

- 1.1 The word 'aspire' according to the Dictionary means to desire earnestly. To aspire means that there should be a desire which we seek to satisfy more than any other desire. Some aspire for fame, some fortune, some others pleasures and some more, the Divine. But an ardent desire for rank, fame or power is known more as an ambition. The word 'ambition' applies to the desire for personal advancement or preferment and may suggest equally a praise worthy or an inordinate desire. Aspiration thus may be understood as an earnest and strong desire to achieve something high or great.
- 1.2 But before we can achieve our aspirations we need to **know what they are**, and then **set concrete goals to reach them**. Aspiration implies a striving after something higher than oneself or one's present status which may be ennobling or uplifting. It is essential that the goal is fixed up first. This fixing has to be irrevocable under any circumstance. It is therefore necessary to know the factors that are likely to affect the achievement of the goal.
- 1.3 It is customary to distinguish between desire and aspiration. This is essentially because we seem to desire so many things in life which we are prepared to give up either because of the obstacles or alternative or more attractive options. Desire is a wild fire that burns and burns till it finally consumes us. Aspiration is a glowing flame that secretly and sacredly uplifts our consciousness and finally liberates us. When we aspire it is obvious that what we aspire for is not with us and it is some thing that is sought after to be possessed sincerely. So the word aspire brings in the concept of sincerity also. We normally do not use the phrase 'I aspire to take lunch/dinner.' Or 'aspire' to go to office.' Or 'aspire to go for a holiday along with family.' These

- desires of ours can be easily accomplished and therefore we do not use the word 'aspire' to fulfill them. So when we use the word 'aspire' we already acknowledge that it is not easy and involves some serious effort. If we decide, for example, that we want to be famous or make a real difference in the world, but fail to make realistic plans on how we will make it big, chances are slim that it'll happen. In the real world, unfortunately, we do not have a wish fulfilling Bhairavi.
- 1.4 Thirst for the higher values or aspiration belongs to upper portion of the heart marked as U in the diagram given in the book Efficacy of Rajayoga of our Master. This realm may be considered as the realm of aspirational consciousness. This is the realm that human beings should strive to live in order to exhibit the human dignity.
 - 1.5 As contrasted to this the thirst for desires pertaining to the needs of the body at the physical and vital planes of being belongs to the realm marked as L in the same diagram in the book of the Master and their satisfaction leads us over a period of time gradually to annihilation of human dignity in us.
 - 1.6 We may think the characteristics that guarantee success in achieving the object of our aspiration, are education, intelligence, good luck, and we are partly right. These characteristics can surely help someone in their climb to the top. But what about the rest of us average folk, those not blessed with the above characteristics? There is one single characteristic that can give us scope to achieve our goal and that is the ability to set realistic yet challenging mid term goals before we reach our perfection. Aspiration is a vital key to success.
 - 1.7 Desire invariably involves expectation and if it is not fulfilled there is despair, frustration and anger. In

Aspiration there is persistent effort and the effort itself becomes a source of joy and happiness. Sadhana is its own reward. In genuine aspiration there is no frustration. By killing the desires, aspiration builds true happiness.

- 1.8 Master, in his book 'Ten Commandments' asks us in the third commandment to "Fix your goal which should be complete oneness with God. Rest not till the ideal is achieved." He is clear in directing us to fix our goal as oneness with God. We are thus asked to aspire for the Divine and this effort should be such that we do not rest till it is achieved.
- 1.9 It is those who seek the Divine that are called aspirants in the realm of spirituality though this word is used in day to day parlance, for any one seeking anything ardently. When we desire to know the Divine (our true nature) we understand that there are many things that stand in the way of such an attempt and since the desire to realize is very intense we are prepared for the necessary effort to be put in to achieve the goal we have set for ourselves. The desire to realize the Divine, turns into an aspiration when we find that there is an irresistible demand to fulfill the desire. If we consider one who desires to be a seeker, a seeker who has made an irrevocable determination in that direction may be called an 'aspirant.' This is what our Master meant when he said the abhyasi has to have 'a restless impatience' to realize. Once a seeker becomes an aspirant there will be no rest or leisure or any other concern than to realize for him. Attempts he undertakes to fulfill this aspiration may be called sadhana.
- 1.10 Fortunately if an aspirant gets a method which puts him in touch with a Master who grants him a taste of the real or ultimate, then a new desire starts which demands him to know the roots of the inexplicable

calmness and peace that he experiences during meditation. When a person directly experiences, as it happens in PAM, even if it is momentary he finds himself infused with a consciousness that transcends time, a consciousness that knows not its origins and therefore is free from birth and death. The consciousness that is experienced is immortal and without a second.

- 1.11 Accepting and understanding that such an experience accompanied with peace that descends into him during meditation to be due to the presence of Divinity, the aspiration to know God starts. The need to know God then takes the proportion of a biological need and that is the stage when we say we hunger for Gods' love, in other words devotion has developed.
- 1.12 A true aspirant has to utilize his time in the best interests of achieving his objective. For this when he prays, or meditates he has to feel that each second is infinitely more important than it was previously, before he took to sadhana in spiritual life. While every second can be used either for meditation or for gossip or for cherishing impure and undivine thoughts, a true aspirant will turn every second into an opportunity to dwell in the Divine thoughts. Such discrimination is one of the main characteristics that develop in a true aspirant.
- 1.13 The most important factor to achieve our aspiration is to try and develop a genuine hunger for God's love, and God's blessings. There are two ways to increase one's inner hunger. One way is to cry for God like a helpless child crying for his mother or the path of surrender. The other way is to offer one's actions to God while keeping a cheerful attitude, or nishkama karma yoga. With both these ways the aspirant will make real inner progress.

- 1.14 In either case 'aspiration' has to be an urge from every level of being of the aspirant. It has to be a conscious dedication to this noblest cause through physical, vital and mental planes of his existence. In all matters God must come first. Aspiration, the inner cry, should come from the physical, the vital, the mental and the spiritual. It is necessary that the physical, vital, mental and psychic being have to become consciously aware of this.
- 2.1 Every pore of the aspirants being should cry for the love of God. And this has to be 24hrs a day and 365 days an year for life. Because the true form of Divinity is Infinite there is no end to this process of aspiration once it gets started and nourished by the Masters Grace and one's own determination with dedication of his entire being to Him. When we consciously aspire in all parts of our being, we will be able to accelerate the achievement of our liberation.
- 2.2 The practical and concrete manner in which we aspire has to become pure and simple even as Divinity. For this purpose we adopt the processes of cleaning ourselves through the methods given by the Master. With impurity no one has so far entered the portals of the realms of the Divine. Our impurities are physical and psychical. In fact in the first Commandment of Master, it is stated that purity of body and mind has to be specially adhered to while we offer our prayer. Physical impurity can be easily tackled through time tested methods of religion. As for the psychical impurities that are stored in us as samskaras, real aspiration alone through cleaning processes graciously bestowed on us by the Master can help in tackling these. Unless the aspiration is real there are always chances that the aspirant may leave sadhana due to

- various effects that purification of samskaras bring in its wake which are testing the ego of the aspirant.
- 2.3 We therefore aspire through proper processes of purification, proper meditation and proper contemplation. Methods of Aspiration cover aspects of both meditation and prayer. In the practices adopted in the Western countries, there were many saints who did not give much attention for meditation. They realized God through prayer. He who is praying feels he has an inner cry to realize God and he who is meditating also feels the need to bring God's consciousness right into his being. The difference between prayer and meditation is this" when I pray I talk and God listens; and when I meditate, God talks and I listen."
 - 2.4 In our system of sadhana we adopt the methods of Prayer, Meditation and also purificatory practices so as to deserve to be called an aspirant.
 - 2.5 Aspiration we find thus leads us to a state where we seek the Divine through our entire being. The various desires of the physical, vital and mental planes need to be given up for achieving this state. Longing for the Divinity is the only mode of the aspirant and under this condition he starts yielding to the demands such an aspiration warrants. Such an yielding attitude to the Will of God leads him to the state of surrender. Surrender may thus be considered as man's conscious oneness with God's Will.