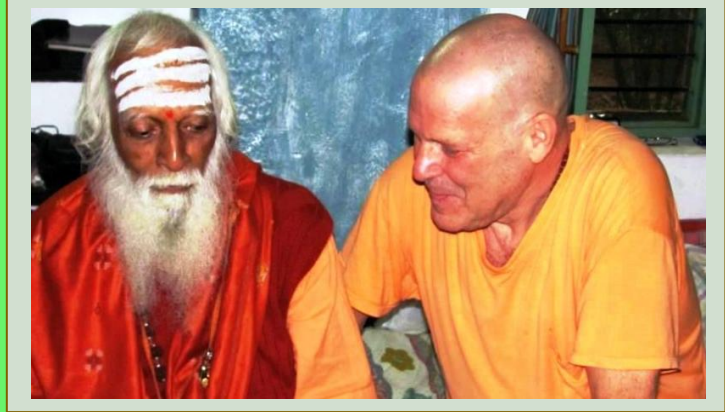


The importance of Sadhana

*Anecdote on Swami Sadasivananda
Narrated by Swami Shantananda Puri Maharaj*

The question of comfort while doing sadhana does not arise. Even if we were to lose all sleep, the main duty is to do meditation in the prescribed way.



The importance of Sadhana

There was a branch of Ma Anandamayi ma Ashram run by a few monks and brahmacharis in San Diego. The Mother Herself had sent to them the statues of Rama, Sita, Lakshmana, and Hanuman to enable them to do daily worship. As this branch Ashram had no money even to carry on their daily livelihood, they ran a bakery by selling its produce in the market. They got the money to purchase their daily food. The various duties like worship, cooking, running the hot oven in the bakery, going to the market and selling them, etc., were all distributed between the monks of that Ashram all of whom were Americans.

In one month, Swami Sadasivananda was entrusted with the daily decoration of the statues of Gods and daily worship as well. One morning, Swamiji was adorning Sita with some artificial earrings. As Swamiji's mind was engaged elsewhere, his nails happened to scratch the Goddess Sita's cheeks. From the statue of Hanuman sitting below, an angry growl was heard. Swamiji was seriously frightened when he realised his mistake while decorating Sita. He mentally begged pardon from both Sita and Hanuman and from that day, he was extremely careful to see that nothing careless happened while decorating the idols of Rama, Sita, Lakshmana, and Hanuman.

Ma Anandamayi of India had given them all detailed instructions for doing their sadhana and mainly she had laid down that every monk and brahmachari should do a minimum of 5 hours of meditation per day in the first 2 years and then slowly increase it further. As every person in the Ashram was fully engaged in running the oven for baking, cooking, cleaning

the Ashram, and going to the market, etc., they were all quite exhausted and would feel sleepy. They could hardly do meditation for 2-3 hours per day.

The next time they went to India to meet Mother Anandamayi Ma personally, they apprised their Mother of their difficulty in doing 5 hours of meditation. The Mother said, "Oh yes, we shall solve it." The monks were very happy that the Mother Herself was perhaps going to reduce the hours of meditation. They were shocked when the Mother told them all, "You better increase your meditation from 5 hours to 7 hours." This is the last thing they all expected from the Mother. But now that She had ordered, there was no other way except to comply with the Mother's injunction. As our main purpose in life is to realise the Lord there is no question of trying to reduce our sadhana under the pretext of being engaged in worldly affairs. This is what the Mother wanted to teach them.

The question of comfort while doing sadhana does not arise. Even if they were to lose all their sleep, their main duty was to do meditation in the prescribed way.

**** Hari Om ****

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