

## Anasura Devi

*"I've always been this way. I was this way before I was born, I'm this way now, and I'll be this way when you think I've gone."*

Anasura Devi was born 1923, in a small East Indian village. Both her mother and father of high Brahman caste had beatific visions regarding the child about to be born. They did not know what these meant. Upon birth there was no crying nor was there any apparent need for nutrition. From birth she exhibited extraordinary qualities, markedly spiritual. She would be found sitting in a full-lotus position, later discovered to be in samadhi, the highest state of consciousness possible for human beings a state of complete bliss. She was, from birth, able to effortlessly enter this state.

During early childhood, upon being fed solid foods, they would be excreted in the same form as when eaten there being no apparent digestion process.

Her parents, not yet realizing the child's nature, thought she had a serious medical condition. They sought various cures, none of which affected the desired end of normalcy. One such attempt to help her took them to an old healer who draped a garland of poisonous herbs around her neck. She tore off the garland and ate the herbs, with no harmful effects.

As a little girl she would often get into trouble when found taking the family's extra food into the village giving it to the poor, often feeding them with her own hand thus violating ancient Hindu caste custom. Later in life, Anasura was asked her view of the caste system, she replied, "The only caste I recognize is the caste of the sperm and the egg." Like Gandhi, she utterly rejected the caste system.

At three years old, Anasura's mother lay dying. She told of a vision that revealed Anasura as being the "Divine Mother." She was now to live with her uncle. Her uncle thought, too, that there was something still unusual needing to be cured. He enrolled her into a Christian boarding school for a year. This complex included a hospital. Here she was to become well. She acted well, conforming to all the standards. During this time she affected positive changes in the school, staff and clientele all benefiting from her presence.

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At the age of four, she was taken to a yogi to receive her first initiation in the form of a mantra. She spent five hours with the yogi. When they emerged from his dwelling, he was in tears, thanking her for being allowed to be in her presence. He called her the Divine Mother. During this, her first initiation, Anasura was the initiator. At the age of twenty-six, the traditional age for the adult initiation, she again became the initiator instead of the initiated.

In many philosophical and spiritual traditions, students are taught, from a young age, to develop a facility to debate different sides of the same issue, thereby attaining mental flexibility, avoiding fixed positions. By the age of 9, Anasura was so proficient at this skill that she was able to win debates with highly respected holy men and scholars. She had been taught neither how to debate nor of the often abstruse philosophical positions. Many who came to debate with this child remained to learn.

When, at the age of thirteen, Anasura was informed she was to marry a second cousin. She laughed. She then repeated, verbatim, a conversation she had overheard between her parents and this young man's parents when she was two months old. She recalled the conversation in detail, "Oh, here's little Anasura. Some day she's going to marry our son." This was not unusual as she had total recall of every event in her life. Once married, she fulfilled the duties of a Hindu wife with great joy. She said, "This is part of my dharma and I'm quite happy to do it."

Anasura birthed three children, one being a daughter born with the gift of healing by touch, sometimes a glance, sometimes from a distance. Sadly, she died at the age of twenty-three.

"I have to go on a spiritual journey, and I want you to guard my body while I'm gone," she said to a medical doctor of her acquaintance. "I will be gone eleven days. My body will appear to be dead." He answered her request, coming to her abode. He watched over her body, possessing no vital signs for the full eleven days. Upon return of vital signs, Anasura appeared as usual, as if nothing had occurred.

Unconditional love flowed to whom all she met independently of all earthly categories. She loved all equally; she loved everybody. This pure love flowed from her being as the Light from the Sun.

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Because most of the villagers were poor, Anasura established a food kitchen. Never knowing the number of people who would need food on a given day, there was always enough food for all. On several occasions when there were more people than food, additional food would as if by magic appear. As time passed, she established many such kitchens in her region that were all free, no charge to anybody. She also made available free accommodations to those in need and established three schools, one of which specialized in the teaching of Sanskrit. She thought India was becoming too Westernized, and sought to preserve its ancient teachings, most of which remained in Sanskrit. She established a community in which all were radically equal there being no leader or hierarchy. All were treated with loving-kindness whether they had been there years or one day.

She never had a teacher, never read a spiritual text, never walked a path, and never became fully enlightened. When asked, "When did you become fully enlightened?" She replied, "I've always been this way. I was this way before I was born, I'm this way now, and I'll be this way when you think I've gone."

Occasionally people would hand her a spiritual text. She would casually flip through it, sometimes commenting, usually not. Other times she would ask a person to read aloud a particular passage. "I have," she repeatedly said, "no teaching, no pupils, no disciples, no followers."

She ate little, perhaps one or two cups of coffee in the morning and a little broth in the evening. Sometimes, however, Anasura would be seen eating voraciously. On one such occasion she was asked, "Why are you suddenly eating so much?" "Because there are some holy men fasting, almost to the point of death, so by my eating, I am saving their lives." Her life was not confined to the location of her body.

Anasura was thirty-three years old when a very old sage-like woman said, "Anasura, you must start initiating people. This is your role in life. You are fully realized. You have to start initiating people." Thus began Anasura's initiation of others.

One of these occasions brought six hundred people present to her little village. They had come to receive a mantra. To properly impart a mantra typically requires three

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to five minutes. She accomplished imparting mantras to six hundred people in less than two hours.

When asked, “Do you have a message for people?” Anasura replied, “A message? I have nothing of that name. I have not given anything as a message as if I ever thought that what we're doing could do anything. That which makes things happen and that which happens that is the message. If you can do it, eat what you have with contentment, give to others with loving care, and have faith that God is doing everything.”

Though Anasura said she had no message, she did have teachings. Her teachings are to be found in biographies and on the Internet.

She loved the sinner as much as the saint. She did not believe in sin, in evilonly goodness. For her, all is manifestation of God, genderless, omnipresent. She rejected all forms of dualism, on whatever plane. When asked what is God? She replied, “There is no need to search for God. God is before you at all times. You are not a manifestation of God, God is manifesting as you.”

She made a distinction between that aspect of God, which cannot be knownever non-manifest, and God as all manifestation. In order to realize the Truth of the latter, one must develop equanimity towards all that occurs, a deep sense of contentment. Any other condition implies a duality. One must rid oneself of the conception that there exists a doer. To move in this direction requires deeply pondering upon the concept of Shakti, “the energy of God.” This is the expression of God’s will. Shakti, itself, is the doer, the perceiver of all. The conception that we are making free choices is root delusion of the doer. Does this mean that our lives are determined? Anasura maintains that everyone has “a good fate,” the only difference being that for some it is sooner and for some it is later.

Anasura teaches that if one is to meditate, for example, Shakti determines whether it occurs. If one is to walk a path, Shakti determines. “If one chooses to meditate, meditate upon meditation itself.” Never do anything for a result, rather do everything for its own sake. This becomes effortless the more deeply Shakti is realized. “If Shakti wants you to practice, you will practice. And if Shakti doesn't want you to

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practice, you won't practice.” To address various conditions of followers’ thinking modes, she sometimes paradoxically used dualistic language. “Think: you are all; all is your doing. You are all; all is your doing. There is no I anywhere in this. We are never the doer of actions. The one alone who emanates this universe is the sole doer of all actions.”

“The creation itself is the most awe-inspiring miracle. What other miracle do you need? There is no greater miracle than love and good will for one and all.” Though there is only one doer, Anasura says that one must always continue trying, leaving the results to be as they are. She speaks of a universal law. “Most fortunately it seems to be a universal law that whenever one lets go of trying to change something and simply flows contentedly with whatever is arising, then the previously judged ‘sinful’ or ‘problematic situation’ sooner or later spontaneously rectifies itself.” Therefore in trying to get people to stop negatively judging themselves and trying to change themselves, Anasura helped them to let God, the sole reality, transform everything into more godly fashion. “Delusion is not feeling that He alone performs every action.” Stated in another way, “Everything is necessary in creation...even alcoholism. That alone is why they have been created. There is not a single unnecessary thing in creation.” The eighteenth century philosopher, Spinoza, had taught the same, “Freedom is the recognition of necessity.”

Renunciation lies in “experiencing everything that comes without becoming tarnished by it.” Using pure, intuitive logic she conjectured, “Feel happy over takes place. Do not worry over what does not.”

“Tell us the way to redemption, Mother.” She answers, “If you go through all difficulties happily, taking them as no difficulties, that is the way to redemption. If you believed that the giver of all, He Himself, is causing difficulties and experience everything with contentment, that is the way to redemption.”

Speaking of herself she said, “Mine is a state. Mine is a state of knowledge ignorance. I do not know what I know.” Upon being asked which practice allowed her to obtain enlightenment, she answered, “None, my child. I did not even light a lamp before the family shrine for my own benefit. I simply enjoyed every experience whether it was good, bad, or indifferent from birth.”

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Should one be criticized in any way, Anasura teaches us to bow our heads. “Whatever the criticism leveled against you is itself spiritual discipline. There is no discipline greater than this.” Indeed, rather than being chagrined about being chastised, Anasura would say one would find laughter more beneficial, “Laughter alone should permeate life. While playing, if you have a fall, do you not laugh?”

Before she died in 1983, Anasura reminded us, “I will be continuing to help you after I am gone.”

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