

Self ♦ Community ♦ Service

BY RAMA JYOTI VERNON

His Holiness The Dalai Lama once said "In our present state of world affairs, the very survival of mankind depends on people developing concern for the whole of humanity, not just their own community or nation."

Today there are immense challenges facing our collective humanity at this time of planetary acceleration. The veil between the seen and the unseen is rapidly disappearing. That which has been lying dormant is now rising to the surface both in the individual and collective conscious of humankind. In this difficult period of readjustment and transformation, there is personal and collective confusion as old structures crumble into the light of the new that has yet to be born.

In the moments of darkness that precede the new dawn, we may ask ourselves, "How can I serve the One source of all creation by serving Self, Community and the World? How can I no longer separate the physical, subtle and causal states of my own consciousness? How can I erase the boundaries between the outstretched hands of the brothers and sisters of the One humanity and my own?"

In true service, we allow the light of the soul to flow through the cells of our inner world to the world around. Service requires vigilance and discrimination. Knowing when to act, when to be still; when to speak; when to be silent; when to give and when to receive. It is holding two points of perspective simultaneously, the personal and collective, the material and spiritual the inner and outer. Service is not a "do-gooder" mentality of helping others who are in need and then feeling resentful because our own well goes dry. It is not "busyness" that leads to disjointed activity and exhaustion. It is the outflow of a loving heart that

*In true service,
one does not lose
energy but is
continuously
restored. It is
not an outer act
within the world as
much as
the inner attitude
that when we give
to another...we
give to Self. It sees
no "others".*

has no bounds, no limitations on its giving. The need or desire to say "no" never arises if the work becomes the worship. It is a continuing pulsating rhythm of the ebb and flow. In true service, one does not lose energy but is continuously restored. It is not an outer act within the world as much as the inner attitude that when we give to another...we give to Self. It sees no "others"

Service follows the rhythms of nature. Transitions of day and night, the rising and setting of the sun and

moon, the flow of the tides, the seasons of the years. There is the time when the server may be called out into the world...and the times when the server will be called into his or her own Self...to restore, to assimilate the valuable lessons learned. Even the dormant periods of our life are a part of service. They are the times when we must become receptive to the guidance that is yet to come. They are the times to sharpen the ears of the soul so that they can be attuned to hearing the quiet voice of the inner Self and the part that it is to play in continuing unfoldment of the Divine plan.

Selfless service is not the forgetfulness of self but the remembrance of Self. Service performed as an evolutionary path becomes a state of "being" rather than doing. Whatever your chosen life's action, there will be periods of strain that are preparatory for the handling of still more work with increased efficiency and speed. You may find yourself living on the verge of new happenings, increased opportunities, fresh complexities and obvious spiritually induced crises. It is in all these moments of we grow. It is in the times of crises that we learn to stand in the turbulent circle of life as a quiet center of calm by mastering the turmoil of life's storms rather than seeking the repressed quiet of a stagnant pool.

How can I find my life's purpose and dedicate my life to service we may ask? Sri Krishna has said in the Bhagavad Gita, "One's own duty performed imperfectly is far better than another's done perfectly" In service, the desire to serve the personality fades into a greater consciousness asking: What is my service at this time? What are the nonessential things in my life that can be released? What is the task to be done? who are the



people I can help? Which aspect of the Universal work should I focus on at this time? To find our purpose in service, we can let simplicity be our guide and one-pointed love, our major objective. In seeking the fulfillment of our life's mission, we may ask ourselves, "How can the spiritual server distinguish the real from the illusory and cultivate a depth of humility that serves asking nothing in return."

The Mission of the spiritual aspirant is to free him or herself from the Great Illusion of Avidya. In the Bhagavad Gita, even Arjuna, representative of the Individual soul succumbed to despair and the forgetfulness of the undying One. In his greatest hour of need before the great battle of Kurushetra, he kneeled before Sri Krishna, the embodiment of the Divine. In the midst of the two warring armies poised waiting to strike, Sri Krishna gave Arjuna the teachings that lifted his individual consciousness into the remembrance of his forgotten heritage. The heritage of the Self, the Atman, the individual Soul that knows no bounds, no conflict, no death, but is eternally at one, peacefully resting in the arms of the Divine South of all creation. what were those teachings?

(1) Know thyself to be the Undying One; (2) Control and understand the mind—for through the mind, the Undying One can be known; (3) Learn that the form (the body) is but the veil which hides the splendor of the Divine; (4) Realize that the One life pervades all forms so that there is no death, no distress, no separation; (5) Detach thyself therefore from the form side and come to Me so dwelling in the Place where Light and Life are found.

This ends the illusion. And in this revelation and remembered recognition, it is possible for one like Arjuna to become a true Karma Yogi and in that state of equanimity step onto the battlefield of life's polarities armed only with the weapons of compassion, understanding and Universal love. It is then we become the true servers of humanity, of community and of Self.