



He did not teach with lectures or through books. He taught by examples and through one-liners, call them *ek vakyas*. A compass provides direction and shows the way out of the wilderness. That was his main business. He was a Mahaguru who not only removed darkness but also taught us to do the same forwards.

Spiritual Compass

Born in a simple family, in a simple town, and having had a simple upbringing, Gurudev should have been steeped in tradition, social norms and common attitudes. But he was not!

He managed to climb out of his skin of conditioning and taught and practiced fair play, rising against the practised ills of society without fear of reprisals from friends, family, and others.

Such attitudes come naturally to those who are advanced in mind and evolved in spirit. Their direction of thoughts and attitudes change from those that are mundane, and lead to paths which are off the beaten track. And hence, they can be considered to be spiritual compasses.

One such was he.

Bindu Lalwani elaborates.

Bindu ji: “One beautiful word that maybe covers everything - ‘*Sahaj*’. *Bhakti* with him was *sahaj*- very simple and achievable. There was nothing preached that was difficult to achieve...baby steps...baby steps, and a very simplistic way of spirituality. It was not turning into a *sanyaasi*. It was staying within the parameters of *grihastha*. You have to have children, you have to get married, you have to fulfil your duties towards your siblings, your parents, children, your household and at the same time complete detachment. Detachment within attachment is what he

preached. You are not allowed to disappear on anybody, you have to be available to everybody. So, you have to be available to your parents, your children, your business and your bhakti.

The race was not between us but with ourselves. We had to better the tunings of our spirits. Constant reflection and correction became a practice. The same continues and we keep looking for weeds to pluck and improvements to sow.

It is not easy to follow a spiritual mentor who is miles and miles ahead. The memory of him is the motivation for us and we would like to share his teachings with many more.

How did Bittu ji view the mahaguru's magnetic north is worth a listen!

Bittu ji: He really tried to make society a better one. He was against dowry and unnecessary expenditure on weddings. My marriage, my brothers' marriages and brother Pappu sardar's wedding, he is older than me—all were conducted at sthan without spending or taking a rupee from us. Whatever langar was there, we were married there. Guruji used to say, "Son, we have to set an example in society that no one thinks women are a burden."

And secondly, he used to say, "Whoever gives you their daughter, gives you everything. The biggest charity (daan) is *kanyadaan*." With Guruji's blessings, Guruji gave us wisdom.

What was most important about him was his belief in social welfare (jan-sewa). Not only at Gurgaon sthan but everywhere you go, serve people. He used to say, "Prayers (Paath) have a limit, but seva does not have any limit. The more seva you do, the almighty will look out for you as much. If you take time out for his creations, he will take time out for you."

My take on kanyadaan is as follows: Since a woman belongs to the family of her husband after marriage and all her obligations are to the ancestors of her husband's family, the implications are immense. Another family gave her birth and looked after her for decades, and

then gifted their asset, in whom they were heavily invested, to another family.

No small gift that.

Gurudev was partial towards women whom he considered to be manifestations of Shakti. He advocated that we treat the ladies in our lives with care and respect. He reiterated that their positive vibrations and emotions would help us grow spiritually.

The compass was easy to read but often hard to follow.

The disciples who ill-treated women encountered his wrath. He advocated spiritual advancement through the Grihastha Ashram where Shakti was a partner.

Uma Prabhu was an eager learner of Gurudev's philosophy. A silent observer and deep thinker. He summarised the concept of gunas for her in just a few sentences.

Uma Prabhu ji: He used to tell me you know, "Puttar, it's not enough." I don't know, he used to speak in Punjabi and Hindi but the essence I am going to tell you, "Puttar it is not enough that you do mantra, you should consciously change your conduct. Nothing like looking at your own self and finding that this is it, plugging the loopholes in your personality." I have been doing that constantly.

An interesting secret that I learnt was that qualities can and do get magnetised ...so beware.

Criticism of others magnetises those qualities into us making us acquire the very attributes which we criticised.

When we were criticised, he would say we were being done a favour unto and should distribute mithai or sweetmeats. Though, I found this hard to understand initially, I realised what he meant with practice. So, I have decided to share this learning with you.

An interesting yogic secret is that you will acquire the qualities of that upon which you meditate. If you want courage, meditate on the lion.

For speed, meditate on the horse. For strength, meditate on the elephant and so on and so forth. I decided I would meditate on him for he was my destination. His qualities, my aspiration. His nature, my ambition.

If you ask me, I think it did bring about a change in my disposition. I have learnt to think like him. At least partially, if not fully. So have many of my Guru bhais.

Gurudev wanted us all to become a part of the 'blue man show'. His teachings were crisp and consistent like an artist who wanted to colour our caricatures in blue, but if only we did not block the strokes. His insistence was on fair play and best practises. Further, he wanted us to be debt free and not accept obligations, and favours.

Givers and not takers were we to be.

Bittu ji adds.

Bittu ji: He always taught us to speak the truth without being afraid of anyone, as whatever has to happen, will happen. He taught us to face any problems in life.

Rajpal ji was the recipient of his unique teachings. Though he was caught unawares, he realised the depth with which his Guru looked at things. For him it was an insight into the inconceivable. His learnings follow.

Rajpal ji: There was this programme of mine to go to Singapore. I had told Guruji the entire programme that I was going to Singapore. My flight was the next day and I had to take blessings from Guruji. Then Guruji said to me in a very taunting way, "My son is going to deceive the world today." I asked him, "Me? I haven't deceived anyone." He said, "If you haven't, then probably you are going to deceive someone"

I asked him who I was going to deceive. He said, "You're going to Singapore". I said I was going to see a factory. "There is a dye, a machine

which makes sinks on an AD sheet. On the same sheet, you can make the drain board and the bowl. I said to Guruji, till that day, we were making sinks, drain boards and bowls on different sheets and we would join them together—that's called a drain board sink. I have heard that in Singapore, there is a factory which has a particular dye and a sheet that makes both of them on the same sheet without any welding". Guruji asked me if I was going to see that. I said yes. Then he said, "You haven't told them that you are going to see the machine. You've told them that you are a buyer, that you will buy 10,000 sinks—only then will they come to the airport to pick you up." I said, "Guruji, you know everything." He said "Yes son, I know." So I asked "But how have I deceived them in this?" Guruji said, "You haven't only deceived them, you've broken their heart as well, because you don't want to buy the sinks—which will cause their hearts to break and cause them pain. And you are just going to look, when they are making arrangements for you, sending a car to pick you up from the airport—you are deceiving them." I said, "Guruji, this is 101% true but Guruji I don't know how to make a dye that makes the bowl and the drain board at once." Guruji said, "Son, I will teach you." He had kept his hands on my chest and said that. I cancelled my trip at the same moment. 15 days later, it was Bada Veerwar (big Thursday) and a lot of people had come. When my turn finished, I came and lay down on a bed in the small room in front of the sthan. I lay down on the bed to sleep. I didn't know I was sleeping, but I wasn't even awake. There was this thought about the dye at the back of my mind. The blueprint of the entire dye, with all its dimensions and curvatures, with the radius as well, appeared in front of my eyes. I opened my eyes. I was in Gurgaon. I opened my eyes to see only the room's walls. I closed my eyes again. Again, the blueprints came in my mind. The entire drawing of the dye was before me, but when my eyes were closed. When I opened my eyes, everything used to vanish. I went to the factory the next day and called my head foreman (laughter). I told him, "Ratan Singhji, the dye is supposed to be made like this." After discussions, Ratan Singh tells me, "Bauji, this is no design for a dye. Are you joking? You are a technical man yourself." I told him this was the design. He said, "Bauji, your age must be around 45-46. My age is 70. I

have been working for 45 years, and there is no design like this.” I told him, “Ratan Singhji, we have to make it.”

(And it was made?)

I told him we have to make it. Ratan Singh said we would lose Rs 50,000. I said, Ratan Singhji, I have saved Rs 50, 000 for this work, for this experience. So Ratan Singh started making the dye according to my instructions. First stroke and it was a winner. After making the dye, we tied it to the press, tied it to the machine and drew a sink—in one stroke, the result was okay. I thought, my God, Guruji is an engineer as well. He didn’t train me—he gave me the entire blueprint of the dye in Gurgaon when I was sleeping.”

Normally the Mahaguru would engineer not the sink but the float! A lot of his time was spent in training his disciples and teaching them how to motivate others. Our divinity to us was a secret. It was caged within. He would put key to lock and unleash it.

Observe, assess and overhaul was his recommendation.

I have always admired Rajpal ji’s lovely long ears. I wonder if they were adjusted by Gurudev. Some of us were lucky to be reprimanded by him. That helped to expand our spiritual growth and steer us on the right path.

Different readings shown by the same compass to Rajpal ji.

Rajpal ji: I went to my guruji. He put his hand on my head and blessed me, like he always did. As I stood up very happily, Guruji said, “Raje, you’ve come here after abusing your factory’s workers.” There wasn’t a telephone then, there was no way of communication, there wasn’t a messenger as well.

I asked him, “Guruji, who told you?” He said, “I am your guru. Whenever I want, I just need to turn and I can see you—whenever I am in the mood.” Then I said, “Guruji, only you are capable of such deeds. I have never

heard about this before that I did something in Delhi and you can see me from here (Gurgaon). Guruji, I will tell you the reason why I abused the worker, you please don't be angry with me. He made us go into a loss, it was his mistake." Guruji then said, "Everyone does losses and mistakes, son. There isn't any human who doesn't commit a mistake or create a loss. But he works for you, he makes things for you, he makes your sinks inside the factory, and on top of that you abuse him." I got a bit argumentative and said, "Guruji, I pay him a salary." Then Guruji said, "Raje, his salary is because of his fate. You are bound to give, and he is supposed to take. His karma creates goods in your factory, on which you make a profit, from which you buy your cars and make your house—that's his karma. For you, it's a debt."

My God, I had never heard this. A factory's owner is actually grateful to his workers. Guruji said, "Yes son."

He helped inspire a sea change in Ashok Bhalla's personality. He subtracted the three A's of Ashok ji's attitude-namely, anger, arrogance and aggression!

There still remained plenty of A's in Ashok Bhalla's name so I guess he was hardly a loser.

Ashok ji: Normally people avoid troubles and I use to look for the troubles. (laughs)

Q: So, were you one of those types who were physically very aggressive to people?

Ashok ji: Yes, I was. I was quite aggressive.

Q: How much transformation has taken place?

Ashok ji: Yes, there is a tremendous amount of transformation, not only about the anger and violence and all these things, but overall transformation. There is a different perspective is there now to look at

these things, my response to the different situations is now very different than earlier.

Q: How did you achieve this transformation?

Ashok ji: Thinking pattern which was - How really to respond to a situation? After I met Guruji, on my second meeting, he told me to stop getting angry, and I agreed. The next time I met him, he asked me, "Could you control your anger? I thought for a while and said, "No, I could not. During the period from last meeting to this meeting, 5-6 days, I have hit so many people. But I'll try."

I could never lie to him. I tried repeatedly but I could not help. Only thing was, the duration between incidents of hitting somebody had increased, like earlier it used to be frequent but then it came to like weeks, month, two months, like that but it did not completely stop. But after about 3 years, I felt very bad, very humiliated, that why Guruji has to ask me again and again and I have to cut a very sorry figure. Then I made up my mind that, from today onwards, come what may, I will not lift my hand on anybody. And I was very successful.

Q: So Guruji inspired you?

Ashok ji: He wouldn't say anything, he only asked me, "Now do you still get angry? Did you control yourself?"

Q: He never lectured you?

Ashok ji: He never lectured me. But the way he would ask you, it was something beyond asking only. I can't really pinpoint what it was. But that inspired me to control my anger. Then I was very happy for about 3 months, I didn't pick any quarrel. At 3 or 4 months and during that period Guruji never asked me "Son now do you get angry?" Otherwise, he always used to ask me but, in that period, he never asked me and I wanted him to ask me so that I could say. (laughs)

Then after 3 or 4 months, an unfortunate incident happened. Someone had stolen a thing, I was trying to talk to him very nicely to give it back to me, I needed it very badly. He did not listen, so I lost my head and hit him.

I did not hit him much, but I hit him. Then I said I should not have, I made a mistake, I came back to my office and I was feeling very sorry. Suddenly I realized because of this man my entire tapasya of 5-6 months have gone to waste. (laughs) Then I went back and hit him like nobody's business.

There was an iron rod lying, I picked it to hit him, but suddenly I felt someone held my hand. The rod got stuck, I looked that there was no one behind me and there was wall behind me and so nobody has really done it. But with that very action I was completely gone and very guilty and came back to my office. I got the man treated. Everything. Now that's not important. And in the evening, I went to sthan. That very day and as soon as I opened the door, guruji asked me, "Son, do you get angry now?"

I was so used to training myself to say "No, I don't, No. I don't" that I immediately said, "No." Then I thought of telling him what had happened, and thought that there are many people here, I will go and explain later that I lost my temper today. He made me stay there for quite some time. I tried to talk to him, but he ignored it. Also, when everyone had left the place, he still ignored it. When I tried to talk, he just put the finger on lips to say that keep quiet. Later after half hour or 45 mins, he said, "If someone in your presence and you are looking at it, takes out some cash from the cashbox, and then when you ask him have you taken some cash out of the box he says no, then you forget what you have seen and you only believe what he said".

(Wow)

First, I was trying to understand what guruji was trying to communicate to me. Then immediately I realized that this is what had happened today. I hit that person. He said "I have not stolen". I knew he had stolen, as there was circumstantial evidence, the other staff members were telling me, and I too knew he has stolen. But even if you see with your eyes and the person is denying. That was the day I promised, from now onwards my way of thinking will be this way, and no other.

Q: Did it work finally?

Ashok ji: It's working till date. I am sticking to it. In fact, I am not sticking to it, this has become my personality now.

This is how the monster became a minstrel and now a muse of my amusement!

Giri Lalwani was another who was taught a lesson by Gurudev. He tried his best to duck but then how do you duck a yorker? An interesting story narrated by the man himself.

Giri ji: Actually, what happened was, I used to visit my factory daily and there a worker did some mistake, so I slapped him. At night when I came back home, my sister opened the door and said "Guruji, has called for you." So, I took the phone and spoke to him, did pranaam. Guruji said to me "Beta, now you have become big." I said "Guruji, I didn't understand. What do you mean by 'Big'?" He said "Now you have become rich so you are allowed to slap people lower to you or your workers. Son, no worries, I will fracture your arm." I said "Guruji, I made a mistake." He replied "Beta, it just came out of my mouth". So, I thought, now I can't do anything, no worries, forget it. I hung up the phone. I didn't go to the factory for 3 days out of fear, thinking that I am bound to fracture my arm. The fourth day, on my father's request I went to the factory. I sat in between my father and my uncle thinking that I won't get my arm fractured this way. We reached the factory and my father and uncle left for office in Kalbadevi and left me there alone leaving a message for me saying come back home with your cousins. I called my cousin so he said "You come here and from here we will drop you to Khar." I said to him "Please come here as Guruji had told me that he will fracture my arm." He said "No, nothing of such will happen. You come with your scooter." I was driving the scooter at 10 km/per hour speed to reach my cousin. Suddenly, I don't know, something happened and I fell from my scooter and fractured my arm. I understood that this was done by Guruji only and nothing else. So, I fractured my shoulder and arm on the left side. I called up my cousin. He came there and picked

me up and dropped me home. I rang the doorbell and my sister opened the door and said “Guruji has called.” I took the phone and said “Guruji, pranaam.” He said “Yes son, what happened?” I replied “Guruji, you did what you wanted to do. You broke my arm.” He said “I was wondering ‘Bakre ki maa kab tak khair manayegi (how long will you manage to avoid the inevitable?)’ What you thought, for 3 days you will be left without punishment? What you think making a guru is an easy task?” So, this incident has happened with me.

Krishan Mohan ji from Durgapur shares with us some of the directions that he got from Gurudev.

Q: So, what did Gurudev teach you?

Kishanmohan ji: “Now, you have come to me. Now beta, whatever I give you only that you will have to eat.” He used to tell me, “I’m giving you my blessings that you will never ask for any help for yourself and whatever you eat will be from your hard-earned money only even if it’s a handful of chanas. (chick peas)”

It’s been forty years today since I have been associated with Gurudev. In these 40 years and even today, I have never felt the urge to ask Gurudev for anything for myself. I only ask for the sthan, for the devotees.

The next query is to Giri Lalwani. What did he learn from Gurudev about harmony with nature and its elements?

Giri ji: He used to say plant trees, and do cultivation and save Earth. He would never say “Save Earth” directly but he would say, “Buy land, do cultivation.” He used to take me to the farmhouse and make me plant trees. He never allowed me to kill or hit any animal or any dog, he used to ask me to rear a dog, a black dog especially. He would never allow me to kick or hurt any animal. That was his message, live in harmony.

As nature and its elements react with a consciousness of their own, I guess there are two sides to a coin.

In Devraj's case, hurting nature had a recoil. Nature seems to have hurt him back. Can this really happen? Devraj will tell.

Q: Now we will go to the very unusual experience Devraj that you had with nature. If you can please explain that to us?

Devraji ji: So, this is been one of the most intriguing experiences of my life. And at some point, of time I have learned to correlate it with the concept of consciousness. And the concept of healing so I'm going to share with you in that context. Periodically, we go to Lonavala where we have a home. And the home has a very vast garden with a lot of trees. I used to take it upon myself to ensure that the trees are well taken care of. Also, that the society or the compound goes neat and clean. And one of the aspects that was involved was ensuring that the trees were well trimmed. So, one such case, 5 or 6 years back, I noticed that one of the trees is required a significant amount of trimming. It was also attracting a lot of insects and hence, all the more necessities what I felt. So, I caught hold of the local gardener. And I very intriguingly explained to him as to how he has to go about in trimming this tree which he agreed to do exactly as what I had said and stood there and got it done myself. But the next morning when I got up, I realized I have been bitten all over my body. Until we came after 2 or 3 weeks, I noticed that there were some creepers that were out of line in the society compounds. Again, I caught hold of the gardener and I told him to trim these creepers so that they don't climb on the tube lights and there are no other issues. And I made sure enough that he did as I had asked him to. Again, the next morning when I got up, I saw that I had been bitten all over my body. Now this time I found it weird because we had stayed a couple of nights in Lonavla and I wondered why bedbugs would wait for 48 hrs to start biting. And I began to wonder whether it had anything to do with the trees that I had trimmed. I let it be because we had left for Bombay a few days later. But when I

came back to Lonavla the 3rd time, I thought I'll have to test this out. This correlation with nature or the relationship with consciousness. And I made it a point without noticing anything to take a gardener along with me and ask him to trim a particular tree. And as he did that, I could feel a weird sensation in my body because I can't explain, more like a tingling sensation. And sure enough the next morning I got up. I was bitten all over my body. I realized that this is got something to do with my instructions to the gardener who had trimmed the trees. I went to the tree who I had got it trimmed, I folded my hands and asked for forgiveness, promising never to do it again. And so strong was this connection with nature that just a couple of years back, I was taking an evening walk in Lonavla in the complex and this time the gardener mentioned to me how the snakes come in all the palm trees because of the way the greeneries camouflaged. And I instinctively told him that he should trim the palm trees. I realized that I was feeling a sensation in my left hand. I corrected myself and little bit my lip and I told him "Don't tell me anything about the trees. What you are doing? Whether you are trimming them or there are snakes or anything like that." Because I can have no role to play in obstructing its nature.

Did nature bite Devraj in the form of bedbugs? Or did Devraj's higher consciousness want to teach him a lesson? Did his aatma punish itself? These questions are not easy to fathom and the answers are even harder to decipher. I do believe this story has deeper meanings and uncanny teachings.

I asked Ravi Trehan ji about Gurudev's views on death. He shares what he learnt.

Q: What do you think was his view on death?

Ravi ji: Frankly, whatever interaction I had with him, death according to him was something that does not exist really. Just the five tatvas (elements) disintegrate, and that's exactly what he meant by death.

Q: This is what he meant, or you think he meant?

Ravi ji: That's what he had shared in simple and straight words any number of times—that death as such does not exist, and he had proved it on a number of occasions by showing certain instances of our past lives to indicate there has been a continuity. And there has been no break as such.

What Gurudev made me realise was that the afterlife was a continuum but a different vibration and a much more subtle form. By making me have several Out of the Body Experiences, he made me see the variations between the gross body and the subtle one.

The learning was that this physical incarnation, though far more cumbersome, was one of greater magnetic qualities. It needed to play the role of the workhorse for the subtle one. It needed to evolve in power, quality and realisations. Using this body, like he did, could lead to the improvement of one's long-term status in the universe.

A one liner from Dr Shankar Narayan follows. Five words that can become five chapters in explanation. Do listen to what he has to say with rapt attention.

Dr Shankarnarayan ji: You can become Shiva yourself. You can become Shiva yourself. You can become Shiva yourself. This is what he told.

This was not an error of editing, just repetition and re-repetition for effect.

What sounds like a nice sentence from the 'good book' was something Gurudev had attained and hence had the right to recommend. Unfortunately for most of us at that time, it was a quote to share but not one we believed was meant for us to achieve. Though the compass

was pointing in the right direction, we had not learnt how to align the N with the arrow.

After hundreds of experiences and years of contemplation on his teachings, we are now open to the idea that the chameleon in us can certainly turn blue.

Finally, after multiple slips and stumbles, we have started seeing divinity within ourselves, with an immense desire to share our screen with others.

An intellectual mind that has been exposed to or has been in the acquaintance of an evolved being would not like the journey to end. The hope is for generation after generation to take up the mantle of helping and healing others, thereby evolving to higher rungs on the spiritual ladder.

History is replete with great saints who've had no more than just a few generations of evolved disciples, thereafter becoming objects of reverence and inspiration to religion. Unfortunately, most religious heads cannot emulate the experiences of their masters and merely parrot their teachings. To this end, I pray that Gurudev will not switch off the button and pull the plug on training and harnessing the potential of spiritual growth and accomplishments.

Uma Prabhu echoes my sentiment.

Q: So now that he has passed on at the physical level, he has left behind lots of devotees, followers and disciples and people who believe strongly in him, who have acquired so many spiritual assets that he helped them to acquire. So, what should be the follow up now? How do you think we should take this forward or should we just remember him with reverence and pray, and do our personal sadhna?

Uma Prabhu ji: I think that we should take forward his legacy. So Gurudev's, that whole ocean of gyan, it is still there. All of us have partaken from that. And I think it is very necessary that more and more

people know about it. Everything is a relay race. We give a baton that has to be taken forward.

Q: Beautifully put.

A compass shows you the straight north no matter where you turn. If you go off track, it guides you back. The challenge is to trust the compass and not the vagaries of misdirection.

Gurudev's teachings appear in various podcasts of this series, and extraction will be your jigsaw to piece together. This audio biography has a lot for you to learn and much more for you to unlearn.

He was and is the leading light who made the path easier to follow. Let's walk the path he forged, together!

*Sune sab raaste pade hue thakan se choor
Sune sab raaste pade hue thakan se choor
Rahi kaun batayega manzil kitni dur
Manzil kitni dur.*