

My Guru, My Guide !

~ Saheli Sheth (Peoria, USA)

Imagine with me: a world where God's energy flows through all of us. In this world, we would rise above all the emotions that come with this body: materialistic happiness, anxiety, sadness, stress, anger, and so on. This vision is not too far out of reach, but only because a guru is there to guide us.

What is the point of a guru if we already have God?

We may all know how to worship God. But how do we learn to kindle God's presence within ourselves? Our guru is the roadmap to this. We may have a destination in mind (i.e., getting closer to God), but **it is our guru who shows us the way.**

A couple of years ago, I reached out to Sadguru Sant Param Pujya Manojdasji about my work anxiety. I expressed feeling incompetent in my job. Manojdasji candidly explained that this anxiety arose because I thought that 'I' was the one doing the work. Instead, he suggested that I let 'God' work through me. To paraphrase his wisdom:

When our ego thinks that 'I' have to do a task, or that 'I' am competent enough to do a task, then **God** will step back and let **the ego** work. Then, **God becomes a spectator!**

Instead, let's have **the ego** be the **spectator**, and let **God** work!

How do we allow God to work through us?

Manojdasji guided me to start every morning, and eventually, **every moment**, by praying for God to work through me. Each evening, he encouraged me to be thankful for God's grace.

I tried this prayer in my mind while sitting across from a patient. Initially, those words carried a desperate tone: "God, **PLEASE** work through me!!!!" Yet, I still noticed a powerful shift. The thoughts that I used to have — "I have no idea what I'm doing" or "my patients will realize I'm bad at this" — no longer had space in my mind, because I couldn't think two things at once. **This continuous prayer silenced my negative thoughts.**

Over time, the words "God, work through me" become peaceful, an invitation for God to join me. Beyond that, they served as an invitation for *me* to remember my God and guru, and that they are with me.

Through this practice, Manojdasji taught me to rely on God instead of my perceived strengths. Believing 'I' was doing the work left me feeling defeated if my performance wasn't "good enough." However, when I let 'God' work through me, it became easier to accept the results as His wish.

We may often hear about "self-confidence," or *being confident in our own ability*, but what our guru teaches us is "God-confidence" — *being confident in God's ability.*

Even in seemingly mundane ways, Manojdasji teaches us how to get closer to God. Recently, some *satsangis* and I went to Taco Bell. Before calling Manojdasji to seek his guidance about one of the *satsangi's* careers, we had a quick dinner at Taco Bell and tried their mango tea. Upon picking up the phone, Manojdasji said, "Oh, you are at Taco Bell! Everyone purchased a new drink today, right?"

We exchanged surprised glances; how did he know? Manojdasji continued, "Thakorji really enjoyed the food as *prasad*, but no one asked Thakorji which drink He wanted." We took away the lesson to make meals a part of our daily conversation with God: asking Him for His preferences and remembering Him before each meal.

This is what our guru does. **He teaches us to transform our lives into an ongoing conversation with God.** Every morning is an invitation for God to join us throughout the day, every meal is a dialogue about what God would like to eat through us, and every night is a prayer of gratitude.

Without our guru, we might still pray and worship God. However, with our guru as our guide, we have the vast privilege of learning how to become **best friends with God**, carrying Him with us throughout our day, and ultimately, throughout our lives.

In every aspect of our lives — whether working, doing *seva*, parenting, studying, or interacting with others — may we make this prayer, "God, work through me," our life's heartbeat. ◆

