

Dattatreya's 24 Gurus of Nature

Number	Guru	Observation	Dattatreya's Learning
1.	Earth	Steadfastly productive, does its dharma, gets abused, heals and is steady in giving nourishment.	Forbearance, remain undisturbed even if oppressed, keep healing even if others injure you
2.	Wind	Passes through everything and everyone, unchanged, unattached, like Truth; sometimes becomes a gale, disturbs and changes the world, like Truth.	Be free like the wind, yet resolute true to your own force
3.	Sky	The highest has no boundaries, no limits, is unaffected even if clouds and thunderstorms come and go	The highest within oneself, the Atman (self, soul) has no limits, it is undifferentiated non-dual no matter what, let the clouds of materiality pass, be one with your soul and the Universal Self
4.	Water	Serves all without pride, discrimination; is transparent to everyone; purifies and gives life to everyone it touches	A saint discriminates against no one and is never arrogant, lets other give him impurity, yet he always remains pure and cleanses attachments
5.	Fire	Purifies and reforms everything it comes in contact with, its energy shapes things	The heat of knowledge reforms everything it comes in contact with, to shape oneself one needs the energy of learning
6.	Moon	Waxes and wanes but its oneness doesn't change	Birth, death, rebirth and the cycle of existence does not change the oneness of soul, like moon it is a continuous eternal reality



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7.	Sun	Source of light and gives its gift to all creatures as a sense of duty; in rain puddles it reflects and seems like distinct in each puddle, yet it is the same one Sun	The soul may appear different in different bodies, yet everyone is connected and the soul is same in all; like Sun, one must share one's gifts as a sense of duty
8.	Pigeon	They suffer losses in the hands of violent hunters, warn against obsessive attachments to anyone or to material things in this world	Do not be obsessive, don't focus on transient things such as damage or personal loss, human life is a rare privilege to learn, discover one's soul and reach moksha
9.	Python	Eats whatever comes its way, makes the most from what it consumes	Be content with what you have, make the most from life's gifts
10.	Bumblebee	Active, works hard to build and create its reserve by directly visiting the flowers, but is selective and uses discretion, harmonious with flowers and never kills or over consumes	Be active, go directly to the sources of knowledge, seek wisdom from all sources but choose the nectar, be gentle, live harmoniously and leave others or other ideologies alone when you must
11.	Beekeeper	Profits from honeybees	Don't crave for material pleasures or in piling up treasures, neither the body nor material wealth ever lasts
12.	Hawk	Picks up a large chunk of food, but other birds harass him, when it drops its food other birds leave him alone	Take what you need, not more
13.	Ocean	Lucid at the surface, but deep and undisturbed within; receives numerous rivers yet remains the same	Let rivers of sensory input not bother who you are deep inside, know your depths, seek self-knowledge, be unperturbed by life, equipoise



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14.	Moth	Is deceived by its senses, it runs to the fire in misunderstanding which kills it	Question your senses, question what others are telling you, question what you see, know senses can deceive, seek reason
15.	Elephant	is deceived by his lust, runs after the smell of a possible mate, and falls into a pit made by mahout's then fettered and used	Don't lust after something or someone, don't fall into traps of others or of sensory gratification
16.	Deer	Is deceived by his fear, by hunters who beat drums and scare him into a waiting net	Fear not the noise, and do not succumb to pressure others design for you
17.	Fish	Is deceived by bait and so lured to its death	Greed not the crumbs someone places before you, there are plenty of healthy opportunities everywhere
18.	Courtesan	Exchanges transient pleasure with body, but feels dejected with meaningless life, ultimately moves on	Many prostitute their time, self-respect and principles for various reasons but feel dejected with their career and circumstances, seek meaning and spirituality in life, move on to doing things you love to do
19.	Child	Lives a life of innocent bliss	Be a child, curious, innocent, blissful
20.	Maiden	She is poor yet tries her best to feed her family and guest, as she cooks she avoids attracting attention to her kitchen and poverty, by breaking all her bangles except one on each wrist	Don't seek attention, a yogi accomplishes and shares more through solitude



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21.	Snake	Lives in whatever hole that comes his way, willingly leaves bad skin and molts	A yogi can live in any place, must be ready to molt old ideas and body for rebirth of his spirit
22.	Arrowsmith	The best one was so lost in his work that he failed to notice the king's procession that passed his way	Concentrate on what you love to do, intense concentration is the way to self-realization
23.	Spider	Builds a beautiful web, destroys and abandons the web, then restarts again	Don't get entangled by your own web, be ready to abandon it, go with your Atman
24.	Caterpillar	Starts out closed in a tiny nest but ultimately becomes a butterfly	Long journeys start small, a disciple starts out as insignificant but ultimately becomes a spiritual master

