hand, to help the practicant on the way to the goal.

Sahaj Marg demands nothing from the individual, other than a willingness to try the system and benefit from it. There are no fees or other obligations for learning and practicing the method. The system undertakes to transform the individual spiritually, if the individual co-operates and undertakes to complement this inner change through a matching change in external behaviour.

Even in the practice, different individuals may set different goals for themselves, at least in the beginning. For instance, one may wish to attain the highest goal of oneness with God, while another may only wish to attain balance or peace of mind. This is one of the advantages of the system, in that it allows one to discover deeper and more profound insights as one progresses with one's practice.

In order to fully evaluate the benefits of Sahaj Marg, it is suggested that the practice be tried, to the exclusion of all other spiritual practices, for three to six months.

Over the last sixty years, the practice of Sahaj Marg has helped thousands of spiritual seekers around the world. We welcome you to try it and benefit from it.

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# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	7
<b>The Master</b>	
The Role of the Master	8
Lalaji	9
Babuji	10
Chariji	11
<b>The Mission</b>	
Ashrams	14
How are the Mission's activities funded?	16
<b>The Philosophy of Sahaj Marg</b>	17
<b>The Goal</b>	20
<b>The Method</b>	
The Daily Practice	
Morning Meditation	22
Cleaning	25
Prayer	26
Transmission	28
Individual Sittings and Group Meditation	
Prefects	28
Individual Sittings	29
Group Meditation (Satsangh)	29
9 PM Friday Sitting from the Master	30
Other Practices	
Constant Remembrance	31
Universal Prayer	32
Keeping a Spiritual Diary	32
The Ten Maxims	33
<b>The Ten Maxims</b>	34
<b>The Emblem</b>	35
<b>Sahaj Marg Spirituality Foundation</b>	36
<b>Publications</b>	39
<b>Glossary</b>	41



# Introduction

Sahaj Marg, meaning “natural path”, is a system of practical training in spirituality. Spirituality is that science which is often referred to as mysticism in the West and yoga in India. It is the process by which a person strives to unite his individual consciousness with the ultimate, Godly consciousness.

Over the years, religion has been very useful in giving us moral principles and in directing our minds towards God. It, however, tends to externalize the search, placing God outside, and creating a separation between God and us. Spirituality states that if God is everywhere, He is also within us, in our hearts. The best way to approach Him is to go within and look for Him in our hearts. God is simple, and therefore the way to reach Him must also be simple. This is the approach of spirituality.

Sahaj Marg is, in essence, the practice of Raja Yoga (yoga of the mind), which has been simplified to help normal people achieve peace of mind, attain a sense of balance in their lives, and which helps them to evolve spiritually. Sahaj Marg offers a natural method based on meditation, by which the mind becomes regulated and refined into a capable instrument, thus helping us to evolve to the highest possible spiritual condition.

Family life is considered as the ideal training ground for spirituality. This is where we learn to develop patience, self-discipline, love and sacrifice, all qualities deemed essential for spiritual success. Sahaj Marg teaches that every human faculty has its legitimate function and that the proper use of all our faculties leads to a balanced life. Thus, in Sahaj Marg, there are no dogmas or rigid methods of austerity to be followed.

Sahaj Marg is open to all individuals irrespective of race, sex, or religion. All are welcome to practice it, the sole criterion being willingness to practice, and the ability to regulate one's mind.

# **The Master**

## THE ROLE OF THE MASTER

The role of the Master is fundamental in Sahaj Marg.

The Master acts as a guide to the aspirant in much the same way that an accomplished mountaineer is a guide to an inexperienced climber, or a teacher is to a student. He has experienced the journey first-hand and is able to lead us safely to the goal. There is only one objective to the Master's relationship with us, and that is our spiritual welfare.

God has no form or name or attributes. This being the case, the question arises, how do we look for him, or become one with him? Normally, all that we can do is to imbibe those qualities that we believe to be God's into ourselves, qualities such as love, tolerance, humility and sympathy, and hope that this will help us to become progressively more 'Godlike'.

In the Master, we have a person who embodies all the qualities and characteristics that we are striving for, and hope to bring into ourselves. The Master is one who has attained mastery over his 'self, and is therefore able to help us to do the same. Therefore, even though the Goal is an abstraction, the Master acts as a role model and guide, and removes this hiatus between our Goal and ourselves. We have to only follow his example or guidance to reach the goal. In Sahaj Marg, the Master serves the practicant in his endeavour to progress up to the Master's own stage of development. He is always striving to lead us towards our highest potential, not to fulfil any need or desire of his own, but solely for the sake of our Self-realisation.

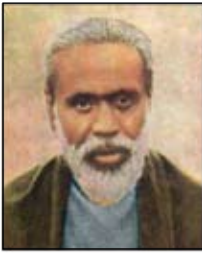
It takes time to develop faith in any person, let alone the Master. The first step is acceptance of the need for a guide or teacher. The next step is the building of trust,

through experience. If we keep our hearts and minds open, and co-operate by doing the practice as prescribed, we will progress spiritually, and come to accept that the Master is serving us, and not the other way around. This will bring about a deep and lasting love for the person who is prepared to give us his all, in his endeavour to help us to progress to our goal. Sahaj Marg does not ask the beginner abhyasi to accept the Master as anything other than a guide.

We present here a short biography of each of the three Masters of the system. While the system acknowledges the unbroken hierarchy of Masters, the living Master is the only one who can guide us to the goal.

## Lalaji

Shri Ram Chandraji of Fatehgarh  
1873-1931



Shri Ram Chandraji of Fatehgarh, born February 2, 1873 and affectionately known as Lalaji, is acknowledged as the first Master of Shri Ram Chandra Mission. He rediscovered the ancient art of transmission, whereby the Master transmits divine energy into the heart of the aspirant in order to expedite his or her spiritual development. This art, which was once practiced in India thousands of years ago, had been lost, and it was Lalaji who rediscovered it. Thus, he brought the highest spiritual goal, previously reserved for ascetics and renunciates, within the reach of all. It was Lalaji's conviction that a normal family life was most conducive to self-development.

Though he loved his followers with all their faults, he was also a strict disciplinarian. In contrast to the practices of his time, he was very much against rituals and idol

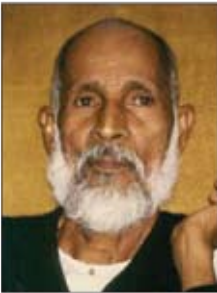
worship and in favour of the remarriage of widows as well as the education of women.

Lalaji felt that every aspirant needs a spiritual Master, and that great care should be taken in selecting one. He regarded morality as essential to self-realisation, and love as the greatest spiritual practice.

On August 14, 1931, Lalaji passed away, leaving his successor Babuji to continue his work for the spiritual upliftment of humanity.

## Babuji

Shri Ram Chandraji of Shahjahanpur  
1899-1983



Babuji was born on April 30, 1899, in Shahjahanpur, a large town in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh, in India. He was named Ram Chandra after Lord Rama of the Ramayana. From an early age, Babuji's craving for spiritual realisation overshadowed all other interests.

After his education, he became a clerk in the local court, and this is where he got the affectionate nickname, Babuji ('babu' meaning clerk, the suffix 'ji' is an expression of respect). On June 3, 1922, Babuji first met his Master (Lalaji), who lived in the town of Fatehgarh, not far from Shahjahanpur. Babuji met Lalaji only a few times during Lalaji's lifetime, but an eternal spiritual bond was forged between them at the very first meeting.

In 1945, several years after the demise of his Master Lalaji, Babuji founded Shri Ram Chandra Mission, naming it after his Master, and established the system of

Sahaj Marg meditation that we now follow.

In the early days, between 1945 and 1960, he travelled extensively all over India, by any available means of transport, touring towns and cities transmitting divine energy wherever he went. As a result of his efforts during this period, many new centres were established in South India and elsewhere. It was as a direct consequence of this that Chariji joined the Mission in the year 1964.

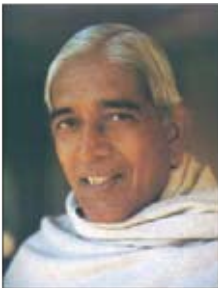
In 1972, he began travelling outside India to offer the method of Sahaj Marg to the people of other countries. Chariji, who was the General Secretary of the Mission at that time, and who succeeded him, accompanied him on these travels. The Mission established a foothold in Europe during this period, with centres in Denmark, France, Germany, Italy and the U.K. Centres were also established in the U.S.A., Malaysia and other countries.

Babuji passed away in the year 1983, leaving the Mission in the capable hands of his successor and spiritual representative, Chariji.

## Chariji

Shri Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari

b. 1927



Shri Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari was born on July 24, 1927, in the village of Vayalur near Madras, in South India. His associates affectionately call him Chari, or Chariji. His mother died when he was five years old, and his father never remarried, choosing to devote himself entirely to his responsibilities as parent and provider to his three sons. The loss of

his mother nonetheless had a profound effect upon the young Parthasarathi, leaving an emptiness that followed him into adulthood.

From an early age Chariji was a voracious reader and developed a keen interest in music. After earning a bachelor's degree from Banaras Hindu University, he took his first job with Indian Plastics Limited in chemical engineering. He travelled abroad, and spent two years in Yugoslavia studying plastics manufacturing techniques. He and his wife Sulochana were married in 1955 and two years later had their first and only child, a son, Krishna. In 1955, Chariji joined the T.T. Krishnamachari group of companies, rising to the position of Director in a number of the group's companies. His work required him to travel extensively within India and abroad.

Chariji's conscious spiritual aspirations were awakened at the age of 18 after hearing a lecture on the Bhagavad Gita. He took up a detailed study of the Gita and other religious and spiritual texts. At the age of 30, he began Vaishnava traditional instruction under a traditional guru. Seven years later, in 1964, he met his spiritual Master (Babuji) and started the practice of Sahaj Marg meditation. While continuing to fulfil his familial and business responsibilities, Chariji was yet vigilant in his spiritual practice and dedicated to the work of Shri Ram Chandra Mission. As General Secretary of the Mission, he contributed greatly to the growth of the Mission, and to the publication of Sahaj Marg literature. Over the years, he became Babuji's most devoted disciple, ably assisting him in his spiritual work.

Babuji characterized the ideal human being as a person having "a Western mind and an Eastern heart," adding that such a person would be needed to guide the Mission successfully into the future. In Chariji he saw not only this blend of qualities, but also the ability to instil discipline

in others. Babuji passed away in 1983, nominating Chariji as his spiritual representative and President of the Mission.

Chariji's work over the last thirty years has resulted in remarkable growth and expansion of the Mission's activities all over the world. His book *My Master*, a personal tribute to Babuji, has been published in nearly twenty languages. His other books include diaries of his overseas travels with Babuji, an autobiography, and numerous volumes of his talks in India and abroad, interpreting, and amplifying his Master's teachings.

In Sahaj Marg it is understood that the Master is the greatest servant. Observing Chariji, one sees this principle in action. His entire existence is devoted to the cause of spiritual upliftment of his fellow human beings, a service that he undertakes with unwavering faith in the divine support of his Master.

# **The Mission**

Shri Ram Chandra Mission was registered in India in the year 1945. The Mission is a non-profit spiritual organisation in India, and in all the countries where it is registered.

Over the years, the Mission has grown enormously and, as of 2005, has more than four hundred centres in India, and is present in ninety countries spread over all the continents. The Mission now has more than 150,000 abhyasis practising the Sahaj Marg system of meditation.

The Mission does not charge any fees of any kind for this spiritual training.

The administrative structure of the Mission is the skeleton around which the spiritual edifice of the Mission is built. As such, it is meant to be virtually invisible, but must nevertheless support the spiritual work of the Master, and provide the services that are required by the abhyasis.

## **ASHRAMS**

An ashram is a place of retreat where we live in accordance with the principles that sustain our inner growth and evolution. Shri Ram Chandra Mission has many ashrams throughout the world—in India, South Africa, Northern and Southern Europe, and the United States.

Generally, ashrams are located on several acres of land with a meditation hall, dormitory style housing and a kitchen providing simple food. Seminars and celebrations are held at the ashrams at various times during the year.

Information on upcoming seminars is posted on the Mission's website: [www.srcm.org](http://www.srcm.org).

The Babuji Memorial Ashram at Manapakkam in Chennai, South India, is the world headquarters of the Mission. It receives many thousands of visitors annually from around the world. With prior permission, abhyasis are welcome to visit there throughout the year. Contact your local prefect or the Mission's website for information.

The Mission has over one hundred ashrams in India, and about ten outside India.



*Babuji Memorial Ashram, Chennai, India*



*Vrads Sande Ashram, Denmark*

## HOW ARE THE MISSION'S ACTIVITIES FUNDED?

The Mission offers spiritual training under the Sahaj Marg system entirely free of cost. However, there are other activities that support this effort and complement the spiritual practice, which are funded through voluntary donations from abhyasis.

To begin with, satsanghs are usually held in abhyasis' homes. However, after a while, the centre grows out of the location, and the need arises to have a common place that can be used by all the abhyasis as their common spiritual home. Then, the centre has to plan for an ashram. These ashrams are funded by voluntary donations from the abhyasis.

At many of the ashrams in India, the Mission provides free room and board to the abhyasis. At some of the ashrams, free medical assistance is also provided to residents as well as the public through the establishment of free medical centres. These activities are also supported through voluntary donations from abhyasis.

The Mission publishes literature and audio and video aids for abhyasis. These are published on a non-profit basis, and sold to abhyasis at prices that are far below what such publications would normally cost in a store.

The Mission also celebrates the birth anniversaries of the Masters each year. These celebrations are funded through voluntary delegate donations from willing abhyasis. Those who cannot afford do not pay or subscribe to the costs of the celebrations in any manner.

In some of the countries in which the Mission is registered, it is mandated by law that the Mission collect an annual membership fee from all active abhyasis. Here too, abhyasis are not forced to become members of the organization, but may choose their own level of participation.

# The Philosophy of Sahaj Marg

In the beginning, we were one with God. This was before we developed our sense of identity and ego. Once these two came into play, we started to drift away from this state of oneness with God, through the effects of our own thoughts and actions. These thoughts and actions formed impressions, which, when solidified, are called samskaras. Samskaras are formed through our egoistic involvement in our own thoughts and actions. These samskaras are the root of four tendencies and problems. They cloud our every thought and action, and form the program which virtually runs our life. It is because of them that we are forced to come to this mortal world again and again. The real purpose of this corporeal existence is therefore to rid ourselves of the effect of these samskaras, and to once again be one with God, the absolute. So, the goal in Sahaj Marg is to attain oneness with the Self/God.

***How do we go back to our source again?*** The answer is that we have to regulate the mind and turn it away from the habit that it has acquired of wandering about, and turn it towards the goal. This we do through meditation. When we meditate, we have a specific goal in mind, that of oneness with God.

***How do we meditate?*** Meditation means to think of one thing to the exclusion of other things. In Sahaj Marg, we meditate on a divine light in the heart. There is an old saying that “we become that which we meditate upon”. Our goal of oneness with the formless and abstract God is difficult to meditate on. Therefore, our Masters have substituted this abstract goal with divine light, which is nearly as abstract, but yet easy to imagine. This is just an idea or supposition. We are not required to actually see the light, or imagine the heart. We are simply trying to replace all the thoughts that the mind generates

with this one thought—that the heart is filled with a divine light. In other words, the outward looking mind is trained and regulated to look inwards, towards the inner self. Continued practice of this meditation helps prevent the formation of new impressions or samskaras.

***How do we get rid of all these past impressions or samskaras?*** People develop tendencies in accordance with their past impressions or samskaras. For those without the benefit of cleaning as prescribed in the Sahaj Marg method, the only way of getting rid of samskaras is through the manifestation of these tendencies as action i.e. one's mind creates thoughts in accordance with such tendencies which leads to action based on one's past impressions or samskaras. The impressions caused by one's involvement in the resultant action can lead to further impressions or samskaras possibly making it an endless, repetitive cycle. In Sahaj Marg, we believe that the mind, being the cause of the samskaras, can also be the cause of their destruction, through the use of the will power that God has given us. Our Masters teach us that they can be removed by the application of the will, and by the constant purification of the system through the Master's transmission. In this way, the regulated mind not only prevents formation of samskaras, but also assists in their destruction, when we apply our will power. Further clarification of this concept of cleaning can be seen in the section on the Method.

***Do we need to believe in the theory of reincarnation?*** No. All that we need to accept is the truth that we are today what we made of ourselves in the past, and that we will be in the future whatever we will make of ourselves from today on.

***What is transmission?*** We know from physics that in the beginning there was nothing, no matter and no energy. When the universe was created, energy came into being,

and later on manifested as matter. This original creative energy is called transmission, *pranasya prana*, the soul of the soul, or the original life force. This is the only energy that can elevate us spiritually, when infused into us by the Master along with the application of His will. In Sahaj Marg, transmission is defined as the utilisation of divine energy for the divinisation of the abhyasi.

***How do meditation, cleaning and transmission combine to make us evolve spiritually?*** Meditation helps to focus the mind by regulating it, and thus prevents formation of fresh impressions or samskaras. Cleaning helps to remove the effect of past impressions or samskaras. The transmission then fills this void that has been created through the removal of the past samskaras, and divinises us, thus making us evolve.

## **The Goal**

Our goal is explicitly spiritual: Oneness with God/Self. Our God is not the God of Abraham or of Muhammad or of the Hindus, or of any other religion, but is the absolute God, without form, name or attributes, who is common to all humankind and indeed common to all of creation. The 'Self' is recognised as the higher self, an indivisible part of the absolute God, who lives within each of our hearts. So, Sahaj Marg has neither any allegiance to, nor any conflict with, any religion.

Sahaj Marg emphasises that God is to be found in the core of our hearts, and therefore we should look for Him inside ourselves. The way to look for Him is with Love. The more we recognise His presence, and allow Him space in our hearts, the more He becomes a part of our existence. The practice of meditation and the other associated practices are only ways to establish His presence within us, and to allow that presence to grow and expand.

When we recognise that our lives have many dimensions, such as the self, the family, the career, and our interaction with society, all of which are important and all of which often compete for importance and attention, then we also recognise the need to bring about a balance between all these dimensions, and to achieve a peace that is often missing in our lives.

Sahaj Marg helps to achieve this peace as a first step; and the sense of peace and balance that results will guide us on towards the path to personal spiritual evolution, and towards the final goal of oneness with the Self.

The Masters of Sahaj Marg believe that since God is simple, the path to reach Him must also be simple and available for all human beings, irrespective of caste, creed, colour, sex, religion, etcetera. The method of Sahaj

Marg is therefore simple and easy to follow, and makes no demands on the practicant, other than a willingness to try the system and benefit from the practice. The system is made yet easier by the presence of a living Master, who takes the responsibility to guide the practicant through the problems of his life, through the Master's own example, from day to day.

# The Method

## THE DAILY PRACTICE

### Morning Meditation

*Sit in meditation for an hour thinking that divine light is present in your heart. Do it in quite a simple and natural way without forcing your mind. Never mind if you do not see the light there. Start with a mere supposition, so to say, and sit meditating in one posture with your attention turned towards the heart in a natural way without any effort to concentrate. Try to be unmindful of the thoughts arising at that time. Begin the morning meditation by mentally saying the Prayer once.*

In meditation, we think continuously of one thing. It is surprising that there is a lot of misunderstanding about what meditation is, and the difficulty associated in doing it. One who is obsessed with wealth is meditating on wealth. Similarly, one who is thinking constantly about success is meditating on success. Meditation is a very simple thing, so simple that even children do it all the time. When a child wants something, it remembers that thing even through sleep, and asks for it when it awakens the next morning. Meditation is therefore a very common thing. In the spiritual context, all that we do is to reorient the mind away from mundane material objects, and give it a spiritual goal to meditate on.

***What is the difference between meditation and concentration?*** Meditation is the ability to think continuously about one thing, to the exclusion of all other things. When we have achieved this ability, by repeated practice, then we are in a condition when our mind is able to be single-pointed. This state of mind is called concentration. So, concentration is the result of the process of meditation.

***How do we meditate?*** We sit in a comfortable posture, with our eyes closed, and make the thought that the heart is filled with a divine light. We are not required to see the light, nor are we required to imagine the heart. Remember, all that we want to do is to replace all the thoughts that the mind would normally bring up, with one thought, that of divine light in the heart. We are asked to sit in this manner for at least half an hour in the morning every day.

***Why do we meditate on a divine light?*** In Sahaj Marg, the object of meditation is a divine light in the heart. The divine light has been chosen because it is the closest to being completely abstract, and is therefore the closest approximation to our spiritual goal of oneness with God or Self.

***Why do we meditate on the heart?*** Our Masters have given us three reasons why we meditate on the heart. The first is that the heart is the seat of life, and so when we meditate on the heart, we meditate on the source of life itself. Second, the heart distributes purified blood throughout the body. The purification of the system thus commences from the heart. Third, all religions teach us that the heart is the abode of the Divine. This makes the heart a fitting point for meditation.

***What do we do when thoughts interrupt our meditation?*** When we meditate, we will of course have thoughts. We are taught not to attend to these thoughts, but to ignore them. Thoughts have no power of their own, but depend on the power of the attention that we give them. So, if we ignore them, they will fall off. By developing the ability to hold this one thought (that of divine light in the heart) during meditation, we progressively develop the ability to regulate our minds. So, we use the mind to regulate the mind. Meditation is therefore a process, and not a goal by itself. The result of the practise of meditation is therefore the ability to concentrate.

***Do we need to have a goal or purpose for the meditation?*** Meditation must always be done with a

purpose, the purpose being our spiritual evolution. When we sit for meditation, we must do so with a receptive and prayerful attitude, so that a vacuum is created in the heart. This vacuum is filled with the transmission from the Master. Only an empty vessel can be filled! We must remember that meditation is like a state of waiting for the discovery of the original condition, and transmission is the only force that can lead us to that condition.

***When is the best time to do the morning meditation?***

Master has said that at the time when night meets day, Nature is in a state of balance. When we meditate at this time, it helps us to progress rapidly. So, this is the best time to meditate.

***What about Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga, and the eight stages?*** In Sahaj Marg, we start at the seventh stage, namely, *dhyana*. When we sit for meditation, the body acquires for itself a comfortable posture, which it can hold for a period of time. Therefore, *asana* becomes established naturally. During meditation, the breathing slows down and settles into a natural rhythm, thus establishing *pranayama*. Through meditation, our mental processes are purified, and this results in right action, thus establishing *yama* and *niyama*. As the power of the mind grows through meditation, the mind is able to achieve a state of concentration, and *pratyahara* and *dharana* are established. Thus, we see that by starting at the seventh stage, namely *dhyana*, under the guidance of a capable Master, the earlier stages become established automatically. As a result of meditation, and with the help of the transmission from the Master, we will also be able to achieve the condition of *samadhi*.

# Cleaning

## Impressions and the Need for Cleaning

Fundamental to the philosophy of Sahaj Marg is the need to clean away the impressions (*samskaras*), which block our spiritual progress. The formation of impressions or *samskaras* started after the time of creation when we emerged from the Divine as separated souls. Whenever we think or act with the consciousness of I, that is, when the ego is involved, we form impressions. These impressions deepen and solidify to form *samskaras*. These impressions exist in each one of us and manifest much later as actions associated with past experiences or habits. They form the basis of our decision-making process, and direct our unique personal expression. Therefore, so long as they persist, action along certain lines is compulsive, and almost inevitable. Normally, we have to undergo the effect or *bhog* of these *samskaras* in order to get rid of their effect on us.

In Sahaj Marg, we believe that the mind can be used to remove or clean away these impressions, through the application of will power. When they are cleaned away, either during the individual evening cleaning, or during an individual sitting with a prefect or the Master, we are, in a sense, reborn, since the past progressively loses its hold over us.

As long as we are egoistic, we cannot stop the formation of fresh impressions. The only way to avoid the formation of impressions is to be unattached to our thoughts and actions. That is, we have to remove the ego and our attachment to the result of our actions if we want to avoid formation of impressions. Thus, in Sahaj Marg, we are encouraged to shift our attention from ourselves to the Self, the Master, through the process of Constant Remembrance.

The cleaning of the system is thus of paramount importance.

## Evening Cleaning

*Sit for half an hour with a suggestion to yourself that all complexities and impurities—including grossness, darkness, etcetera—are leaving the whole system through the back in the form of smoke or vapour, and in their place the sacred current of the Divine is entering your heart from the Master's heart. Do not meditate on those things that you want to get rid of. Simply brush them off.*

The evening cleaning is to be done after the day's work is finished. By doing the cleaning at this time, we rid ourselves of the effect of the impressions that have formed during the day. The older and deeper impressions may have solidified, and need to be removed during individual sittings with a prefect.

***How do we do the cleaning?*** The method for doing the daily cleaning is to sit comfortably with the eyes closed, like during the morning meditation, and to imagine that the day's impressions are going out of the body from the back in the form of smoke or vapour, and that in their place the sacred current of the Divine is entering the heart from the Master's heart. It is an active process, in which we use our will power to remove our own impressions. Please note that in the morning meditation there is no use of will power, whereas in the cleaning, the will is involved very definitely and specifically.

## Prayer

*Just before going to bed at night, sit in a supplicant mood and repeat the Prayer mentally twice or thrice. Then begin to meditate over its true sense and try to get lost in it.*

*O, Master!  
Thou art the real goal of human life,  
We are yet but slaves of wishes  
putting bar to our advancement.  
Thou art the only God and power  
to bring us up to that stage.*

At bedtime, repeat the prayer a few times mentally and meditate on its meaning for about ten minutes. It should be the last thing you do before the day is brought to a close, so that from the prayer-meditation you can go directly to sleep.

This same prayer is to be repeated once before we start our morning meditation. It plays no part in our evening cleaning process. It is not to be used over and over (like a mantra) during meditation or throughout the day.

The prayer contains just three statements of fact.

The first line says: *O Master! Thou art the real goal of human life.* “Master” in this context refers to God, the ultimate Master who resides in each and every heart. Thus this statement is useful for persons from any religious background. The first line really says: *God! You are the real goal of human life,* reminding us of the true nature of the goal we are trying to achieve.

The second line of the prayer says: *We are yet but slaves of wishes putting bar to our advancement.* Here we are not asking God to remove or change our wishes. We are merely recognizing, with an attitude of humility, that we are the creators of our problems. We humbly state that our desires are standing in the way of our spiritual progress.

The third line says: *Thou art the only God and power to bring us up to that stage.* Here, we acknowledge the fact that we cannot progress solely by our own effort. We recognise that God alone can help us and take us up to that higher stage of existence.

In Sahaj Marg, the Master is recognised as one who has achieved mastery over himself, and is therefore able to guide others to the same stage. This he does by his life and personal example, augmented by the philosophy of the system of practice. The Master is therefore one

who serves the abhyasi in the real sense, by being a role model and a guide, every day of the abhyasi's life.

## Transmission

A unique feature of Sahaj Marg is the yogic transmission (also called *pranahuti*) from the Master to the abhyasi. Transmission is defined as the utilisation of divine energy for the transformation of a human being. Shri Ram Chandra of Fatehgarh (Lalaji) rediscovered this ancient technique after it had been lost for centuries.

When the Master transmits this divine energy into our hearts, we are filled with a force higher than ourselves. Through the transmission, spiritual progress is not only accelerated, but it actually expands our own limited capacity for growth.

This transmission can be felt by anyone who practices Sahaj Marg even for a brief period. It can be received directly from the Master, or from prefects who have been trained by the Master to do this work on his behalf, and who act as conduits for the transmission.

## INDIVIDUAL SITTINGS AND GROUP MEDITATION

### Prefects

Someone who practices Sahaj Marg meditation is called an *abhyasi*. A prefect (also referred to as 'preceptor') is an abhyasi who has been prepared and permitted by the Master to introduce people to the Sahaj Marg system, and conduct group meditation. Prefects also give individual sittings, cleaning away the deeper samskaras in the abhyasi and acting as conduits for the transmission. The prefect is better able to do this since his will is developed through constant practice and use.

## Individual sittings

While the surface impressions are cleared away through the daily cleaning practice, it is during individual sittings with a prefect that the deeper cleaning takes place, and acts as a catalyst to promote spiritual growth and advancement. The reason these sittings are effective is because prefects have a better-developed will, and are therefore more effective in removing deep-seated impressions.

The prefect's role is that of a conduit for the Master's work. Sittings (individual and group) are therefore most effective when both the abhyasi and the prefect have the inner attitude that the sitting is being given by the Master.

Abhyasis are expected to receive individual sittings from a prefect at least once every two weeks. Individual sittings typically last about thirty minutes. When receiving a sitting, either group or individual, the abhyasi should sit in meditation in the same manner as during the morning meditation. After the sitting, the abhyasi should take a few minutes to reflect on the sitting. Any observations should then be noted in the diary, and may be shared with the prefect. This exercise increases the sensitivity of both abhyasi and prefect.

## Group Meditation (Satsangh)

The word *satsangh* means 'being with the ultimate Truth'. In Sahaj Marg, it refers to group meditation. True satsangh is really only when the minds and hearts of the participants are connected to the Ultimate.

It is important to attend satsanghs whenever they take place in the centre. Master has given three reasons for it. The first reason is that the combined aspiration and effort of a group produces quick results. The second reason is that it promotes

brotherhood. Third, it is an act of obedience. Sunday satsangh has a greater significance, since during this satsangh, the Master attends directly to the spiritual needs of each member of the group that is assembled.

Abhyasis should arrive at least fifteen minutes before the scheduled time of satsangh and settle in by doing a few minutes of cleaning, in preparation for receiving the transmission. This cleaning is very brief and only done to prepare oneself for the satsangh. Regular cleaning as part of daily abhyas should be done in the evening, as prescribed. When you arrive at the meditation hall, please remove your shoes at the door, turn off your mobile phones and sign the attendance register.

Note that men and women sit in separate groups during satsangh. This removes all distractions during the sitting, and helps us forget our surroundings and focus on the real goal.

After the group meditation, abhyasis sit quietly for five to ten minutes, reflect on their spiritual condition, and note their experiences in their diaries. Usually, satsangh is followed by a reading from one of the Masters' works, information about upcoming Sahaj Marg seminars, local events or other Mission news.

Note that even on satsangh days, the regular individual practice of morning meditation, evening cleaning and night prayer should be done.

## 9:00 PM Friday Sitting From The Master

Every Friday, the Master gives direct, "long distance" sittings to abhyasis around the world who have no access to a prefect. These take place at 9 P.M. local time. Even those who have access to regular sittings from a prefect can benefit from these sittings. The sittings usually last at least thirty minutes, during which time you sit in meditation just as you would during your morning meditation or during an individual sitting. You may open your eyes when you feel that the sitting is over.

## OTHER PRACTICES

In addition to the meditation, cleaning, and prayer, there are some other practices that aid in our overall spiritual evolution. These include: constant remembrance, the ten maxims, the universal prayer, and the spiritual diary.

In Sahaj Marg, we are encouraged to live full and natural lives as householders. It is in the family life that the spiritual principles of love, tolerance, morality, patience and acceptance are nurtured.

### Constant Remembrance

Meditation, cleaning, and prayer constitute the main framework of the Sahaj Marg method. What infuses it with life and feeling is the practice of constantly remembering God, the divine Master, in the midst of all our daily activities. Some people think that constant or even frequent remembrance of God is not practical in a life filled with worries, worldly attachments and responsibilities. But practice and experience will show that constant remembrance is actually a simple process, once we begin to divert our attention toward God in the real sense.

A good method is to have the thought, at the beginning of any work or activity, that the divine presence within you is guiding your thoughts and actions. Then simply proceed with whatever it is you have to do, treating each task as part of your divine duty, without any attachment to the result of the work.

The practice of remembrance will eventually lead you to the subtle, constant thought of the Divine in all your activities (thus, gently diverting your attention away from your ego). As it becomes rooted in your heart, every action will become a sacred duty to the Self, done out

of a sense of duty, without concern about results. As His presence becomes predominant, our ego begins to fade away. When our attention is focused on the Master within, ego is kept at a minimal functional role, and all our thoughts and actions are in tune with Nature. This way, we no longer form impressions.

When this stage is achieved, our work is more or less finished.

## Universal Prayer

The nine o'clock prayer in the evening is a feature of the practice that is for the general spiritual welfare of all human beings.

The method is to sit quietly, with the eyes closed, for approximately fifteen minutes, thinking that the hearts of all human beings everywhere, regardless of whether they are abhyasis or not, are being filled with love and devotion for the Divine. Thus, at any given time, abhyasis in different time zones around the world are praying, and their combined thought creates a continuous beam of transmission of human love and human concern for the well-being of others. There is a certain cumulative effect out of this that far exceeds the sum of the individual efforts, and which contributes to establishing a spirit of brotherhood around the world.

## Keeping A Spiritual Diary

The diary in Sahaj Marg is a progressive record of our spiritual development and evolution, the nature of which becomes evident when we re-read our entries after a year or so. When we are driving up a mountain, we hardly see anything of the road either above or below us because of the twists and turns along the way. But when

we reach a sufficient height we can look back and see the terrain over which we have come. Similarly, we gain perspective, understanding and knowledge of our growth by maintaining and reviewing a spiritual diary.

The diary is most helpful when we express ourselves honestly. Such an account makes it possible for us to look into ourselves with absolute candour and to assess our own condition. It also helps us to accept ourselves as we are, without feelings of shame or guilt, and to take corrective action through the methods of the practice and with the Master's support.

## The Ten Maxims

The Master takes complete responsibility for our internal spiritual transformation. However, character development is our own responsibility, and the Master can play no part in it unless we are willing to cooperate and change ourselves. Overall transformation of the individual is possible only if external character transformation and internal spiritual transformation go hand in hand. Here, the Ten Maxims are a great help if we incorporate them into our daily lives.

Some of the maxims focus on the practice of meditation, while others guide us in the transformation of our character. Still others open the way to self-examination and introspection.

As a whole, the ten maxims cultivate in us an attitude of human-ness. We must use the self to train the self, just as in meditation we use the mind to regulate the mind.

## **The Ten Maxims of Sahaj Marg**

1. Rise before dawn. Offer your prayer and meditation at a fixed hour, preferably before sunrise, sitting in one and the same pose. Have a separate place and seat for worship. Purity of mind and body should be specially adhered to.

2. Begin your meditation with a prayer for spiritual elevation, with a heart full of love and devotion.

3. Fix up your goal, which should be “complete oneness” with God. Rest not till the ideal is achieved.

4. Be plain and simple to be identical with Nature.

5. Be truthful. Take miseries as divine blessings for your own good and be thankful.

6. Know all people as thy brethren and treat them as such.

7. Be not revengeful for the wrongs done by others. Take them with gratitude as heavenly gifts.

8. Be happy to eat in constant divine thought whatever you get, with due regard to honest and pious earnings.

9. Mould your life so as to rouse a feeling of love and piety in others.

10. At bedtime, feeling the presence of God, repent for the wrongs committed. Beg forgiveness in a supplicant mood, resolving not to allow repetition of the same.

## The Emblem



The emblem is a representation of the Sahaj Marg system. The writing near the bottom acknowledges that Babuji founded the Mission in the memory of his Guru, Lalaji.

The swastika near the bottom represents the point from which we start on our spiritual journey. The swastika has been used since ancient times, and in many different religions. Here, it symbolizes life, the sphere of forms, rituals and practices of various types.

Above the swastika, the path of Sahaj Marg cuts through the mountains of difficulties and obstructions. We march on this path through different spheres of light and shade of varying levels of grossness, growing finer and finer at every step, until we attain the highest stage of spiritual evolution.

The sphere of light created by the rising sun denotes the spiritual era started by Lalaji. It permeates the space, commanding over the regions we started from and passed through on our path of Sahaj Marg.

*Satpad* is just below the top of the emblem. This region of light, though in a very refined state, is but a reflection of Reality.

*Om Tat Sat*, at the top of the emblem, is the highest attainable region. It is a region of neither light nor darkness—it is unchanging and eternal. It is the pure and absolute state from which our present existence has evolved and may be denoted as the sphere of Eternal Peace.

# **Sahaj Marg Spirituality Foundation**

Shri Ram Chandra Mission has only one purpose for its existence: to offer those who are willing, the possibility for spiritual evolution through the practice of the Sahaj Marg system of Raja Yoga. To spread this system, the Mission does not advertise, is not in the public eye, is not in newspapers, and is not publicised in any way. The only way the Mission spreads is through word of mouth, by people like you and me trying it, benefiting from it, and speaking to others about it.

Over the last few years, Master has felt a need to present a broader front, as it were. The first time this happened was during the Gujarat earthquake in India in 2001. After this natural disaster, Shri Ram Chandra Mission presented a sum equivalent to around one hundred thousand US dollars to the Prime Minister's Relief Fund.

As a vehicle for these associated activities, Master created the Sahaj Marg Spirituality Foundation. The Foundation has been registered as a nonprofit charitable organization in the United States, Europe and India.

The Sahaj Marg Research and Training Institute was founded by Babuji Maharaj many years back, and has been doing valuable work, especially in the field of education, in India. SMRTI has created Value Based Education curricula for children in schools and conducts workshops for teachers, parents and teachers all over India. These programs have been implemented in many schools all over India. SMRTI is now recognised as one of the leading providers of such programs. Value-based spiritual education programs are also being created for colleges and universities in India. SMRTI is now a part of the Foundation and all its work is done through the Foundation.

Babuji long wished to offer free food and free medical assistance at all the ashrams in India. This dream of his was not realised during his lifetime, but is being realised now. At Manapakkam, Tiruppur, Satkhol, and Kolkata ashrams, all abhyasis are now fed free of charge funded by the Sahaj Marg Spirituality Foundation. This program will be extended to other ashrams in due course. This program is funded through the Sahaj Marg Spirituality Foundation. In addition, in Manapakkam and Satkhol, the Foundation runs a free clinic which offers medical and dental assistance to all those who come there. There is a proposal to add such clinics at other ashrams as time goes on.

Sahaj Marg Spirituality Foundation has instituted internship programs for the Mission's employees and residents at the various ashrams. The Foundation has also established welfare programs for all these persons, whereby they receive free food, free accommodation, free medical insurance, free accident insurance, and training to do jobs. This is a program designed to take people who have education but don't have jobs, and to train them in various skills.

The Sahaj Marg Spirituality Foundation is also in the process of starting retreat centres in India. At this time, there are three centres under implementation, the first one in Bangalore, the second in Pune, and the third in Ambala. The fourth one will come up in eastern India. These centres will provide free food and accommodation, and facilities for training. Abhyasis and prefects will stay for up to six weeks and spend this time in training. There will be guest faculty from various religions, from various other institutions, so that abhyasis and prefects may get a holistic picture of Sahaj Marg and other philosophies.

The Foundation also funds the Scholarship Program of Shri Ram Chandra Mission. New abhyasis, from

countries where the Mission is not present, are selected and brought to India for training for a period of up to six weeks. During this period they are given training in English, in Sahaj Marg philosophy, and very often have the opportunity to travel with Master on his travels inside India. At the end of this training process, those who volunteer to do the work and are found fit are also made prefects. The Scholarship Program is offered free of charge.

In Europe, Sahaj Marg Spirituality Foundation, through SMRTI, has been training abhyasis and prefects. The Foundation also publishes books on Sahaj Marg and other related topics. The Foundation's books are available in bookstores across Europe.

The Foundation is thus designed to be a parallel and complementary organisation to Shri Ram Chandra Mission and is designed to be the public face of the Mission, as it were.

## **Publications**

The following publications are recommended for beginners. To purchase these books ask your local prefect or centre co-ordinator.

A complete list of publications, tapes and videos can be found on the website: [www.srcm.org/bookstore/index.html](http://www.srcm.org/bookstore/index.html).

*My Master*, P. Rajagopalachari

This is a beautiful narration, lovingly told by Chariji, of his Master, Babuji. Starting with his first exposure to Babuji, the book illustrates his growing love and devotion towards his Master, who was a uniquely simple yet spiritually profound man. This book describes Babuji with such lucidity that readers feel as though they have also met this wonderful personality.

*Complete Works of Ram Chandra*, Shri Ram Chandra

An essential work by Babuji, explaining the purpose and goal of life, and how one may attain that goal with the help of the Master.

### **NEW ABHYASI PACKAGES**

Two 'new abhyasi' book packages have been very recently released and contain all the books recommended for initial reading. They include:

1. The Practice of Sahaj Marg and the Role of the Abhyasi.

2. Principles of Sahaj Marg volumes 1,2 and 3 - by Shri P. Rajagopalachari - available also as part of the series Combined Works of Chariji (volume 1).

3. Reality at Dawn by Shri. Ram Chandra (Babuji Maharaj) - also available also as part of Complete Works of Shri Ram Chandra (in volume 1).

4. Role of the Master in Human Evolution by Shri P. Rajagopalachari. - available in volume 3 of Combined Works of Chariji.

## Periodicals

<b>Name</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Published in</b>	<b>Periodicity</b>
<i>Natural way</i>	English	UK	Quarterly
<i>Sahaj Marg Newsletter</i>	English	Sri Lanka	Quarterly
<i>Sahaj Marg Bladet</i>	Danish	Denmark	Quarterly
<i>Nyhedsbrevet</i>	Danish	Denmark	6-8 times a year
<i>Sahaj Marg Magazine</i>	French	France	Quarterly
<i>Sahaj Marg Magazin</i>	German	Germany	Quarterly
<i>Sahaj Deep</i>	Bengali	India	Bi-annual
<i>Constant Remembrance</i>	English	India	Quarterly
<i>Sahaj Sishu</i>	Hindi	India	Quarterly
<i>Sahaja Deepa</i>	Kannada	India	Quarterly
<i>Sahaja Deepam</i>	Malayalam	India	Quarterly
Sahaja Deepam	Tamil	India	Quarterly
Sahaja Margamu	Telugu	India	Quarterly

Further information on the Sahaj Marg system worldwide, publications, activities and events, subscriptions to quarterly periodicals, training modules, and upcoming seminars with the Master are available from the Mission's web pages at [www.srcm.org](http://www.srcm.org) and the related link for the Sahaj Marg Spirituality Foundation (SMSF) and the Sahaj Marg Research and Training Institute (SMRTI) at [www.sahajmarg.org](http://www.sahajmarg.org).

## Glossary

*The following terms are commonly used in Sahaj Marg publications.*

*Abhyas:* Formal practice. In Sahaj Marg, it is composed of meditation, cleaning and prayer.

*Abhyasi:* Aspirant; one who practices yoga in order to achieve union with God.

*Absorption:* See Samadhi

*Adi Guru:* First Guru; In Sahaj Marg, Lalaji is recognised as the Adi Guru.

*Agni:* Fire, the fire element or principle.

*Ahamkara (or Ahamkar):* Ego.

*Ajna Chakra (or Agya Chakra):* The fire point located between the eyebrows, Trikuti.

*Akasha:* The Absolute, space, sky. The fifth element, ether, the space element or principle.

*Ananda:* Bliss.

*Anubhava:* Intuitive perception or personal experience in the realm of Nature or God.

*Anubhava Shakti:* Intuitive capacity, capacity acquired by experience.

*Asana:* Posture, pose, usually yogic, as in yogasana, third stage in Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga.

*Ashram:* Place of retreat where we try to live in accordance with principles that sustain our inner growth and evolution. In Sahaj Marg, they are places spiritually charged by the Master to create such ideal conditions for progress.

*AshtangaYoga*: Sage Patanjali described yoga as having eight steps: yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana and samadhi.

*Atma Chakra*: Heart chakra. In Sahaj Marg, the second, or soul point.

*Atman*: Soul.

*Avatar*: Incarnation of a divine soul, taking birth for a specific purpose.

*Basant Panchami*: Fifth day of spring. Indian Festival. Associated in Sahaj Marg with Lalaji's birthday, which falls on that day.

*Bhagavad Gita*: 'Song of God'. An essential scripture of Hinduism, containing the portion of the Mahabharata in which Lord Krishna transmits divine knowledge to the warrior Arjuna on the battlefield just before the start of the Mahabharata war.

*Bhakta*: Devotee.

*Bhakti*: An admixture of qualities including faith, love, devotion, gratitude, surrender, dedication and obedience.

*Bhandara*: Spiritual gathering or celebration.

*Bhog (or Bhoga)*: Process of undergoing the effects of past impressions (samskaras); also enjoyment.

*Bhuma (or Bhooma)*: Absolute, Ultimate, Base.

*Brahmanda Mandal*: Mental sphere, Supra-material sphere, cosmic region; sphere where everything manifests in a subtle shape before taking place in the material world.

*Buddhi*: Intellect. *Chakra*: Centres of super-vital forces located in different parts of the body.

*Cleaning*: Specific technique prescribed to be practised at the end of each day by a Sahaj Marg *abhyasi*, wherein the will power is used to remove the impressions that we gather during the day, and that which impede our spiritual development.

*Darshan*: Vision of someone's inner Reality.

*Dharana*: Concentration. Sixth stage of Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga.

*Dharma*: A term with many applications, depending on the context: Duty, righteousness, destined way, truth, virtue, that which upholds.

*Dhyana*: Meditation. Seventh stage of Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga.

*Grihastha*: One who leads a worldly life, a householder.

*Grihastha ashrama*: Conditions of a household life.

*Guru*: From *gu* meaning *remove*, and *ru* meaning *obscurity*. One who transmits light, knowledge; a spiritual teacher, guide. Master of his Self, one who guides the *abhyasi* by the example of his life and by what he preaches.

*Introduction*: Refers to the introductory sittings given to all who begin the practice of Sahaj Marg.

*Invertendo*: Term coined by Babuji to describe the apparent inversions the Truth undergoes as it moves through higher levels of abstraction.

*Jiva (or Jivatma)*: Individual incarnated soul.

*Jivan mukti, jeevan mukti*: Liberation of the individual incarnated soul.

*Jnana (or Gnana)*: Knowledge; Supreme wisdom or knowledge leading to Realisation.

*Jnani (or Gnani):* Gnostic; one who has (Divine) knowledge.

*Kabir:* Indian mystic and poet who lived in the 16<sup>th</sup> century in Varanasi.

*Kama:* Desire. At the origin, longing of the soul to reunite with the Absolute.

*Karma:* Action, deeds.

*Karma yoga:* The path of action, work and service leading to realisation. When one works in the most effective manner possible in a given situation, without involving one's ego, and is no longer attached to the results of the action, one is a Karma Yogi.

*Kshob:* State of disturbance; loss of equilibrium; stir caused by the will of God to effect creation. The original stir.

*Kundalini:* The power, which is coiled like a serpent at the base of the spine

*Laya Avastha:* The state of merging. *Mahabharata:* One of the great epic stories of India.

*Mahapralaya:* State of complete dissolution when everything in existence merges with the Centre. The final and complete dissolution of the universe.

*Maha Samadhi:* The final samadhi when a saint renounces his body and enters the brighter world.

*Mahatma:* Great soul, saint. (From *Maha*—great, and *at ma*—soul).

*Manas:* Psyche, mind. In Indian philosophy, *manas* is the location and source of all activities, emotions, feelings and expressions of the individual. It can also be said that it is the root cause of our slavery.

*Mantra:* From *manas* (mind) and *tray a* (protection). Repetitive recitation of a sacred sound, word, or phrase. Vedic hymn.

*Master:* The Guru or teacher of Sahaj Marg. One who has mastered himself, and guides others by his example.

*Maya:* Illusion.

*Moksha:* Enlightenment.

*Mukti:* Liberation.

*Niyama:* Second stage of Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga. Subjected laws such as purity, contentment, austerity, self-study, and devotion to God, which must be followed.

*Pandit:* Learned person, well versed in any subject. *Para Brahman* Indeterminate Absolute; God as the ultimate cause of existence.

*Para Brahmanda Mandal:* Supra-cosmic region of the mind.

*Patanjali:* Ancient Indian scholar who wrote the Yoga Sutras.

*Prakriti:* Nature.

*Pralaya:* State of dissolution, applied not to the whole universe but only to a part of it.

*Prana:* Life, breath, vital force.

*Pranahuti:* Process of yogic transmission by the Master. Derived from *prana* meaning life and *ahuti* meaning offering. Offering of his life force by the Guru into the disciple's heart.

*Pranayama:* The fourth stage of Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga. Derived from *prana*, (life, breath) and *ayama* (to restrain).

*Prasad*: Divinised food, usually sweet; an offering to God.

*Pratyahara*: The inner withdrawal of the mind. The fifth stage of Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga.

*Prefect*: Abhyasi who volunteers, is chosen, prepared, and permitted by the Master to impart spiritual training. A conduit for the transmission from the Master to the abhyasi.

*Puja*: Religious traditional practice. In the Sahaj Marg context, refers to the practice of meditation.

*Raja Yoga*: Yoga of the mind. Ancient system of meditation followed by the great rishis and saints which helped them to realise the Self or God. Sahaj Marg is a modified system of Raja Yoga.

*Rishi*: Saint. Seer, one who has realised his 'Self'.

*Sadhak*: Disciple who practices a sadhana.

*Sadhana*: Spiritual practice. In Sahaj Marg, the sadhana is composed of the daily morning meditation, evening cleaning, night prayer and constant remembrance.

*Sadguru*: Guru capable of giving the knowledge of Truth.

*Sahaj Marg*: The natural or simple path; modified system of Raja Yoga practiced in Shri Ram Chandra Mission.

*Samadhi*: Eighth and final stage of Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga. Babuji split the word into *sama*, meaning balance, and *adhi*, meaning original or ancient—a state in which we remain attached to Reality. *Samadhi* indicates simply that the mind is regulated and at rest. Babuji explained that *samadhi* comes in various stages, and that the most superior form is when the devotee remains conscious of his environment and functional, while remaining in a state of constant remembrance or meditation on the Divine

(*Sahaj samadhi*, natural *samadhi*). Sahaj Marg does not consider this state to be the ultimate accomplishment of *sadhana*, unlike other schools of yoga.

*Samarth Guru*: A capable or perfect Guru, who possesses all the required qualities.

*Samskara*: Impression. Our actions or thoughts form impressions that become hardened and are deposited like an envelope or veil over the heart, colouring our perception of Reality. As such, *samskaras* are often at the origin of our thoughts and actions, and thus form our destiny. The *samskaric* background of each individual is his or her 'programme' governing their behaviour. The way to be liberated from *samskaras* is through meditation, cleaning, and constant remembrance of the Divine.

*Sanstha*: Spiritual tradition; organisation; group.

*Satsangh*: Spiritual assembly; Being with the Ultimate Reality.

*Shri*: An honorific title roughly meaning "Mr." or "Sir".

*Sitting*: A session of meditation, usually lasting from thirty minutes to an hour, in which the Master or a prefect cleans and/or transmits to an individual or a group.

*Surrender*: State of complete dependence of the self to the Divine will.

*Tapasya (Tapas)*: Ascetic practices to purify the soul and attract Divine grace. Literally means "heat," and indicates the heat generated by the friction of intense spiritual practice.

*Transmission*: Process by which the Divine energy emanating from the Source is transmitted into an abhyasi, to divinise the person.

*Upanishads*: Sacred scriptures, philosophical texts that complement the Vedas (Gnana Kanda).

*Vairagya*: Renunciation, detachment, seeing without passion for the external world.

*Veda*: Perfect knowledge, that which was seen. Also, ancient Indian scriptures in which a superior knowledge is revealed.

*Utsav*: Religious celebration. In the Sahaj Marg context, a large gathering or *bhandara*.

*Vairagya*: Renunciation, detachment, non-attachment.

*Viveka*: Discrimination.

*Swami Vivekananda*: A great saint of India who lived in the early twentieth century, and was a disciple of Ramakrishna. Was the first to bring Vedanta to the Western world.

*Yama*: Refers to purity of body and mind. First stage of Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga.

*Yatra*: Inner spiritual journey. Literally, voyage, journey, pilgrimage.

*Yoga*: From the Sanskrit root *'yuf* meaning yoke, connect or unite. A system of Hindu philosophy showing means of emancipation of the soul from further incarnation. The state of yoga is the state of union of the soul with the ultimate divine soul. Any practice or sadhana that leads to the state of yoga is also termed Yoga.

*Yogi*: One who practices yoga; one who achieves union with the Absolute.





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