

# SS GuruPrem Singh Khalsa Los Angeles, CA, USA

## Candidate Statement



### Personal Information

Name:	Guru Prem Singh Khalsa
City & State/Country:	Los Angeles, California
Name of Spouse:	Simran Kaur Khalsa
Occupation:	Therapist, Teacher, musician, author
Length of Participation in 3HO/Sikh Dharma:	44 years
Length of time as an Ordained Minister of Sikh Dharma:	12 years
Are you a KRI certified teacher or trainer? If so, what is your certification level and when did you acquire your certification?	I am a KRI certified Professional teacher. I acquired my certification in 1979
Ashram Communities lived in:	I've lived in the Guru Ram Das Ashram community for 43 years. During that time I spent 12 years living in Guru Arjan Dev and Siri Gurbani Sadan Ashrams. I Presently live in a Dharmic communal multifamily environment in the same neighborhood.
3HO/Sikh Dharma Community Positions:	I have continued to serve on the Los Angeles Sangat's executive council for about 10 years. I'm also on the Yoga Wests board for approximately 10 years.

### Questionnaire

1. Why do you feel called to serve on the SSSC Board?

I was asked by a community member why I wasn't serving on the SSSC board. My response was "I have enough to do serving my local community".

I was then asked if I would accept being nominated. I agreed and said I would go into it whole heartedly. I believe I've been called and now I'm answering that call. I am willing and able to bring integrity to the responsibility of serving in this position if elected. I have dedicated the past 43 years to serving humanity in many ways: my local community, as well as community outreach programs such as the Share-a-meal organization. I am a founding member of this food service S

2. What relevant areas of experience and expertise qualify you for this position and will make you an asset to the board?

2. My greatest asset is dependability. I'm also a good judge of character. I recognize good value and how to allocate resources. I've been self employed for over 40 years and know how to employ my energies to both prosper and serve. Although I've never pursued a career in the world of finance I majored in economics and social science at the University of Southern California. I enjoy to this day the study of the flow of money, both macro and micro in the realm of economics. Additionally I have served and taught in over one hundred teacher training programs.

3. Please summarize your prior and current service to the Dharma. If you have served in leadership positions please note them.

3. My Service to the Dharma includes: Serving on the Yoga west board, Serving on the Executive council for the Los angeles Sangat and Serving as a regular volunteer in the Share-a-Meal food service program. Serving Yoga West's and many other teacher training programs. Serving my students and clients in the most sacred and confidential manner. Serving Guru Ram Das Ashram on a daily manner by my attendance and Seva. Being a regular financial contributor to the LA Sangat as well as Miri Piri Academy an other Dharmic organizations.

4. Please describe your experience of the Siri Singh Sahib as a teacher and your

experience of his teachings.

- a) Please describe how your personal sadhana and spiritual discipline support you to keep up.

My personal relationship with the Siri Singh Sahib goes back to 1976. I was 22 at the time and had just graduated from USC. I was already moving away from my University studies in economics, towards the healing sciences. At the time I had begun the study of Pantomime and Kundalini yoga. It was in the fall of 1976 I took a class at UCLA called 'yoga for the health professional.' This class was taught by Yogi Bhanan and some of his students. The first words I heard Yogi Ji speak was "you're as old as your spine". But what really struck me as profound was the way he used his facial muscles. I had been practicing facial muscle control as part of my mime training. I was impressed to see how he could use his eyebrows independently of each other. So my first real connection to the SSS was trying to imitate his facial expressions. To do that I would sit in the front of the class at his feet. Imitating his face proved to be very challenging. Little did I know at the time that the face mirrors the mind. But I knew that he was a man I needed to study. The first time I spoke with the SSS was after class at 1977 L.A. mens course. Baba Singh brought me up to introduce me. I recall sitting in rock pose for a very long time too scared to move. When he finally acknowledged me he stared for what seemed like a very long time. His first words to me were "I see you as a saint". That was something my 22 year old brain had no capacity to comprehend about myself as I had not lived a very saintly life in my college years. He then was curious about my years in gymnastic competition. I told him I was about to retire from the sport but he wanted me to stay involved which I couldn't understand at the time. But the deep connection was made there and has continued to deepen further.

I have had a very challenging but ultimately successful time fulfilling all of the difficult tasks he put before me. If interested one can read about them in the book "Everyday Devotion." Whether treating the many individuals he sent to me for my therapeutic guidance or the collaborations on the songs we created together. Those were the easy tasks, the more difficult you could either read about or ask me personally. But I did fulfill all except for one last assignment. That is to write a book about relaxation. That will happen soon enough. But I know he was very satisfied with my fulfillments a few months before his passing. It was in that final meeting where I presented him the book "Divine Alignment" that he said "That is very good, now I can rest"

I have been living the 3ho life with great enthusiasm for these 44 years and I look forward to experiencing more. I teach weekly at Yoga West LA and I'm on the staff of teacher training. I teach in the teacher training in other centers as well. In addition I take a least 2 Kundalini Yoga classes every week. I do this for my own growth and enjoyment but I also want my students to see me as regular student.

Regarding the rest of my lifestyle I attend Gudwara everyday. I play Gurbani Kirtan twice a week and I serve in the children program weekly at GuruRam Das Ashram. I have continued to collaborate with the SSS on his poetry. By this I mean I'm writing new music to put his poems to.

I am continuing to live up to the title he gave me. And that is "Posture Master". I really do make a continuous effort to live by the standard he set for me. I daily dig into his teachings to support my growing consciousness. As I mentioned earlier I still need to write what he said should be a small book on relaxation. Here's what I know about that so far. "Relaxation is the highest Wisdom. Relaxation is surrendering the unnecessary tension so you feel the hand of God guide you" SSS. So it will be a small book but big assignment.

I daily get up and take my cold shower, read Jap ji, meditate and go to Gudwara. I also do Shabad kyria every night before sleep. I still have aspirations to read more of my Banis and that is my hope for my future.

5. Please describe what the Siri Singh Sahib's saying means to you: "If you cannot see God in all, you cannot see God at all." In practical terms:

a) How would you apply this saying in your day to day service on the board?

b) How would apply this perspective to help our community and organizations move forward together?

Seeing God in all requires both philosophical and experiential understandings. As Jaap Sahib so aptly describes, God is everything and nothing. It's the mystery of the the Anahat, the unstuck sound. This is the first cause manifestation of the heart center in all Human Beings and well as All of creation. Truth speaks from nothing as everything. To appreciate Kartapurkh is to recognize God as the doer in all things, doing everything all at once and forever. All of creation is God's constant doings throughout time and space. Seeing God in all is seeing and knowing that God is not separate from the creation but is the creation. Learning to see God in all can only be realized by the Guru's guidance. Without the Guru's guidance we only experience the creation as infinite separations leading us to believe we are disconnected and alone. In fact we all share the same one soul divided by the vibrations of our experiences. There is no such thing as a Sikh soul or an American soul just one Maha Atma divided into the many forms throughout creation. Therefore I see God in the suffering as well as the beauty. I see God as the homeless, in the rich and fearful. God teaches me throughout his creation, sometimes as a sage and sometimes as a psychotic. And since I am one with the creation I am the sage and the psychotic, but with the Guru's guidance I can serve all as I serve myself.

b. Using this understanding to move our community forward requires having skills at using this oneness of being with all to build and deepen connections. I really believe that that I'm here to add to the beauty. Being able to communicate with skills that connect physically, mentally and spiritually can inspire our community to act creatively and courageously. We also need to be guided how to make wise sacrifices to ensure our future growth. "It is the responsibility of the conscious person to make himself understood, it's not the responsibility of the other person to understand"-SSS.

I believe I can bring a desire, direction and discipline to this position and add to the beauty I envision for our community.

6. What do you understand the Role of the SSSC to be? How do you see the SSSC carrying out that role on a:

- a) Practical level
- b) Spiritual level

I see the role of a SSSC board member as someone entrusted with oversight, creative guidance and inspiration of the whole organization that the Siri Singh Sahib was in charge of. We have to hold all of the vision statements of the various businesses and nonprofit organizations in our hearts and minds, while working to manifest a wholehearted vision for our future destinies and the Dharmic entities. We need both a birds eye and worms eye perspective to help manifest this collective future. I will continue working to become comparative, comprehensive and intuitive.

7. As an SSSC Trustee you are accountable to the Sangat. Describe:

- a) How you would like to build and enhance the relationship between the Sangat and the SSSC?
- b) How you will personally deal with the pressure of accountability while maintaining your spirit of service?
- c) How do you traditionally respond in a crisis or high-tension situation?

7a. Just to be available, known and open to being a voice of this Board. The SSSC has done a lot to keep a relationship with the Sangat and I would just make sure to be known for serving this position and being available. It is a matter of my commitment that I try to represent myself as someone who is available to serve and trust. I would like see the Kundalini Yoga teacher training Kundalini programs give better explanations of who we and what we are. Meaning our businesses and the other organizations.

7b. Having been through more than a few Dharmic challenges I would do what I have always done, offer it to the Guru. By that I mean, meditate on God's name and bow to the Guru. Then listen deeply and act courageously. Pressure can't be eliminated but it can be equalized. The equalization requires humility, which would allow me to receive praise and blame alike. So here is how I put it to practice: Facts, faith and fortitude, in that order. One needs humility when one gets the facts wrong. So I bow and change. Then I bring my faith into play and support that with fortitude. Fortitude is energetic courage. To practice courage is to connect the depth of your heart with your vitality.

7c. I have responded to crisis with calmness. I don't claim to have mastered calmness but when the situation requires I try to respond with a strong navel, a warm heart and a cool head.  
Breathe deeply, listen deeply and act courageously.

8. The SSSC practices inclusion, transparency, and accountability.

- a) What experience do you have incorporating these practices into your personal and professional life, and
- b) How would you incorporate them into our Organizations?

8a. Inclusion and transparency begins with who is welcome in your home. I have welcomed many people of all different spiritual beliefs, political affiliations and sexual orientations. If you come in peace you are welcome. I also seek out people with very different beliefs then my own often to share a meal and attempt to listen and understand a differing point of view. I do consider myself openhearted and therefore by nature I am welcoming. In my professional life as a healer therapist, I serve the needs in front of me. After 44 years of practice I have maintained a love all serve all approach. This doesn't mean I ignore ungraceful behavior, I don't. Kindness isn't always nice but it is still kind. Love sometimes has to be tough.

8b. I believe what you are informs what you do. To start with I try to keep an ever watchful eye using my negative mind looking for problems before they become a crisis. Then use my positive mind to find solutions. Really it come down to act courageously before being forced to react anxiously.

9. How do you see the 3HO/Sikh Dharma family of Nonprofit and For-profit organizations serving humanity in these times?

- a) What do you see as the three (3) greatest challenges facing the Dharma (Sikh Dharma-3HO and the family of For-profit and Nonprofit entities)? What would you do as a Trustee to overcome these challenges?
- b) What skills, tools, and techniques can you bring to the SSSC Board of Trustees to help us move toward the vision you described above?

9a. The three greatest challenges facing our Dharma and its organization are these.  
1. Holding the form of the Guru and sharing this technology with joy, acceptance and openness that allow our children to be committed to living the Guru's teachings. And how to inspire more people to grow into the form and lifestyle of the Guru's wisdom. I know this from my community at GRDA. We struggle to garner and maintain active participants. It can be a long journey from Kundalini yoga, to reading in our weekly Akand path, to being committed to

serving. I consider that the most important challenge facing us. Our future leadership depends on this.

2. We need to generate more wealth in order to create opportunities for people to live more connectedly if not communally. In the Los Angeles Sangat we are challenged by the cost of living. Young people would love to live by the Ashram but rents are too expensive. I have personally created a communal environment but this is only available for a few people beyond my family. This is a problem only money can fix. Everyone of our non-profits needs more funding.
3. We need good messaging about who we are and our relationship to our founder the SSS.
  - b) We have been challenged in the past and we will again in the future. We have been unable to properly represent who we are and what we have to offer. Slanders and scandals have challenged us in the past will again in the future. We will need better and consistent messaging.

9b.

1. Keeping our children interested and involved requires supporting their “tribe” that reflects the Guru’s virtues and values. We have to stop forcing them into the template of our structure. My generation is often perceived as fanatic and too restrictive. They want a “tribe” of their peers and contemporaries. Specifically we can offer more housing and jobs in places they want to live, where affordable housing doesn’t exist. Post high school is the critical time, even if they attended Miri Piri Academy. The opportunity for education and jobs is the key. Los Angeles would be ideal place for post high school. We have a Sangat, a pop culture and great weather and environments. We are also blessed with world class colleges. This includes community colleges, which for most, is a better transition from high school. Financial resources would make that possible and there is a reasonable way to do that. There are properties in LA both private and Dharmic that could create dorm like living that would be very desirable. It can be done in a very reasonable fashion. This can happen in other places as well. In addition we can expand the role of women even more than they already occupy. After a few years of discussion the GRDA community has finally allowed women to serve as overnight sevadars. As the SSS would often say, “If women get their act together men will follow”. There still remains a large divide between Sikh Dharma and 3HO. It’s been my personal mission for many years to erase the divide but in a way that is inclusive and open.

I believe it’s through our business that we can teach beyond the paycheck. Our values and virtues need to be very obvious through our businesses. One of the SSS business teachings is this. “The purpose of business is to make a profit and to leave behind a pleasant fragrance”. The memory of any interaction needs to carry a sweet fragrance of our character. Good business practices will go a long way to insuring a profit.

This profit is the resource needed to grow our individual and collective futures. These resources under wise stewardship can bring about faster transition into this new age. We have many future Sangats to support as well

as expanding our other outreaches. Providing jobs is required to enable our future generations the opportunity to gracefully live the science and devotion our Dharma offers.

2. Jobs and career support. That is what all of our communities need. In the late 70's I first began to live in the form of Guru Gobind Singh. It was no longer possible for me dressed the way I do and find gainful employment. So I was able to work for one of the community business for a few years until I became self employed. In addition I lived in one of our local ashrams for very low rent. I continued to live in the Ashram for the next 12 years. We can recreate that but even better by first deciding that this would be a good use of resources and having some Ashram like living situations. The new version will become more relaxed and less restrictive but still within the parameters of conscious living. Creating jobs where none presently exists will require skills resources inspiration and perspiration. It might not be possible to create this for 18 year olds in the short term but there are many yoga students who would love to live in the modern communal setting right now. All over the US communal spaces are being created in the big cities where rents a just too high for many. These have proven very popular and profitable for the owners of these properties. Often these communal spaces are designated non-drug and alcohol living environments. To be able live in desirable places and have it affordable is a great possibility. The yoga students in our community have jobs but often can't comfortably afford to live here.
3. Become famous. Become renowned in your chosen profession, endeavor, hobby and service.

It sounds maybe too self centered but that is really the way to garner attention and attraction.

Think of the power of Oprah, one sentence and you can launch careers. What if you're a congressmen? or an actor, imagine someone famous touting his love for yogi tea. People already love what we offer, let's leverage that love. Look what Snatam has already done. One or many of us could be ten times bigger.

9b. I have taught, coached, ministered and healed people my whole life. My first independent job was when I was 16. I worked at a YMCA teaching gymnastics to young kids. I was good then I would be much better in the future. When I was 23 and living in Guru Arjan Dev ashram in LA I was coaching a high school level gymnastic team, introducing the team to Kundalini Yoga as part of their training. In addition to 3 hour afternoon regular practice I offered Kundalini Yoga 3 mornings a week from 7 to 8 am. We were the highest ranked team in the USA that year. Sure they were talented but the yoga was the fairy dust. The reason they were willing to do this much and to a coach who wore a turban was kind of simple. I was still a better Gymnast than most of my students. They wanted to in some way be like me. And so they listened and worked and obeyed, loved and served and indeed excelled. I have continued to this day teaching workshops for P.E. and gymnastic coaches. I still get asked "how do

you do that” So beyond the formal Kundalini classes and work shops I have continued to teach people from where they are. Bringing the outer community into our homes is another easy way to involve newer even potential students. Pangat and sangat in our homes. Making our lifestyle fun and enjoyable rather than rigid and fanatic. That is how we are sometimes perceived.

Regarding business and business growth I have some experience. I have been successfully self employed for over 40 years. I have learned how live both simple and comfortable. I’ve been able to give and receive as well as lose money and recover. Before I became the multidisciplinary therapist that I am today I was once on a career path in business. My college major was economics and social science. In addition throughout college I operated a very successful business. I bought and sold luggage at swap meets on weekends. Even though I was on an athletic scholarship the money I made was nice for me and helpful to my family. To this day I like to study the flow of money as well as the flows of the circulatory systems. I’m well aware that all expansions requires knowing where to contract. The laws of the body and the laws of money are really the same. All expansion comes from a contraction. Knowing where to contract makes for predictable expansions. I have a good sense of what and where to sacrifice in order to grow and prosper.

With regard to protecting our image from slander and misinformation we need good strategies and realistic understandings of how the world sees us. I’ve been witness to a few of our Dharmic scandals. I’ve witness up close how the SSS managed the situations. I was always impressed by his coolness under fire. He would calmly adapt strategies an implement them. I’ve learned about that too but I don’t pretend to be as centered as he was. I did learn about trying to heal people where they were rather than cast them aside. Good strategies, good messaging and good projection will see us through times of adversarial stress.

10. Board service regularly requires 10 to 20 hours per month (or more) in evening and weekend board and committee meetings. These meetings are generally held at 8:00 pm Eastern time (20:00 hours). In addition, there are three Face-to-Face meetings per year (two in New Mexico following the International Khalsa Council Meetings (end of April and end of September) and a third in January or February in Los Angeles or one of our Ashram communities). The Face-to-Face meetings are two days in April and September and three days in January/February. *Note: One day of each Face-to-Face meeting period is always on Monday.*

- a. Can you fulfill these requirements?
- b. If so how will you balance these requirements with your other personal and professional responsibilities?
- c. What do you anticipate being the most difficult part of serving as a Trustee on the SSSC Board?

10a. Yes I have the time.

b. My children are adults, my Wife and I are happily together after 30 years and my professional and community responsibilities afford me the opportunity to serve on the board.

c. The most challenging part of serving on this board will be the possibility of enduring too much unnecessary talking. I tend to get board if the discussions get too redundant and unnecessarily emotional.

11. Are you related by blood or marriage to an officer, director, employee, or paid contractor of any of the constituent organizations (nonprofit or for-profit) including all subsidiaries?

a. If yes, to whom are you related, how are you related to them, and what is their position?

My wife serves as the board chair of Miri Piri Academy.

I am presently on the board of Yoga West LA. Yoga West LA is part of KIIT.