

Sharing and Donating as Spiritual Practice: Gurudakshina & Dasvandh

By SS Sat Siri Singh Khalsa

The great challenge in “spiritual” life is that the experience of our personal, separated existence with its needs and fears is not always in compliance with the teachings of Oneness of everything and Divine Identity in every part of creation. Most Sadhana and practice aims long-term to resolve this conflict.

However, the separated self - the ego - tends to establish a possessive relationship between the apparent doer - the ego itself - and any technique or practice applied, and then claims both effort and effect for itself. Like this, the ego gains and might even become what some call a “spiritual ego.” The idea of surrender did not come from the ego, unless it is pretending.

The techniques of selfless service (Seva) and renunciation (Sanyas) are designed to disrupt this process by not allowing the ego to experience the satisfaction of the claim. This is not easy and usually painful for the ego. Seva is not a moral approach of doing “good” things, but simply a technique of action that does not allow the ego to claim anything.

The same process can be applied to personality and matter. Normally, the ego has established strong possessive relationships to everything we believe to be and own. Sharing, giving away, renouncing or losing things, relationships or reputations of “importance” has basically the same effect on the ego like Seva: The nature of the relationship is questioned, the energy of the relationship is challenged and dissolved, and so is the ego itself.

The illusion of our personal, separated being and its possessive and demanding nature veils the fact that all its relationships are temporary, so we experience pain and grief once they inevitably come to an end. This message is iterated on every page of all sacred scriptures.

But once we train our minds to adopt the perspective that nothing is ours to begin with, never was, never will be, the possessiveness of the relationships ceases, and so does the ego itself. Once we recognise that it is not our insurance companies and our pension plans which ultimately take care of us and our families, but the Power that has created everything (and that is our One True Identity), we can change our priorities in relating to the world and to our lives and deaths.

Guru Amardas writes in the Anand Sahib:

ਤਨੁ ਮਨੁ ਧਨੁ ਸਭੁ ਸਉਪਿ ਗੁਰ ਕਉ ਹੁਕਮਿ ਮੰਨਿਐ ਪਾਈਐ ॥

*Surrender body, mind, wealth, and everything to the Guru;
obey the Order of His Will, so you find and obtain.*

That fact that we have to give everything if we would like to be true to our commitment as students and teachers of the Divine gives us a new and more relaxed perspective on sharing and donating “our” earnings and possessions in general. What a sweet and humble taster of the ultimate donation we are due, to just share 10% and/or 11% of our earnings as Dasvandh to the community and/or Gurudakshina to our teachers, respectively!

Why not try it now?

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Read more about Dasvandh & Gurudakshina wihtin 3HO:

www.dasvandh.org

www.ikyta.org/history-gurudakshina