



FREE ASSEMBLY



The Giving Product — Sovereign Discipline (Sikh)

The Order of Sovereign Discipline

A DIY transformation workbook for the Sikh order of the Free Assembly

FREE WORKBOOK — DIY TRANSFORMATION

How the Offerings Become Transformation

The ancient Israelite pattern of Leviticus 1–7 places five offerings in a deliberate order: the offering that is wholly consumed, the offering of the daily bread of labour, the offering shared as a feast, the offering that washes away wrongdoing, and the offering that makes amends. This is not a ladder of guilt; it is a rhythm of transformation — surrender, then dedication, then gratitude, then purification, then repair.

For the Sikh practitioner, these five movements already have names. The *burnt offering* is **tan-man-dhan** — the offering of body, mind, and wealth through **se va** (selfless service) offered without desire for reward, the ancient cure for **haumi**, the ego that says "I, me" and blocks the spiritual path. The *grain offering* is **dasvandh** — the tenth part of one's earnings set apart in the Guru's name, the living form of **vand chhako** (sharing with others) joined to **kirat karo** (honest labour). The *peace offering* is **langar** — the free community kitchen where all sit together in **pangat**, the single row of equals, and share a meal that turns gratitude into fellowship. The *sin offering* is the washing of the mind through **Naam simran** — remembrance of the Divine Name, especially at **amrit vela**, the quiet hours before dawn — and the turn from the **five thieves** (lust, anger, greed, attachment, pride) from which haumi gives birth. The *guilt offering* is **restitution**: restoring what was taken, adding more than what was owed, asking forgiveness, and beginning again.

Do this work alone, in your own home, in your own life. No priest, no temple, no altar is required — the offering is your conduct. Each practice below is something you can do with your own hands this week. As the Gurus teach, the teaching is meant to be *lived*; service rendered with a pure heart dissolves the sense of the separate self and turns the servant toward the Divine.



1. The Burnt Offering — Total Self-Dedication (tan-man-dhan through Seva)

(a) The Meaning

In the Israelite pattern, the burnt offering is entirely consumed by fire — nothing is kept back for the offerer. In the Sikh tradition, the equivalent is the offering of **tan, man, dhan** — body, mind, and wealth — placed in service through **nishka m seva**, service rendered with no desire for reward, recognition, or return. This is the Sikh answer to **haumai**, the disease of self-centredness the Gurus call the source of the five evils: only when the "I" stops demanding its portion can the whole of the person be given. Total dedication does not mean giving everything away at once; it means reserving nothing — no corner of your time, no skill, no resource — from the work of serving others and remembering the Divine.

(b) The DIY Practice

1. **Name your three resources.** Sit quietly and write three columns: **tan** (your body — health, hands, hours), **man** (your mind — skills, attention, counsel), **dhan** (your wealth — income, savings, possessions). Be concrete. 2. **Ask the surrendering question.** For each item ask: "Is this **mine**, or is it on loan to me for service?" Mark each item honestly — you are diagnosing haumai, not performing generosity. 3. **Choose one act of seva for this week** that costs you something real: your time (help a neighbour, clean the gurdwara or a public space, serve food), your skill (teach, translate, repair), or your wealth

(feed someone anonymously). 4. **Do it without being seen.** The Sikh standard is nishkam — desireless service. Do not announce it, do not post about it, do not fish for thanks. If someone praises you, say only "It was the Guru's work" and move on. 5. **Do one unseen seva daily for seven days.** Small counts: carry someone's groceries, wash dishes after a meal, water a neighbour's plants. Let the servant disappear entirely. 6. **Rise before dawn once this week (amrit vela)** and sit in simran — quiet repetition of *Waheguru* — for twenty minutes. Offer your morning, your best hours, the way the burnt offering was offered first. 7. **End with surrender.** Each evening, place your palms together and acknowledge, in your own words, that the day's body, mind, and wealth were borrowed and have been returned through service.

(c) Reflection Prompts

- Where does haumai — the "I-me" voice — grip you most tightly: your time, your opinions, your money, your status? What would surrendering just that one stronghold change? - If Guru Nanak watched one ordinary day of your life unseen, which hours of it would he call seva, and which would he call self-service?

(d) Action Step

Within 48 hours, perform **one act of seva that no one will ever know you did** — something that costs you at least an hour. Do not tell anyone about it.



2. The Grain Offering — Dedication of Work and Daily Bread (Dasvandh)

(a) The Meaning

The grain offering in Israel's pattern was fine flour, oil, and frankincense — the fruit of honest labour, given back in thanksgiving. The Sikh equivalent is **dasvandh**: setting apart one-tenth of one's earnings in the Guru's name for the common good of the community — a practice rooted in Guru Nanak's twin teachings of **kirat karo** (earn by honest labour) and **vand chhako** (share what you earn with others). It was nourished by the institutions of *sangat* and *langar*, and formalised as Sikhs pooled resources to build their shared life. Dasvandh is not a donation; it is a declaration that your work is not only for yourself. Some also give a tenth of their **time** — the principle is the same: the first portion belongs to service.

(b) The DIY Practice

1. **Calculate your honest tenth.** Take your last month's net income and compute one-tenth. Write the figure down. This is your dasvandh — neither less nor more for now.
2. **Examine the work behind it.** Before you give, ask: was this income earned by honest labour (*kirat karo*)? If any part came from cutting corners, credit-taking, or unfair dealing, name it and make a plan to stop — the grain offering had to be fine flour, not refuse.
3. **Choose where the tenth goes.** It should serve the common good: your gurdwara's *langar*, a hunger-relief effort, a family in need, or a community project. Do not give to be admired; give to be useful.
4. **Give it cheerfully and quietly.** Make the transfer or delivery this week. Give it in the Guru's name, not your own.
5. **Bless your daily bread.** For one week, before each meal, pause and trace the meal backward — the farmer, the driver, the cook — and acknowledge that your bread is the fruit of many hands. Eat the first bite in gratitude.
6. **Dedicate one workday.** Choose a day this week and do your professional work as if every task were an offering — thoroughly, honestly, without shortcuts. This is dasvandh of your **time**: the same principle, applied to labour.
7. **Keep a simple ledger.** On one page, record: what you earned, what you set apart, where it went. Review it monthly. The Sikh *masands* once kept faithful accounts of the community's offerings; your honesty with yourself is the first accountability.

(c) Reflection Prompts

- Guru Nanak taught that the one who earns honestly and shares part of what is earned knows the true path. What share of your earnings currently goes to anyone but you — and what does that number say about you? - If you gave a tenth of your **time** as well as your income — roughly 2.4 hours a day — whose life would that time go to first?

(d) Action Step

Within 48 hours, set apart your tenth from your most recent income and **give it to one place that feeds or serves others** — a langar, a food bank, or a person in need you can name.



3. The Peace Offering — Gratitude Expressed in Communion (Langar)

(a) The Meaning

The Israelite peace offering was a shared meal — part burned, part eaten by the priests, part eaten by the offerer's household — a feast that turned gratitude into fellowship. In the Sikh tradition this is **langar**: the free community kitchen where all sit together in **pangat**, one row, with no distinction of wealth, caste, gender, faith, or status, and eat the same food. Established by Guru Nanak and given its full form under the early Gurus, langar declares that before the Divine there are no high and low — there are only mouths to feed and hands to feed

them. It is the peace offering because it turns thanksgiving into *sangats*, holy company, and makes equality something you taste.

(b) The DIY Practice

1. **Attend or support a langar this week.** Go to your nearest gurdwara's langar hall. Sit in the pangat — notice who sits beside you, notice that no one asked your rank before serving you. 2. **Serve before you eat.** Volunteer to serve food or wash dishes in the langar kitchen for at least one hour *before* you take your own plate. The servant eats last; the Sikh ideal is that the highest status is to be lowly and useful. 3. **Eat without distinction.** Sit beside someone you would not normally sit beside — a stranger, someone of a different background, someone poor. Eat in silence or in simple conversation. Let the shared row do its work. 4. **Cook one langar-style meal at home.** Prepare a simple, nourishing vegetarian meal (dal, sabzi, roti, rice — the classic langar fare). As you cook, hold the intention that no one who eats it is above or below you. 5. **Invite someone to your table.** This week, share a meal with a neighbour, a coworker, or a stranger who would not expect the invitation. Serve them first. This is your household's peace offering. 6. **Thank the hands.** At each shared meal this week, name aloud — or in your heart — three people whose labour made the food possible. Gratitude spoken is communion begun. 7. **Reflect on equality.** After the week's meals, write one page on this: in what places in your life do you still keep separate rows — people you would serve but not sit with? What would it cost you to end one of those separations?

(c) Reflection Prompts

- Langar insists that the rich man and the beggar eat from the same pot, sitting on the same floor. Where in your life do you still eat from a different pot — and what would sitting in the single row require of you? - The peace offering was shared between the offerer, the priests, and God. In langar, who is the priest, who is the guest, and who is being served — and can you tell the difference?

(d) Action Step

Within 48 hours, **serve food to someone else before you eat your own meal** — volunteer an hour in a langar kitchen, or simply cook for a neighbour and serve them first.



4. The Sin Offering — Purification through Naam

(a) The Meaning

The sin offering in Israel's pattern cleansed what wrongdoing had defiled. The Sikh teaching on purification is direct: **haumai** — the self-centred "I-me" that is the mother of the five thieves (lust, anger, greed, attachment, pride) — is a stain no outer washing can remove; the Gurus teach that pilgrimage bathing at a hundred holy rivers cannot wash it. The one washing that works is **Naam** — remembrance of the Divine Name — joined to honest turning. The sinner in the Sikh path is the **manmukh**, the one who faces the self; purification is the journey toward the **gurmukh**, the one who faces the Guru. This is not self-hatred. It is diagnosis, remedy, and turning — three movements, done with humility rather than despair.

(b) The DIY Practice

1. **Name the thieves at work.** Take the five thieves — lust, anger, greed, attachment, pride — and write one honest, specific sentence for each about where it stole something from you or someone else **this month**. Be precise; vague confession changes nothing. 2. **Confess to the Guru.** In the quiet of your own room, speak the list aloud — not as theatre, but as truth-telling. The Sikh path begins with seeing yourself as you are, without the stories haumai tells about you. 3. **Wash through simran.** For seven mornings, rise before dawn (amrit vela) and sit for at least eleven minutes in simran — repeating **Waheguru** slowly, letting the sound settle each of the five confessed faults.

This is the Sikh purification rite: the Name does what water cannot. 4. **Turn the pattern.** For each confessed fault, design one concrete reversal to practice this week: if anger, one deliberate act of patience each day; if greed, one deliberate release; if pride, one deliberate act of lowliness. Turning is proved by the opposite act. 5. **Fast one appetite.** Choose one indulgence — rich food, gossip, a screen habit — and abstain for a day or a week, using the freed attention for simran. Mastery of the senses is the outer discipline of the inner turning. 6. **See k the sangat.** Attend one congregational gathering this week — a diwan, a kirtan, any holy company. The Gurus teach that the disease of haumai is overcome in the company of those who walk the path; isolation feeds the manmukh. 7. **End in humility, not shame.** Each evening, note where you turned well and where you failed, and begin the next morning again. The Gurus' path is not perfection but direction: the gurmukh is the one still walking.

(c) Reflection Prompts

- Which of the five thieves has the deepest roots in you — and what does it promise you that Naam does not? Be honest about the trade. - Guru Nanak taught that one who conquers the mind conquers the world. What would your household, your workplace, your sangat look like if that one thief were disarmed in you?

(d) Action Step

Within 48 hours, **rise before dawn and sit in simran for eleven minutes**, bringing before your mind the one fault you most want washed. Begin the turning the same day with one opposite act.



5. The Guilt Offering — Restitution and Making Amends

(a) The Meaning

Israel's guilt offering was unique: it was not only an offering to God but a payment to the wronged party — the loss restored, plus an added fifth, *before* the offering was complete. Reconciliation with the Divine ran through reconciliation with the neighbour. The Sikh parallel is **restitution made real**: the tradition holds truthful conduct (*sach achar*) as the heart of its ethics, and honours those who repair what they broke rather than those who merely feel sorry for it. Making amends is the outer proof of the inner turning of the sin offering — Naam washes the conscience; restitution heals the relationship. A debt owed to a person cannot be settled with God alone.

(b) The DIY Practice

1. **List the debts.** Write down every person you have wronged in a way that cost them something — money taken or owed, property damaged, a promise broken, a reputation harmed, time stolen, trust betrayed. Be exhaustive; haumai hides debts. 2. **Calculate the restoration.** For each debt, write what full restoration would look like — the amount repaid, the item replaced, the promise kept late, the public correction made. Then add something *more*, following the spirit of the ancient fifth: restitution should cost you enough to remember. 3. **Begin with the smallest debt.** Choose the easiest one and settle it this week —

repay the money, replace the item, keep the belated promise. Do it directly, in person where possible. 4. **Ask forgiveness where the debt is to a person, not just a thing.** For wrongs that cannot be priced — betrayal, harsh words, neglect — go to the person, name what you did without excuses, and ask plainly to be forgiven. Accept whatever answer comes. 5. **Write the letter you cannot deliver.** For wrongs against someone unreachable — dead, distant, or unsafe to contact — write the full amends in a letter, read it aloud in simran, and then destroy it, releasing the matter to the Divine. 6. **Make one reparation to the community.** Choose one of your debts that was against no one in particular — a kindness you withheld, a public trust you abused — and repay it with an act of seva for the community at large. 7. **Mark the ledger closed.** When each debt is settled, strike it from your list with a line and a date. The Sikh ideal is a clean conscience kept through truthful conduct going forward — so add one new discipline: a weekly ten-minute review of debts, so you never accumulate them again.

(c) Reflection Prompts

- The guilt offering required restoring the loss *plus* an added portion. What would "plus a fifth" look like for your heaviest debt — and why does your haumai resist paying it? - Whose forgiveness have you been hoping time would grant you for free, without the asking? What has that delay cost them — and you?

(d) Action Step

Within 48 hours, **settle the smallest debt on your list** — repay it, replace it, or make the contact — and ask the person directly to forgive you. One debt closed is the practice begun.

The Five-Week Cycle

Work through the five offerings one per week, in order, then begin again. Each week takes roughly thirty minutes a day: morning simran, one practice step, and an evening review. The order matters — surrender first (week 1), then the dedication of your work (week 2), then gratitude shared (week 3), then purification (week 4), then repair (week 5). A cycle completed is a conscience examined and a life re-ordered.

A five-day intensive alternative: for those who want the whole journey in one week, take one offering per day for five days (Burnt on day one through

Guilt on day five), doing the Action Step of each offering on its day, and rest on the sixth and seventh days in simran and gratitude.

The standing weekly rhythm (after your first cycle): keep dasvandh monthly, keep one weekly seva and one langar meal, keep daily simran — and repeat the guilt-offering debt review every week so that amends become a habit, not an emergency. The transformation is not a course you finish; it is a discipline you keep. That is why this order is called Sovereign Discipline.