

A Study of Mystical Musings in Select Poems of Sadhguru

¹Jay Vasani, ²Dr. Savita Deogirkar

¹Research Scholar, VMV Commerce JMT Arts and JJP Science College, Nagpur, Maharashtra, India.
jay.j.vasani@gmail.com

²Professor, VMV Commerce JMT Arts and JJP Science College, Nagpur, Maharashtra, India.
deogirkarsav@gmail.com

Abstract

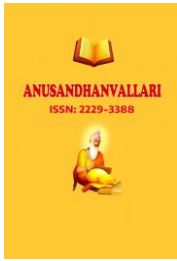
This research paper explores the profound themes of Sadhguru's poetry collection, "Eternal Echoes," analyzing its resonance with human experience and spiritual quests. Through a thematic analysis of select poems, we uncover the transformative power of Sadhguru's verses in evoking deep emotions and insights. His poetry celebrates the intrinsic connection between humanity and nature, inviting readers to rediscover life's profound essence. Themes of spiritual awakening, existential longing, and the pursuit of transcendence resonate throughout the collection, reflecting universal quests for inner peace and understanding. The poems evoke deep emotional responses and highlight the transformative power of love and devotion on our spiritual growth. They challenge conventional ideas of separation, emphasizing unity and interconnectedness within the universal consciousness. By drawing on references from mysticism in contemporary poetry and theological interpretations, the research provides a clear understanding of Sadhguru's poetic vision and its impact on readers. This study aims to illuminate the profound impact of Sadhguru's mystical poetry. It encourages a deeper understanding of existence and our interconnected place, ultimately inspiring a journey of self-discovery and spiritual awakening.

Keywords: Sadhguru, Eternal Echoes, Mysticism, Poetry, Spirituality

Introduction

What is Mysticism?

Mysticism is a tool to approach the dimension beyond sense perception by being in our physical limitations. A place that is not experientially physical but exists as a realm of ultimate reality. It can help us experience the true nature of existence, which humans usually ignore. '(Mysticism is) the accomplishment of insight in decisive or hidden truths (A. Arockiadass et al. 2896).' Mystical experience is like a torch towards the path of union with our ultimate self. "Mysticism is, by definition, a negation of the rational. Since it expresses a state of mind that can be neither communicated nor experimentally verified but only felt, it must base its appeal on the testimony of direct and unique experience (Glicksberg 235)." This suggests that mysticism is not a fantasy of a forlorn mind but a real inner experience. It is an intuition within a being relayed from a higher dimension, which gets translated to gauge through our senses. "It (mysticism) is the withdrawal into contemplation by which the mystic seeks to establish contact with Ultimate Reality (Nafi' et al. 106). Here, the word contemplation is not a thought process initiated by the self. Instead, a seed of thought is implanted from beyond as an intuition. Nafi's words can also be understood as a mystic who chooses to go within himself through meditation to explore the mystical realm and discover the ultimate reality. Often, mysticism gets surpassed by most of the population. It is a rarity that people could gauge the true essence hidden in a mystical phenomenon. "Two contraries coincide in the expression "mystical phenomena": what is "phenomenal" appears and is visible; what is "mystical" remains secret and invisible (de Certeau et al. 16)." Even if one experiences the mystical elements in a given situation



still it is impossible to grasp or hold on to it. "Like the ancient sphinx, mysticism remains the rendezvous of an enigma. It can be situated but not classified (de Certeau et al. 24)."

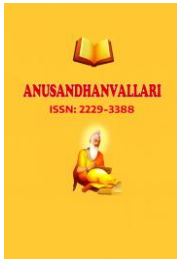
Mysticism in Poetry

In the vast landscape of literature, poetry uniquely conveys profound observations and evokes deep emotions. Poetry is a channel through which one can express something that does not fit the limitations of logic. In a mere few lines of poetry, one can hit somebody fundamentally; it hits them in such a way that those lines transform their lives. This essence of poetry makes it most suitable for mystical elements to sync in it. "The philosophers and psychologists have aided the poets in their determination to affirm a mystical principle at work in the creative process (Glicksberg 240)." Blending mysticism's characteristics into the poetry setting gives a favourable outcome. This is an outcome that a mystic uses to express and succeed to an extent, as his mesmerizing vision translates into the simple setting of words. "Poetry is one of the most useful expressions of a mystic's inner experiences (Nair N V 7)." With the help of mystical elements, it formulates a process in the structure of poetry to achieve the desired mystical experience. As poetry is a tool for articulating thoughts and emotions, similarly systematically merging mystical elements helps manifest mystical encounters in poetry. "The mystic presents us with a unique poetic structure which posits a systematic symbolism of process in which there is suffering, purification, and death to an estranged self, and finally, a new birth of ecstatic unity with Spirit (Kalita 14)." Through these lines, allegory is one of the chief elements that supports the mystical claim in poetry. Hence, poetry is the most natural ally of mysticism; in other words, poetry is the most convenient and preferable medium to express mystical experiences. "Mysticism can legitimately form a part of poetry is evident in the work of a number of poets, each with his distinctive view of life (Glicksberg 242)."

There have been many mystical poets in India from the Vedic period to the present. These poets have composed poetry in their regional languages. An intense fervour of such poetic expression began around the 7th century in India by the name of "The Bhakti Movement". Bhakti means devotion and the name suggests that the movement was inclined toward spirituality and mysticism. The movement continued until around the 17th century, giving out genuinely unique and inspiring works of iconic personalities. The Advent of the English language to the Indian subcontinent came after the Bhakti movement was over. During this period, we had two remarkable mystical poets, Sri Aurobindo and Rabindranath Tagore, who also composed poems in their regional languages and English. Their poems have spiritual and mystical themes with various expressions. In contemporary times, poets who deal with spirituality and mysticism in their poetry are Sadhguru, Arundhati Subramaniam, and Tishani Doshi. With several themes spoken in their poems, Subramaniam and Doshi extensively used the themes of spirituality and mysticism. Sadhguru is a contemporary mystic who, working on several well-being initiatives, composes poetry with the themes of mysticism and spirituality.

This research paper deals with the mystical themes of Sadhguru's poems taken from *Eternal Echoes*. Sadhguru is a yogi, mystic, visionary, and spiritual master. He is celebrated for his life-changing works in various fields, including writing several books and achieving two New York Times bestsellers.

Sadhguru was born on 3 September 1957 in Mysore, Karnataka. He has exceptional clarity and influence on spirituality, business, environment, and international affairs. Sadhguru was named in the 50 Most Powerful Indians list in 2019 by India Today. He has been awarded the Padma Vibhushan, India's second-highest civilian award, for his outstanding contributions. Sadhguru's initiative for Indian rivers through Rally for Rivers and Cauvery Calling is a huge success. It gathered massive support from the entire nation and globally as well. These campaigns have helped construct government policies for river development in India. Sadhguru is a popular speaker worldwide. He has addressed places like the United Nations and the World Economic Forum. His skill set includes architecture, poetry, painting, aviation, and sports. His artistic skills are seen in every corner of the



Isha Yoga Centre. In 1993, Sadhguru founded the Isha Foundation. It is a global non-profit organization. Over nine million volunteers worldwide are devoted to serving the needy and helping to contribute toward human well-being through the foundation.

Through a thematic analysis of Sadhguru's poetry, the researcher aims to understand the transformative power of mystical literature. By studying these poems, we seek to understand how Sadhguru's poetic expression resonates with universal truths and sparks a deep connection with the cosmos.

Ultimately, this research sheds light on Sadhguru's mystical poetry's profound impact, highlighting its capacity to evoke spiritual experiences. This study will help us deepen our understanding of existence and our place within it.

Evaluative Commentary

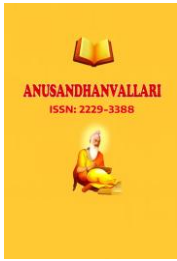
'Sadhguru's poetic collection, "Eternal Echoes," is a glimpse after glimpse into the unimaginably eventful inner life of a mystic', says Arundhati Subramaniam (Sadhguru et al. 9:38-9:44). Sadhguru's poems explore spiritual awakening, existential longing, and the pursuit of transcendence. Sadhguru's poetry goes beyond mere words—it touches something deeper within the reader. His poems create feelings of wonder that transcend the physical dimension. "Any work that deals with experiences of super consciousness, union with the absolute power, any philosophical address on spirituality and the like can be considered as a work of mysticism and the writers may be referred to as mystics (Nair N V 7)."

Sadhguru describes poetry as 'an in-between land between logic and magic (Sadhguru i).' To support this claim, he adds that it is a place where one can explore and make meaning of the magical but still make enough sense with logic. This statement convinces us that poetry and all its aspects are mystical in literature. Many poets have articulated how their experience from within is so beautiful that they compose poetry with mystical elements enhancing it.

While working on his farm in his youth, Sadhguru wrote over 1600 poems. Often, these poems were written after nightfall, when he had finished working at the farm for the day. He would write multiple poems on various topics on several small pieces of paper. These compositions were made almost in darkness due to the absence of light. Unfortunately, those 1600 poems were lost in a fire accident.

Words in poetry emote our sense of experience within; poetry is the essence of our emotions. Sadhguru's poetry makes such an impact. He has written poems on diverse topics, whether nature to god, darkness to devotion, time to yoga, or life to death. His poems fit the occasion and give a sense of belonging to readers. During COVID-19, Sadhguru would recite his newly composed poems while giving discourses. There would be various experiences within his listeners, some happy, others teary out of bliss. Many would get awestruck by its theme and way of articulating through the means of poetry. Recently, in March 2024, when he went through brain surgery after enduring excruciating pain with no sign of suffering on his face for six weeks, he wrote a poem after that. The poem, 'Lost Me in You,' was written a week after the surgery. This poem responds to all the devotees and people worldwide praying for his recovery.

In this paper, the researchers aim to study select poems from "Eternal Echoes" that contain the essence of mystical encounters. Each poem speaks about the mysteries of life. These poems help readers to reflect on the unity of all beings and the limitless nature of spiritual realization. Eternal Echoes is depicted wonderfully by Arundhati Subramaniam. She says, 'This is the province of the lyric, not of logic. This is the province of the twilight world, not the province of hundred what illumination (Sadhguru et al. 8:00-8:14).' Here, twilight indicates being ecstatically blissed out from within yet actively participating in the bustle of extensively active life.



More than poetry, this book is a series of utterances. It is like having a glimpse into a mystic's journal. To portray its author within the book, Subramaniam adds, 'This (book) offers a glimpse into him (Sadhguru) as that borderline being standing on the cusp of diverse worlds as a dual citizen of both the darkness and the light (Sadhguru et al. 9:55-10:09).' Eternal Echoes have the guru's intimacy, vulnerability, frequently unguarded tenderness, and playfulness. It is a book above all of heart.

Sadhguru's poetry has the element of allegory to an extent. Allegory uses symbolic characters, settings, or events to convey more profound and hidden meanings and moral messages. 'The necessity for descriptive symbolism is an integral part of the mystic poem, for the essence of symbolism rests on the conviction that all material things in nature have something in common: to the mystic, the experience of the spiritual Unity underlying all diversity (Kalita 12).' In Sadhguru's poems, he often employs vivid imagery and symbolic language to represent themes like spiritual awakening, existential longing, and the pursuit of transcendence. His poems have various poetic meters to create rhythm and musicality. The primary poetic meters predominantly used in Sadhguru's poems are iambic and trochaic.

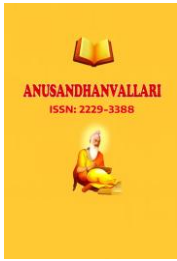
Poems Analysis

1. "The Source"

In Sadhguru's poem "The Source," he talks about all living, non-living, tangible, and non-tangible things in nature preparing for the rainy season. He describes how everything in nature seems excited and eagerly awaits the rain. The poem uses words like "cool breeze," "expectant leaves," and "bustling ants" to show how alive and vibrant nature feels before the monsoon's arrival. Sadhguru shows how plants reach out like they are reuniting with something they love, and peacocks care more about their feathers. This poem celebrates how nature changes with the seasons and how everything in nature is connected. It also makes us consider our connection with nature and its importance to all living things.

The poem celebrates the mystical anticipation and interconnectedness found in nature. These elements can be seen when everything in nature prepares for the arrival of the monsoon. Several lines in the poem showcase the elements of mysticism embedded in this poem. One such line is, "*Do you see the excitement in the air of expectant leaves of plant and tree stretching their arms like long parted lovers*". This line in the poem evokes a sense of unity among everything in nature; it is shown with the help of personification. "Wordsworth claims that there is a pre-arranged harmony between the mind of man and the spirit of nature, which enables man to relate or communicate with nature (Mysticism in Wordsworth's Poetry)." When there is harmony, naturally the unity among everything in nature prevails. It also suggests an anticipation of all the things connected and part of nature, sensing the changing scenario of nature and adapting accordingly. These couple of elements highlight the mystical essence of this poem.

As stated above, the poem also uses personification. The personification of elements in the poem, such as plants, trees, ants, and peacocks, can be seen clearly. The said figure of speech suggests a deeper connection between humans and the natural world. That, in turn, portrays nature as alive and conscious. A couple of lines given seem fitting examples, "*Ants scurrying around to close and shore up their nests against the oncoming deluge*" and "*The peacocks have shifted their conversation from contentedness of summer's warmth to concern of preserving their magnificent but oversized plumes*". This aspect of the poem, where personification is used again, supports and implies awareness of nature through a mystical approach. In other words, nature itself harbours and is magical. "Wordsworth claims that a divine spirit can be seen through all the objects of nature (Mysticism in Wordsworth's Poetry)." Term 'divine spirit' used by Wordsworth can be synonymous with the term 'mysticism'. We also learn that personification directs us towards how everything in nature is readying them to prepare for the coming



scenario. Overall, the usage of personification in sync with mystical elements in the poem powerfully emotes the message.

2. "Mukthi"

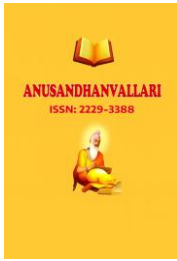
In this poem, Sadhguru talks about a significant change happening within a person. He uses words like feeling "drifted" and being surrounded by something new and sweet, like being in sugar syrup. The change talked about in the poem is not scary. It is a joyful celebration of life's vast and limitless nature. Sadhguru shows how a person's ego dissolves, and they start feeling connected to something bigger than their limited identity. It is an experience of being one with the universe. This poem is about breaking free from limits. It is about feeling a sense of unity with everything around us. It teaches us about spiritual growth. This poem urges readers to seek limitless possibilities.

The poem "Mukthi" deals with the mystical experience of inner transformation and liberation. Initially, these experiences seem strange; they give a feeling of immense shift within oneself. An intensity of change is not gauged prior. However, as the poem progresses, within a few lines, it establishes that the change is not uncalled for and is a guiding light towards freedom. To better understand, here is a line from the poem, "*A drowning and death of one and conception and birth of another.*" In this line, the poet is not talking about a person who died and another person being born. Instead, this line consists of a metaphor to get an idea of an untrodden place within us. Metaphor helps this line to depict a mystical message it wants to convey about our self-made identity. The identity we have created for convenience and comfort is not the truth of life and must be experienced. With the help of metaphor, the poet portrays an experience of dissolving the self into one true consciousness. In that way, our being one with the cosmos and the true consciousness will be achieved, which is liberation. "He (mystical poet) seeks to merge with humanity, to lose himself in the Absolute (Glicksberg 242)." The scenario suggests a mystical rebirth in the sense that we have crossed our limited way of being and have unlocked limitless consciousness within.

Despite initial uneasiness, the sense of celebration and liberation in the face of change points to the mystical nature of the transformation described in the poem. When we encounter a slight change, there are several repulsive reactions in routine life. However, once we understand those changes and positively respond to them, we are in store for new possibilities. Such experience is said to be mystical in the poem. "We must lose our anxious, despairing, estranged self so that through ecstatic identification of self with Spirit a higher Self of Spirit can be born in us (Kalita 17)." To clarify this thought, here is another line from the poem, "*An effulgent celebration for the life as it exploded beyond the limits of my body and perception.*" This line from the poem highlights the immense joy of the poet undergoing the process of self-transformation and being liberated from the mundane. It also underscores that the poet is not just identified by the body and mind that belong to him. Instead, there is a sense of expansiveness in the experience that has resulted from being liberated.

3. "Human"

In this poem, Sadhguru talks about being in the comfort of home. There is a longing for a true sense of "home" or belonging, even in familiar places. It is like searching for inner peace and completeness. The poem shows a paradox where someone desires a home but feels lost. This shows many people's struggle to find meaning and purpose in life. Sadhguru wants us to think about our journey of self-discovery. It helps us understand our true selves better. The poem encourages us to explore our inner feelings. To be inclusive of everything.



The poem "Human" explores the mystical longing for inclusiveness and inner well-being amidst the paradoxical experience of feeling lost when at home. This utterance is done when the poet realizes the true nature of life, where accumulating materialistic things is not enough to become complete or successful. At the start, home is portrayed as a shelter, which is a necessity, but still, the life within is not satisfied and yearns for even more. In yogic lore, it is said that life within is still not fulfilled even after achieving everything that can be materialistically achieved; one needs to look within to realize this. In another sense, home is perceived as a sense of realization that the author is longing for so that his quest for inner well-being culminates. 'According to Clements (2012, as cited in Saavedra- Carballido, 2015) Mysticism is "through which one sheds or suppresses the rational mental constructs that form, organize, and distort immediate experience, in order to experience the world without mediation" (Nafi' et al. 97).' When awareness dawns, a seeker who longs for inclusiveness seldom sheds materialistic things, which even include mental scape, which are his own making and far from reality. This line from the poem gives a glimpse, "*Even when at home, I longed for home.*" This line conveys a sense of existential longing and searching for deeper meaning. Thus, it suggests a mystical journey for self-discovery.

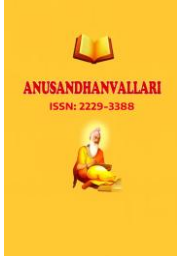
The poem also talks about the dissolution of boundaries and the sense of transformation within the self. Here, boundaries or walls of the home are dissolved, which means that the ignorance endured because of a limited sense of identity of self has been dissolved. When there is a longing to know something, ignorance always disappears. The thirst to know only happens when there is awareness and a sense of inclusiveness with the existence. Moreover, that is the journey of transformation within towards realization. "It is the essence of mysticism to transcend the limits of the rational (Glicksberg 244)." Transcendence from rational can be experienced when the boundaries are dissolved, where boundaries are depicted as physical, mental, emotional, and energy level barriers. It is nicely depicted in a line from the poem, "*When the walls of home dissolved, a pristine home unwallled and unfettered, devoid of love, affection, or companions blossomed.*" This line highlights the mystical journey of breaking limitations and becoming inclusive.

4. "Here and Here"

In this poem, Sadhguru invites readers to have a glimpse into himself. He says people have ignored his true essence out of curiosity about getting to know him. Sadhguru portrays himself as part of a larger existence with images of him in various elements of nature. He believes that the experience of his being is inclusive of everything around him. So, has become eternal in that sense. Being one with everything has brought him a sense of meditative stillness and harmony. He has outgrown his limited identity and embraced universality beyond everything. As a result, he is in everything moving (living) and unmoving (non-living).

The poem portrays Sadhguru's universal essence and a sense of oneness with all existence. Sadhguru is a realized mystic who helps the seekers visualize how he is consciously connected with everything in existence. "The mystic is a visionary who claims to hold a direct communion with the Divine Spirit (Nafi' 97)." As analyzed and seen in previous poems, Sadhguru mystically portrays various aspects of life to make people understand easily; that shows his involvement with every small and big thing and how he is a realized being. The lines from the poem finely address that, "*I am in them... I am in that.*" These lines suggest a mystical identification with various elements of nature, which suggests that he has an expansive consciousness where he is inclusive of everyone and everything around him.

The poem also highlights the dissolution of limited individual identity into stillness and a universal consciousness. When asked about Sadhguru's true nature and where he came from, he said there is nowhere to come from and to go, and everything has become still. This portrays that he is not identified with something particular or limited. As he is involved with everything around him, there is a sense of serenity and fulfillment that is depicted by the word "stillness". 'Men of spirit then are the organs through which the universal Spirit speaks (Kalita 8).' The term



'men of spirit' refers to a spiritual being or someone who deals in mysticism. Such people can gauge and experience the language of the universe. In other words, mystics are people who have realized the true nature of the universe and are in sync with the larger consciousness. The following line speaks of it, *"All has become stillness as everything that's moving and unmoving is me."* All the lines in the poem convey a profound sense of the union of Sadhguru's being with cosmic consciousness. Moreover, the part where stillness is mystically used shows Sadhguru's interconnectedness with existence.

5. "Hold My Hand"

In Sadhguru's poem "Hold My Hand," as a master, he gives unconditional support through the symbolism of holding hands. Holding his hand is a metaphor for experiencing eternity and transcendence. By holding Sadhguru's hands, we can grow tremendously in seeking truth. We can find strength to face life's challenges and overcome our fears. It symbolizes a spiritual journey toward liberation and a deeper understanding of existence. The imagery used in the poem conveys a profound message. A guru is essential in seeking truth in an unknown dimension. Moreover, that guru will dispel the darkness.

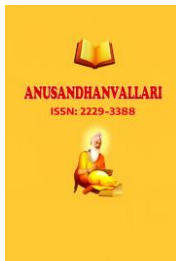
This poem symbolically represents spiritual guidance and the transformative power of connection with a higher consciousness. In the first half of the poem, Sadhguru offers unconditional support to help seekers evolve to a higher dimension of consciousness. The Sanskrit word "Guru" in English is translated to the "Dispeller of Darkness". This suggests that when a seeker is in the refuge of a guru or a master, his darkness in the form of ignorance is dispelled. Furthermore, that manifests the possibility of transformation within. 'For the mystic, there is a deliberate choice of a difficult self-training, and it is this which constitutes the asceticism of the genuine mystic who leaves the things that warm the lives of other men and goes forth on a lonelier and stricter way (Nafi' et al. 105).' The following line from the poem beautifully captures its essence, *"Hold my hand and have a taste of eternity."* This line metaphorically suggests an invitation to experience transcendence from untruth to truth. It is a call to dissolve into the limitless emptiness to become one with a larger consciousness.

This poem shows a sense of inclusiveness and willingness to usher seekers towards their realization. When a container is filled, there is no space for anything else to fit in; similarly with that analogy, Sadhguru, in a mystical way, portrays himself as emptiness. When he is empty, there is enough space for every seeker within him. This symbolizes his inclusiveness and willingness for the seeker's well-being. The lines narrate this scene are, *"I am just an emptiness... You shall dissolve."* These lines evoke seekers' surrender to the guru's mystical call. 'What the mystic seeks is a pattern of unity in this surging chaos of indestructible energy (Glicksberg 242).' The phrase 'surging chaos' can be seen from a different perspective. Here, we can understand how various materialistic things pull a seeker down in his longing for ultimate realization. However, the mystic helps him elevate his inclusiveness with the universe. Thus, the poem highlights a sense of empathy for the seekers on the path of realization and hastens their possibility to go beyond the mystical horizon toward higher consciousness.

Thematic Exploration of Sadhguru's Poetry

Sadhguru's poetry delves into profound themes that speak to our innermost selves and our connection to the world. Through his verses, he guides us on a journey of self-discovery and spiritual growth. His poems invite us to explore the depths of our souls and go beyond the limitations of materialism.

Nature plays a significant role in Sadhguru's poetry, acting as a mirror that reflects the interconnectedness of all living things. His vivid descriptions of the natural world remind us of our place within it and evoke a sense of reverence for the beauty and harmony of life. Existential questions about longing, belonging, and the search for



meaning are central to Sadhguru's poetry. His words resonate with the universal human experience of seeking purpose and fulfillment. It urges us to delve deeper into our innermost thoughts and emotions.

As a spiritual master, Sadhguru offers wisdom and support to those on the path of self-discovery. His verses serve as a source of inspiration to seek truth. He guides us toward fulfilling our longing for realization. At the heart of Sadhguru's poetic vision is the recognition of the oneness of all beings and the interconnectedness of the universe. His poetry invites us to transcend our identities and connect with the vastness of existence. These utterances tap into the eternal truths that lie at the core of our being.

In essence, Sadhguru's poetry is a profound exploration of the human experience. It invites readers to embrace their authentic selves and seek inclusiveness in life. He offers us guidance, inspiration, and a deeper understanding of ourselves and the world around us through his words.

Conclusion

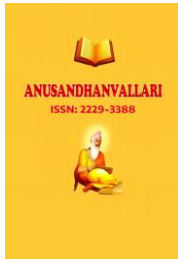
In exploring Sadhguru's poetry from "Eternal Echoes," we have discovered themes that deeply resonate with our human experience and spiritual journey. Sadhguru's poems celebrate the strong connection between humanity and nature. They urge us to rediscover the deep essence that flows through all life. Sadhguru reveals our ability to dissolve in the universality of existence with vivid descriptions and imagery. They inspire us to revere life's interconnectedness.

These poems explore spiritual awakening and deep longing, reflecting our universal journey for inner well-being and deep understanding. They depict a transformative journey toward inner freedom. These utterances are the pursuit of something beyond the ordinary. Sadhguru's poetry shows emotional depth and devotion as central characters. They evoke a sense of surrender and a deep connection to the divine. His poetry highlights the transformative power of love and devotion. This helps us seek spiritual growth and personal evolution. The poems also highlight unity and oneness. They challenge traditional notions of separation and highlight the interconnected nature of all beings. They encourage us to recognize our shared existence within the universal consciousness.

Overall, Sadhguru's poetry from "Eternal Echoes" inspires us to explore life's deeper dimensions. These poems motivate us to embark on a profound journey of self-discovery and spiritual awakening. His words resonate with timeless wisdom. His unbridled utterances encourage us to embrace life's inclusiveness and the mystical essence surrounding us.

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