

॥Om̐ bhūrbhuvāḥ svaḥ tatsaviturvareṇyāṃ bhargo devasya dhīmahi dhiyo yo naḥ prachodayāt ॥  
(May Almighty illuminate our intellect and inspire us towards the righteous path)

- Rigveda 3/62/10; Samveda 1462, Yajurveda 3/35, 22/9, 30/2, 36/3



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Dr. Pranav Pandya

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**Amrit Chintan**

## ***My Prostrations to the Holy Sandals of My Guru***

*Ananta samsar samudra tara naukayitabhyam guru bhaktitabhyam |*

*Vairagya samrajyadha poojanabhyam, namo nama sri guru padukabhyam | |*

My prostrations to the holy sandals of my Guru, which serve as the boat to cross this endless ocean of material world, which endow me with the devotion to my Guru, and which grace with the valuable dominion of renunciation.

*Kavitva varasini sagarabhyam, dourbhagya davambudha malikabhyam |*

*Dhoorikruta namra vipatitabhyam,, namo nama sri guru padukabhyam | |*

My prostrations to the holy sandals of my Guru, which are the ocean of knowledge; which serve as the downpour of water to put out the fire of misfortunes; and which remove the distresses of those who prostrate before them.

*Nata yayo sripatitam samiyu kadachidapyasu daridra varya |*

*Mookascha vachaspatitam hi tabhyam,namo nama sri guru padukabhyam | |*

My prostrations to the holy sandals of my Guru, adoring which the worst poverty-stricken have turned out to be great possessors of wealth, and even the mutes have turned out to be great masters of speech.

[Excerpts from *Guru Paduka Stotram* by Adi Shankaracharya]

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**Faith is the bird that sings when the dawn is still dark. - Rabindranath Tagore**

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**Grace is to the body, what good manners are to the mind.  
- FranÁois de la Rochefoucauld**

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# Let Each River of Our Country Become Sacred Like Mother Ganga

*Papapahaari duritaari tarangadhari  
Shailaprachari girirajaguhavidaari |  
Jhankarakari haripaadarajopahari  
Gaanga punatu satatamshubhakarivari | |*

“One which absolves all sins; is an enemy of evil deeds; has waves; that flows on rocks; that breaks through the caves of Himalayas, the king of mountains; one that flows with musical sounds and washes the feet of Sri Hari – Let that eternally auspicious water of Ganga purify me.”

Millions of Indians have expressed their faith in and prayers to Mother Ganga as mentioned above since times immemorial. Mother Ganga has been showering her love on millions of her children, but have her children been able to discharge their responsibilities towards her? Have they fulfilled their duties towards her? These questions have remained unanswered till now. There was only one Bhagirath several *yugas* ago who brought Ganga onto Earth with his penance, prayers and untiring efforts. But there has not been another Bhagirath since then who could offer his life to make the water of Ganga clean and pure. Today, Mother Ganga is sad, looking at her children's indifference and is missing her son Bhagirath.

Who is able to see the sadness of Ganga? Are they, who dump their puja items into its waters through umpteen rituals, able to feel her sadness? Or those who set up factories to amass wealth and dump the industrial waste into the waters of Ganga? Just a few months ago, Kumbh Mela was organized in Prayag, the king of pilgrimage centers. During the course of Kumbh Mela, this issue was taken up for discussion. Everybody including sadhus, strangely- dressed mendicants and those dressed in grandeur participated in this discussion. During those very days, there was news that water of Ganga was causing cancer, leading to death. According to a survey conducted by The Indian Council of Medical Research, there is an increased danger of fatal diseases like cancer due to water of Ganga. According to the report, those living near the banks of Ganga in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal are getting entangled in the grip of cancer. When compared to Uttar Pradesh, the situation still worse in Bihar and West Bengal. It is evident that largely the big cities at the banks of the river are responsible for this situation. Though these cities developed because of Ganga, they began to dump poisonous wastes into the same river and endangered the lives of millions of people.

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**A book is a gift you can open again and again. - Garrison Keillor**

Why Ganga alone, today, 27 rivers in 7 states are getting smothered. The situation is so bad that these cannot even be counted as rivers. We can call it a river when there is a flow of clear water throughout the year and which can quench the thirst of a person without any risk to health. It is extremely deplorable that majority of the rivers in the country do not satisfy these criteria today. Mahananda in West Bengal was considered the second biggest river after Ganga. This river which was nourishing thousands of villages is in grave danger today. It has lost its flow owing to the burden of waste that it has to carry from cities and villages. Other rivers in West Bengal are also in similar condition. They are decreasing in size day by day; and they are losing out on the land too. What used to be a river before is now being used for construction. Other rivers of the state namely Dhaunk, Ramzan, Dekan, Dagra etc are either in similar state or even worse.

Important rivers in Poornia district of Bihar - Harada, Kosi; Gandagola of Katihar - are in last stages of extinction. Masaiha river of Buxar has been a target for encroachment since a long time. Earlier river Gandak used to have some small ships sailing through it, but today even a boat cannot be rowed in it. People living near the river recount that during their childhood, it was extremely difficult to cross the river, but today it is nothing more than a shrinking stream. The condition of Uttar Pradesh, which is known as the land of rivers, is a lot worse. The Varuna river, from which Varanasi gets its name, is not even in existence. This river, which used to flow through the heart of the city, now remains a dirty nullah. Prayag today looks less of confluence of three rivers and more of confluence of pollution from various cities. It is difficult to call Yamuna in Delhi, Mathura and Agra as a river. Country's capital, Delhi has converted Yamuna and Hindan into carriers of wastage.

There have been talks about cleaning of Ganga and other rivers (which have reached this dire state of affairs) by NGO's as well as by leaders sitting in the Parliament, but the situation remains unchanged. Our ancestors had taken the first step to include rivers alongside the names of Gods and Goddesses and lauded their significance and contribution to humanity. But we, on the other hand, have forgotten all about their divine qualities and have, knowingly or unknowingly, imbibed all demonic tendencies. Long ago, Chanakya had written the verse below describing the qualities of Kali Yuga.

*Kalau dashasahasreshu haristyajati medineem |  
Tadardham jahnaveeteyam tadardham gramadevata | |*

'Lord Vishnu will vanish after ten thousand years have passed in Kali Yuga, Ganga will begin to disappear after five thousand years and *Gramadevatas* will disappear after 2500 years.'

Scriptures say that five thousand years have elapsed in Kali Yuga and it really appears as though Ganga is close to becoming extinct. The condition of all the other rivers of the country is also

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**Tears are the safety valve of the heart when too much pressure is  
laid on it. - Albert Smith**

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worsening by the day. If Brahmaputra, Godavari, Krishna and Cauvery proceed in the same direction of extinction, then the following poem will lose its meaning and context – '*Ganga, Yamuna, Brahmaputra, Krishna, Cauveri jakar mil gayin sagar mein huin sab ek hain, Hind desh ke sabhi nivasi, hum sabhi jan ek hai*' (Meaning- When Ganga, Yamuna, Brahmaputra, Krishna, Cauvery go and meet the ocean, they all become one there. Similarly, all the citizens of India are united). If you listen, understand and accept the truth as it exists today, both the poem and the rivers are losing their meaning. All this is happening because of the pace of expanding cities and industrialization. Whenever the topic of deterioration of Ganga and other rivers comes up, people express their worry and grief; and plans and administrative committees are formed. Very recently, when a young sanyasi who was fighting for making Ganga pollution-free died, the government came up with an administrative committee in a huff. It was decided that this committee will function under the Central Forest and Environment Ministry. It will be headed by the Prime Minister himself and the chief ministers of all those states through which Ganga flows will be members of this committee.

It is very heartening to know that the objective of the committee is to protect Ganga and to ensure its cleanliness and uninterrupted flow and is to make Ganga pollution-free by 2020. But all these are words on paper. The truth is that the committee has not even met. In this context, the non-government members namely Magsaysay Awardee Rajendra Singh, Ravi Chopra of People's Science Institute and AMU professor Rashid Hayat Siddiqui resigned on seeing the government's indifference. This goes to prove that it is futile to hope that any kind of efforts by the government in cleaning Ganga or any other river in the future will yield any results.

How can we preserve the rivers? In response to this question, it has to be noted that most of the programs currently are about managing sewage and industrial waste. Efforts are not focused with the overall condition of the river in mind. Looking at the danger being faced by Ganga and other rivers, the health of a river is can be improved by identifying the environmental flow. The meaning of environmental flow relates to identifying the quantity, quality and flow (with respect to time); while also determining the length of the river, its benefits and balancing the natural water resources between people and other species.

In reality, environmental flow has multiple facets. There are both social and technical aspects associated with it. From the social standpoint, it depends on what the society expects from the river in terms of cultural / spiritual support, as means of livelihood, biodiversity or in any other way. Many multifaceted techniques will be required for detailed study of science of water, its flow and geology. WWF's survey of environmental flow in just the Ganga basin has shown that in the stretch from Rishikesh to Kanpur, there is no sufficient flow of water even for 8 months in a year.

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**A great man shows his greatness by the way he treats little men. - Thomas Carlyle**

In this context, after studying and analyzing the present situation, we can definitely conclude that effort to preserve the unimpeded flow of Ganga and other rivers is a national need. It is extremely important for us to preserve the environmental flow of our rivers. Today, they have been bound with dams and barrages at several places. At the national-level, in accordance with the environmental protection law, it is required to release enough water to preserve the rivers and their natural flow. In addition to this, there is a dire need for conservation of water. There have been many techniques for conservation of water through which increased production may be achieved in the farming sector.

Expert analysis shows that there will be an increased demand for water by the industrial segment by 2025. It is true that industries require water, but the greater truth is that everyone requires water. Hence water should be considered as a common resource for society, nature and industries. Hence people from different walks of society should discuss with scientists and government agencies regarding this issue. Water wastage in the cities should be prevented. Government should also look at managing waste water and pollution in the cities. More importantly, people in the society should be made aware of preserving the rivers and water.

Each and every citizen of the country should reminded again and again that Ganga and other rivers have played a pivotal role in nurturing the civilizations. The ill-treatment to which we are subjecting these rivers should be looked upon as collective suicide. Just not river Ganga, time has come for us to display our responsibilities towards all the rivers, because it is just not about water problem but about handling a serious crisis. This crisis involves food, water, forests and all the resources that emanate from them. It has become very clear that nothing much can be achieved by mere governmental plans. It is essential that all of us should join hands to save the rivers of the country. We are dependent on rivers every moment of our life. Our very existence depends on water, food and forests. All of us are using them and the by-products in some form or the other. Hence it is our duty to protect them.

Now is the appropriate time for millions of our countrymen to ponder on this issue and jump into action to discharge their responsibilities. Till now, whenever discussions ensued on this topic, they got concluded by passing critical remarks about the government and its plans. But now, this is not how the discussions should end. Protecting Ganga and other rivers of the country is not just the duty of any particular person or organization or government alone, but of each and every citizen of the country. We have to consider it as our national responsibility and come forward to discharge our duties. Until and unless each and every house, village and city on the banks of the river from its source point till it merges with the ocean, are aware of their responsibilities towards the river, nothing concrete can be achieved regarding this issue.

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**Against the assault of laughter nothing can stand. - Mark Twain**

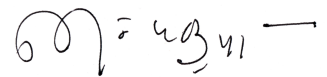
Today, the country again needs a Bhagirath; not just one but many. Some people in our country have even commenced efforts in this regard and that is certainly praiseworthy. Balbir Singh Seechewal has become recognized as Punjab's most famous eco-activist, spearheading an anti-river-pollution campaign. He has resurrected the 110-miles long Kali Bein rivulet to such an extent that people have begun to visit the river for tourism. Rajendra Singh from Rajasthan, also known as 'Waterman of India' has resurrected the Alwari River in Alwar district of the state which had dried up by 1940 itself. This not only prevented the exodus of the Rajasthani people, but also rejuvenated farming in the area. Greenery was restored when trees were grown. There is such encouraging news from South India as well. The industrial town of Tirupur in Tamil Nadu was throwing its toxic industrial waste into Bhavani and Noyal rivers. Regional educational institutions took the help of Yoren Ose, a professor from Israel and rekindled the hope of cleansing the rivers. Professor Yoren Ose is renowned for rejuvenating many water sources in his country through the technology of nano-filtration. It is essential to mention in this context that Gayatri Teerth - Shantikunj has made pioneering efforts towards this national responsibility. I just want to say here that all of us have to show the grit of Bhagirath. The impossible can become possible if the perspective changes. Let us all realize our responsibilities. Each and every river that flows in our country is equivalent to Mother Ganga – kindling this emotion in the minds of the people is our foremost responsibility. We should be enthusiastic to preserve each and every water source and rivulet. When this seed of thought is implanted in the minds of all the citizens and they resolve to do their duty towards cleansing the rivers, it is then that the following verse from the Vedas will really become true –

*Sham no devirabhishtya aapo bhavantu peetaye |*

*Sham yorabhih sravantu nah | |*

Let the divine waters give us happiness. Let these fulfill our wishes and become a source of peace and life.

With Prayer-filled *Guru Poornima* Greetings,



(Pranav Pandya)

**P.S.** –When this issue was being processed, a heart-rending news of devastation of Garhwal region of Uttarakhand by flash floods and landslides hit the headlines. The tragedy has claimed thousands of lives and made lakhs of people homeless. Environmentalists feel that this is not just nature's fury; it may be the result of too many hydropower projects, underground tunnels, roads and indiscriminate encroachments of riverbeds by buildings coupled with deforestation. Be it nature's fury or the man-made disaster, let us unite at this hour of national crisis and help the affected people in whatever way we can do best and pray for the peace of the departed souls.

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**Quality means doing it right when no one is looking. - Henry Ford**

# Art of Creative Entertainment

Apart from air, water and food, sustenance of healthy life requires a compatible ambience and direct or indirect support of fellow beings. Need for entertainment is also as important as these basic necessities, and this requirement is unique to the human species.

All through their lifespan, other creatures remain preoccupied with arranging for their food and shelter. As and when necessary, they have their own ways of expressing and sharing their sorrows and joys by jumping or flying, or roaring, barking, chirping, etc. They often have to traverse long stretches in the skies or in the forests and wilds. That also serves as a rejuvenating change for them. Their fights and plays within the group they live with, and their act of hunting for the prey, etc, supplement whatever more they might need for 'amusement'. They don't require any external source or activity of entertainment.

But this is not so in the case of humans. Our species has a mind that wanders around with ever-new thoughts, impressions, expectations, cravings, fantasies, negativities, and what not. We perpetually accumulate more of these and hence more of agility and illusion in that process. We keep swinging and sinking in the whirlpool of hopes and despairs, aspirations and depressions, exciting zeal and dooming

lethargy, enthusing joy and vexing boredom from moment to moment. We have to face ups and downs of changing circumstances and deal with the consequences of our actions. At times the burden of vicious or sick mentality becomes heavier than adversities and sinks one into the smog of despair or mire of vices. At times, little success or false ego makes the mind fly vehemently in the mirage of daydreaming and complacency. It needs lots of effort and loving support for adept tuning of mood or tempo. Entertainment is a part of such efforts or necessities.

In this respect, as for the other aspects of human life, force of the mind proves to be the mightiest. The domain of mind encompasses intrinsic impressions, tendencies, convictions, faiths, inclinations, emotions, thoughts and imaginations. One's personality is a product of these mental elements. It is therefore said that one's mental state governs his circumstances. From a worldly viewpoint, by and large, these circumstances define the course or overall state of life – whether one's life is in peace and happiness or in trouble and facing adversity; whether it is excelling or declining.

## **Need and Purpose of Entertainment:**

If somebody's mind is burdened under stress or tension, or engulfed in untoward

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**Intellectual growth should commence at birth and cease only at death. - Albert Einstein**

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imaginations or illusory thoughts, he will not be able to do even the normal, daily chores appropriately. He will not be able to take any decision or think properly. Sound sleep is better than partial or disturbed sleep in which one is neither awake nor asleep but keeps wandering in the landscape of haphazard dreams. He does not get any rest in such a state and gets tired without doing any work. Stressed or tensed state of mind is more harmful. Longer the stretch of this state, the worse would be one's physical and mental health. Unnecessary irritation and apprehensions and depressions are natural consequences of such mental states. Unmindful thoughts, actions and decisions occur in such a disturbed or abnormal state of mind and worsen one's circumstances on personal, social and professional fronts in several ways. Good opportunities and external support will not be of much help unless the mind is in normal state.

Energetic and balanced state of mind is a great asset that helps making good use of one's potentials and fetching the best out of any opportunity. Thoughtful and focused mind can safely float in turbulent currents of unfavorable circumstances and bear all pressures, hindrances and adversities. So it is desirable to keep the mind alert and calm irrespective of the ups and downs of external circumstances. While adequate sound sleep, engaging of mind in creative activities and constructive thoughts are essential for this purpose, entertainment also provides excellent support.

### **Choice of Entertainment:**

In general, humorous company, performances of good musicians, singers, dancers and actors (e.g., in comedy shows, dance and music programs, and cinemas or plays, etc) provide immediate entertainment. However, it is not possible to have a humorous company all the time, or to watch such programs in a theater, or on TV or computer, or listen to them on the radio at any arbitrary time at will. Lighter chat with people around is also not possible at random.

Moreover, it is a common experience that what entertains one and in what way, depends upon one's mental state. Sometimes one may be eager to watch a certain program on television, but at some other times the same program or show may appear boring or annoying to the same person. Sometimes one may like to listen to music while at some other times chit-chatting with a friend might give the desired boost or entertaining diversion to one's mood.

Thus it is in the fitness of things to realize the psychological basis of entertainment and look for what could be the nearest and always accessible mode that would serve the purpose of entertainment.

### **Spirit of Entertainment in Daily Chores:**

Transforming filth into cleanliness, disorder into order, lethargy into meaningful activity, is an art of beautifying life. In our own routines, working styles, in homes, surroundings, work-places things are not always so neat and clean, well organized, or managed properly. Arranging things on the

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**Behind every argument is someone's ignorance. - Robert Benchley**

working table or at home itself gives a positive diversion to the mind.

**Orderliness:** Attempting to be a more organized person and trying orderly management of things is a wonderful way of creative entertainment. It also brings benefits in terms of efficient use of time, faster completion of daily chores as well as the assigned job. We may begin it with cleaning and proper upkeeping of the tools we use – e.g. setting the bed, organizing office or study table, cupboard, bookshelf, etc. This habit would also inspire others around us.

The old Master instructed the unhappy young lady to put a handful of salt in a glass of water and then to drink it. "How does it taste?" the Master asked. "Very bad" Said the lady. The Master then asked the young lady to take another handful of salt and put it in the lake. The two walked in silence to the nearby lake and when the apprentice swirled his handful of salt into the lake, the old man said, "Now drink from the lake." As the water dripped down the young lady's chin, the Master asked, "How does it taste?" "Good!" remarked the apprentice. "Do you taste the salt?" asked the Master. "No," said the young lady. The Master said, "The pain of life is pure salt; no more, no less. The amount of pain in life remains the same, exactly the same. But the amount we taste the 'pain' depends on the container we put it into. So when you are in pain, the only thing you can do is to enlarge your sense of things..... Stop being a glass. Become a lake!"

More powerful and elevating art of experiencing and spreading joy is seeing the good that dwells in everything, everyone around. Praising somebody's good qualities is not flattering. (It turns out so if you admire someone falsely or only for some selfish motive.) Your admirations should be aimed at encouraging somebody to do much better, enhance his/her virtues and inspire others. Sometimes a few words of consolation, positive support and optimistic guidance would turn somebody's life downside up and accelerate it on the path of progress. Inducing hope and enthusiasm in a despaired or depressed mind, motivating someone to make better use of his/her talents and potentials, uplifting the downtrodden, etc are wonderful ways of disseminating light and happiness in many lives. You will feel great joy and satisfaction in every such endeavor; the feeling of which would be so fulfilling, boosting and intense that perhaps no other success, possession, or external mode of entertainment could ever provide.

**Selected Reading:** As most of us have experienced while reading the newspapers and magazines, any report of cruelty, crimes or immoral conduct somewhat upsets the mind and recedes its enthusiastic mood. Negativity spreads negativity. Company of criminal mentality, perverted persons or thoughts attracts, influences and pulls many others on the slippery road of decline. Positive and virtuous thoughts and company of good people on the contrary induce inner delight and peace, and inspire one towards good deeds and excellence. You should therefore attempt direct

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**Keep your fears to yourself, but share your courage with others. - Robert Lewis Stevenson**

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or indirect contact with elevated personalities and their thoughts – by attending their discourses, discussions or regularly reading and contemplating over their thoughts and works.

There might be a lack of virtuous talents, benevolence and sincerity in the ambience you live. But there is no scarcity of inspiring narrations, works of art and fiction revolving around noble characters, biographies or memoirs, autobiographies of great personalities, their writings or recorded speeches and commentaries, and collections of their works. Reading or listening to these is indeed an enchanting source that would entertain and also illuminate your mind.

### **Interactions with Family & Friends:**

Rendering amicable support and help to family members, friends and colleagues in their good endeavors, nurturing harmony and cooperation on personal, social and professional fronts is so delightful for both the sides. Why can't we practice these in all our interactions every day? Being grateful to all those who have been kind and helpful to us is a definite means of generating pleasant

Above all, beware of compromises. Hold on to your own principles in weal or woe and never adjust them to others' "fads" through the greed of getting supporters. Your Atman is the support of the universe - whose support do you stand in need of?

**- Swami Vivekananda**

calmness and delight. If we start recording all the good that we have ever come across, read or seen, then all the troubling thoughts and negative feelings of arrogance, anger, jealousy, etc will begin to lose their grip on us. We will find that in spite of inflation of adversities and negativity, the extent of auspiciousness, goodwill and consequent happiness would always weigh heavier.

One can wipe out the bad, debasing, depressing or annoying memories by instant recalling of something good in one's life, howsoever short-lived or insignificant that might have been. This would cast out the smog of fallacies, vices, fatigue, boredom and tensions. Instead, it will induce the joy that one kept hunting in external means of cinema, television and what not.

Rather than killing time in gossiping and watching television shows, videos or cinema everyday, it is better to spend some free time sitting with family, playing with children, reading storybooks for them, having light chit-chat with clean humor, narrating or discussing something that gives useful information, knowledge or positive thought to everyone. Trying some creative work on holidays collectively with family and friends, one can make daily chores, routine jobs, more interesting.

One can get entertainment from everything, every moment, if one cultivates a cooperating and joyous temperament and looks at the horizons of happiness with a perspective consonant with one's nature.

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**Never fear shadows.... that always means there is a light shining somewhere. - Jonathan Santos**

## The Marvelous Human Brain

Dr. Wilder Penfield, a noted American neurosurgeon of yesteryears had reported amazing results during the study of the nerves and neuronal processing. Once, when he electrically charged a portion of the brain of an eight-year old girl undergoing a neurological treatment, she began to describe an incident without a pause; it appeared as if a gramophone record player had switched on inside her mouth.

There is no parallel to Mr. W J M Baton of England in building up brain-power and memory capacity. Born in Kent county of England, Baton was so dull that he could not remember what he read. He was very weak and sick; and he had to leave his school prematurely at the age of 11. What type of memory and wisdom can be expected from him? But inspired by his father, he developed a hobby of memorizing small events occurring around him and then describe to people with date, time and names of the places, just to impress them. He gradually increased his memorizing capacity to such an extent that he was considered as a walking encyclopedia! Baton became so famous in his time that after his death, one American health institute purchased his head for 10,000 dollars to study the secrets of his extraordinary brain capacity.

Dr. Penfield was surprised to note that such a young child was describing an incident in so much detail. The flow of her thoughts/ imagination and expressive narrations was amazing! The girl's mother later on revealed that the above incident had occurred, when this girl was only about two years old. As the doctor was sure that no child at that small age could ever remember a past incident, he conjectured that there must be a system in the brain that is 'matured', 'skilled' and 'thoughtful' since the time of birth. Although he could not find an answer in support of this consideration, the idea motivated him towards dedicated experimental research about this possibility.

Accidentally recorded or experimentally elucidated results in the modern scientific laboratories have affirmed several of the supernatural potentials of the human brain described in *yoga*-scriptures. The above-described experiment of Dr. Penfield is an elementary illustration of such findings. In the case of the particular example of the little girl, one might argue that certain peculiar incident must have created such an impact on the child's mind that it got assimilated in her memory with a high intensity and thus became 'ever memorable' to her. However, there are many other examples — including those of awakened

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**The roots of education are bitter, but the fruit is sweet. - Aristotle**

memories of the previous lives, which demonstrate the existence of the layers of latent memory with immense storage capacity in human brain which contain the memories of the previous lives and the inherent tendencies of one's mind.

A somewhat similar effect was observed in the case of an American boy. When external electrical current was flown through some specific nerves, the boy began humming a song in a language which was foreign to him. The tune of the song and the perfection of the boy's singing made it quite soothing. The song was instantaneously recorded in the lab. Later on, linguists recognized the language of this song as a dialect, which was spoken in some parts of West Germany long time ago. Surprisingly, nobody in the boy's family — neither maternal nor paternal relatives - had ever had any connection with that region of Germany. None among his acquaintances or friends had ever heard that language. After a detailed study of the case, the researchers concluded that the boy must have heard or learnt that song in a

previous life whose memories were assimilated in his brain's otherwise dormant portion, which got activated due to the (bio)electrical charge.

In a neurosurgical operation, Dr. Penfield had observed that a particular nerve of a patient used to be stimulated during the epileptic attack. After that particular nerve was carefully cut and separated the patient got rid of epilepsy and enjoyed a normal healthy life. Commenting on this case, Dr. Penfield stated that — “There are many thousand millions of protein molecules present in the brain matter; about two thousand millions of these have an average age of seventy years approximately. During the lifetime (active state) of these proteins, whatever a person perceives or experiences in the conscious state of the mind gets stored in neuronal registers of the brain. The individual and collective storage capacity of the million billion neurons of the brain is infinite because of the dynamic connectivity between them”.

There was a man, whose mind was very fickle. He began learning carpentry, but soon got bored of it. He went to a weaver and began to learn weaving. A few weeks passed and then he got interested in the work of a gardener. He began to learn gardening and soon enough got bored of this work too. Confused and upset, he sought the advice a scholar. The wise man told him – “Son! First set a clear goal for yourself. If you wander here and there without aim, your hands will always be empty.” This is why Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya has said, “Clock's pendulum moves day and night but does not reach anywhere. Likewise an aimless person does many things but doesn't attain anything worthwhile.”

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**Keep your face always toward the sunshine - and shadows will fall behind you. - Walt Whitman**

History has witnessed rare incidents of supernatural memory, depth of knowledge and exceptional talents of humans since the time of yore. Many of these live examples also highlight the eternal connection of the soul with the conscious, unconscious and super-conscious faculties of the mind. Observance of extraordinary potentials of farsightedness, clairvoyance, telepathy and other kinds of supernatural perceptions also gives evidential support to this aspect. Many such cases observed in the past few centuries have been recorded and compiled with authentic reports in some western countries. In his book 'New Frontiers of Mind', Prof. J.B. Rhine of Duke University has cited many examples of clairvoyance that were analyzed and tested by the neuroscientists and psychologists. Over fifty percent of the partly reported cases were proved to be true. Hundred percent of the cases pertaining to supernatural 'vision' during dreams or in a trance-like state of the mind were found to be true. One such case reported by Prof. Rhine is described below:

Rhine's neighbor's wife had once dreamt that her brother, who lived in a distant village, was going to his granary in a horse cart. There he opened his cart and all of a sudden climbed up the scaffold and committed suicide by shooting himself by a revolver. He had then fallen on a heap of chaff nearby. The lady was so frightened by this dream that she got up and asked her husband to immediately start for her brother's village. Her husband went to Rhine's father to borrow his horse cart. The couple reached the village next day early morning. The lady was shocked to find her brother's

dead body lying in his granary in exactly the same position as she had seen in the dream.

Another incident was reported to Prof. Rhine by one of his friends. The latter also was a university professor. This had happened when his wife was playing a game of bridge in a friend's house. She suddenly felt as if her daughter, whom she had left at home, is in some serious trouble. She wanted to inquire about her little daughter over telephone but had to continue playing cards on her friend's request. After a while, she felt so uneasy and mentally disturbed that she left the game and rushed to the phone. A maidservant received the phone. When the lady asked about her daughter's well being the servant paused for a while and replied 'she is all right'. As her friend insisted to complete the game, she then played for some more time and reached home in the evening. There she learnt that her daughter had had a narrow escape from serious injuries in a car accident.

When the girl (daughter) was going in a car with her father, she was on the back seat. Peeping through open window, she lost her balance and was kicked out due to a sudden jerk. Somehow she got hold of the window glass and was almost hanging outside the speeding car. She was so scared that she could not even scream! Before her father could realize this, the traffic police noticed her and stopped the car within a few minutes. Had there been a slight delay, the girl would have slipped down and got crushed in the running traffic. The tragic movements of this accident were exactly those when her mother felt uneasy and

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**A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds. - Francis Bacon**

panicked about her. The daughter had reached home safely by the time her mother had phoned there. As the child was all right, the maidservant did not tell anything over phone about the incident.

Rhine's book also cites some incidents of his professor friend receiving subtle signals from the cosmos when he was a graduate student living atop the hills of Pennsylvania. Such experiences cited in the book reflect the potentials of the subconscious and the unconscious mind. But modern science has not been able to decipher the brain-functions associated with the sublime cores of mind.

The human brain appears more mysterious, with its better understanding through advancement of research in different disciplines of neurosciences. Deeper elucidations would be possible by collaborating modern research with the ancient science of yoga and spirituality.

The approach of the Indian *rishis* — the ancient scientists of yoga and spirituality, had been comprehensive in understanding and using the miraculous potentials of human brain. They had focused their research on its subtle faculties — the *mana* (mind), *buddhi* (intellect), *chitta* (the inherent memory and source of mental tendencies) and *ahamkār* (the sense of being — the manifestation of the existence of the soul). They were able to study all the spiritual and mental aspects of the brain by realizing the existence, functions and eternal linkage of its sublime energy nuclei with the soul. Acquisition of the knowledge of its activities at the physical, physiological, neurological, and biochemical levels was an offshoot of their realizations of its subtle activities. They were able to attain supernatural talents and make use of the body beyond the barriers of time and space. The discoveries of these perfect scientists of brain, mind and consciousness will remain an immortal source of guiding light for researchers of all Ages.

A case of theft was brought to the court of Sessions Judge K.M. Sanjivaiya in Kodagil, Madras (now Chennai). The government prosecutor filed a petition calling on the court to transfer the case to another court as he feared that the court might be biased towards the accused because he was none other than the son of the judge himself! Justice K.M. Sanjivaiya argued that the prosecutor should resort to such option only if he found the verdict unsatisfactory or biased. It was really a testing time for the judge as he had to choose between love for his son and the law of the land. From the evidences and the testimonies of the witnesses it was clearly established that his son was guilty of theft. Justice K.M. Sanjivaiya sentenced him to two years in prison along with hard manual labor during his imprisonment. Responding to the grievances expressed by the family, Justice K.M. Sanjivaiya said, "As a father, I have undying love for my son. But my duty to defend justice takes precedence over my love for him. Law does not discriminate between anyone whether he is friend or foe."

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**Nothing strengthens authority so much as silence. - Leonardo da Vinci**

# Simple Ways To Cure Sleeping Disorders

Sleep is a very essential part of our lives. On the one hand, students feel worried that they lose a lot of study time by sleeping; on the other hand, there are people who are troubled by lack of sleep. The latter is a more troubling condition, and hence, it's considered an illness by doctors.

There are two major conditions associated with lack of sleep. These are insomnia and obstructive sleep apnea. If these are not properly diagnosed then they may lead to other severe health problems. Insomnia is when a person is not able to sleep. He spends the night twisting and turning in bed, trying to somehow get sleep. Specialists think that some of the factors that cause insomnia are lack of physical activity, working in stressful environment, and anxiety. The symptoms of insomnia include irritability, lack of energy, tiredness, laziness, among others.

In obstructive sleep apnea, lack of sleep is not caused by tension but due to obstruction of sinus. A person is able to fall asleep but snores during sleep and has an interrupted sleeping pattern. This leads to inflamed tonsils (tonsillitis), inflammation of nasal sinus (sinusitis), sleep apnea, among others. Heavy breathing without physical activity and excessive yawning are also symptoms of obstructive sleep apnea.

Numerous surveys have been conducted worldwide for sleep disorders. The findings indicate that it is a very common illness and affects almost half the population at some point in their lives. One of the problems discovered was that people don't think about a long term solution for the sleeping disorders and start taking sleeping pills instead. Most sleeping pills are 'sedative hypnotics' and are habit forming. Sleeping pills induce sleep in people but are not a long term solution. Slowly, individuals become completely dependent on these pills for getting sleep. To make matters worse, the side effects of these medicines are severe too. These symptoms include burning or tingling in hands, arms, feet, or legs, changes in appetite, dry mouth or throat, drowsiness, parasomnia, among others. That is why these medications are classified as narcotics (behavior changing).

According to researchers from Institute of Human Behaviour and Allied Sciences, consumption of sleeping pills over a long period of times may induce long lasting mental health problems. In this age, working youth and old people are most affected by sleeping disorders. If a person gets a good sleep in the night then he wakes up feeling energetic and approaches the day feeling refreshed. But unfortunately, the rat race of city life has led people to follow

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**Sell not virtue to purchase wealth, nor liberty to purchase power. - Benjamin Franklin**



a disorganized life style, which leads to habitual alcoholic consumption, and eating unhealthy diet. According to researchers, the long term solution is not sleep-medication but to tackle this problem through step by step lifestyle changes.

Normally, an individual effortlessly falls asleep within 10-15 minutes. There are various phases in a normal night's sleep. The two basic stages are R.E.M. (rapid eye movement) and N.R.E.M. (non-rapid eye movement). Typically, people begin the sleep with a period of NREM which has four stages:

Stage 1: This marks a reduction in brain activity from wakefulness state. Stage 1 may last for five to 10 minutes.

Stage 2: This is a period of light sleep during which the heart rate slows down and the body temperature decreases. At this point, the body prepares to enter deep sleep.

Stages 3 & 4: These are deep sleep stages where a person experiences dreams. During the deep sleep stages, body regenerates tissues, builds bones and improves immune system.

R.E.M. stage occurs approximately after 90 minutes of sleep and it causes rapid eye movement and returns brain activity to waking levels. At the same time sleep paralysis sets in the body which restricts the movement of an individual during sleep. This stops any voluntary/ involuntary muscle movements which happen during waking

state. The period of REM lasts for about 10 minutes and increases in duration with each subsequent onset. Children spend as much as 50% of the sleep in R.E.M. stage but this percentage decreases with age. This decreases even more for individuals who are suffering from anxiety, stress and other conditions.

If we want to cure all sleeping disorders then we need to first address the issues plaguing our thoughts and calm down our mind. To fill the vacuum created by the absence of negative thoughts, mantra chanting should be practiced. People who regularly practice mantra chanting recognize the powerful calming effect that it has on a troubled mind. Reading inspirational books before sleeping also has a therapeutic effect. If someone reads an inspirational book before sleeping then it increases the positivity in our minds and directs our thoughts in a creative direction. Eating a healthy plant-based diet and drinking recommended amount of water keeps the body healthy. A healthy mind lives in a healthy body, and a healthy body provides for a comfortable and rejuvenating sleep.

Good health and good sleep are inter-related; one cannot exist without the other. With the fast paced lives that we are leading, the incidence of sleeping disorders will rise in future. We can save ourselves from this epidemic by following the simple steps mentioned above and it could be used to save the lives of countless individuals who are suffering everyday from chronic sleeping disorders.

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**A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step. - Lao Tsu**

## Oblations In The Independence - Yagya -5

### Refuge in Suraj Prakash's house

Due to the swift and stringent action taken by the British Government in the first week of January, Shriram too left the office of 'Sainik'. He carried a sheaf of papers along with him. He wanted to gather the clothes and other articles he had, but felt that it would be more useful to carry the paper used for printing news instead. They would come handy to write news and paste it on doors and walls. Shriram did not go to Aanwalkheda from Agra, as he suspected that police would already be lying in wait for him there. He went straight to Jarar. Donoriya's house was also not safe. Seeing his involvement in revolutionary activities, there was a fear of police coming there. He went to Suraj Prakash's house and asked him to arrange for his stay in one of his gardens for a few days.

"I believe that imagination is stronger than knowledge; that myth is more potent than history; that dreams are more powerful than facts; that hope always triumphs over experience; that laughter is the only cure for grief. And, I believe that love is stronger than death."

- Robert Fulghum

Suraj Prakash was the Jagirdar of the area. Seeking refuge with him was a risky proposal. But Suraj Prakash remembered the days in which Shriram had helped him emerge respectfully out of the *Dharna* that Donoriya had staged. Speeches of the leaders of the national movement echoed in his ears. The threats that came from the District Collector of Agra, Mr Williams every now and then had also opened his eyes. Suraj Prakash had begun to think: 'Of what use is supporting the British? They are here today but will not be there tomorrow. The local people will always be here and be of help at all times.' Shriram had sensed this change in attitude in Suraj Prakash and hence approached him to arrange for his stay for a few days. Everything was arranged and a house that was two kilometers away was identified for the purpose.

### Publishing wall-version of 'Sainik'

Shriram called Donoriya and his other revolutionary friends to his place. Since the 'Sainik' office had been closed, publishing the newspaper was not possible. They began to write on the papers using a reed-stalk. The first copy was made ready by Shriram. Others made multiple copies of that. When twenty to twenty-five copies got ready, they made plans to paste them on the walls in various areas of Agra.

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A hard beginning makes a good ending. - John Heywood

This involved a lot of physical exertion and risk. It was not possible to publish a new issue daily. The intention was to keep the presence of 'Sainik' alive. Shriram reached Agra with his friends and pasted the wall-version of Sainik in several chosen places. After that he felt it was better to stay in Agra than return to Suraj Prakash's house. The basic requirement was to hide himself, and hence there was no need to stay several miles away for that purpose, when he could easily stay incognito in Agra itself.

The government was suppressing ruthlessly the freedom struggle. Revolutionaries who were living a public life were arrested in the first round itself. All those who were involved in background tasks were being searched with hawk's eye. In the first issue of 'Sainik' itself, he had written that the British were ruthless

"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat."

- Theodore Roosevelt

cheats; and he invited people to oust them. The process of collecting news had not developed then. The reporters used to travel here and there for collecting regional news. For any news outside the town, they had to rely on radio, telegram and telephone, all of which were controlled by the government. It was next to impossible to receive any correct news. Those who had yielded to the British were publishing news in favor of the government and were announcing that there was peace everywhere. They focused on publishing things that worried the people.

### **The effigy of the queen was burnt**

In the second handwritten issue of 'Sainik', a message was published that the effigy of the queen would be burnt on 10<sup>th</sup> January at 10 in the morning at the banks of river Yamuna. This issue was pasted on the wall opposite the house of the Collector. The administration was alerted. It planned to disrupt this activity and arrest all those involved in it. Banks of Yamuna covers a huge expanse of area and surrounds Agra for about 10 kilometers. The message did not speak of the particular place where it would be done and hence police kept an eye on each and every possible venue.

The wall-version of Sainik was pasted at fifteen –twenty places only, but the message published in it reached thousands of people by word of mouth. People were wondering about the exact venue for burning the effigy. The day of 10<sup>th</sup> January arrived. The police were extremely alert. The volunteers working for 'Sainik' hoodwinked the police who kept watch on the banks of the Yamuna. A youth came and

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**Great thoughts reduced to practice become great acts. - William Hazlitt**

reported to the police that people had gathered in large numbers near the Taj Mahal; probably the effigy would be burnt there. The police force ran to that place. From a distance they saw that a group of youth was standing in a circle. There was something burning and flames were rising to the sky. Youth were crying 'The queen is no more; her rule is also no more'. There were shouts of '*Bharat Mata ki Jai*' and '*Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai*'. The police approached the group stealthily. But the youth were aware and cautious. One of them saw the police and alerted the others. All of them vanished in a matter of seconds. The speed at which the vanishing act was performed left the police spellbound. There was no chance for the police to follow them. Hence they tried to put down the flames but it was of no avail as the effigy had been completely burnt to ashes. Half-burnt pieces of the planks on which '*Bharat Mata ki Jai*' and '*British Raj Murdabad*' were written were strewn all over the place.

The call of Pandit Motilal Nehru had reached the people. It was an appeal for rejecting anything that was foreign, to burn

all foreign goods, clothes and to discourage those who drank alcohol. These messages were published in the wall version of 'Sainik'.

The publicity work was anyway in progress in the villages. The work of Swaraj Panchayats had also commenced there. The news of dissolving the old Panchayats and the formation of new Panchayats with people working for the national movement was also published in the new 'Sainik'. The news about creating parallel governance at the district level was also being emphasized in the paper. A new issue of 'Sainik' was being released every five-six days. Police and the detective department were tired of searching the source of this newspaper. They wanted to catch the persons who prepared it. Their main suspects were the ex-employees of Sainik and Shriram's name was at the top of the list. But they could not trace him.

#### **Hoodwinking the police and the arrest**

There is a village named Kiravali in the Agra Mandal. It had become a center for the revolutionaries. There was constant flow of

A young man asked Mr. Henry Ford for guidance to be as successful and rich as him. Ford said, "Maintain your honesty at any cost and strive in the profession with hard-work and strongly positive attitude". Ford started his career as a simple automobile mechanic and reached the highest peak of success only through hard-work. He is considered the pioneer and founder of the entire automobile industry. At the time of setting up his factory, he cherished a dream to produce a car so cheap that each of his employees can afford it. In the year 1930, each car that rolled out was costing \$300 and 70,000 cars that stood before the factory gate belonged to the people who worked inside the factory. Henry was believed to be the richest person in the world by the time of his death in the year 1937. He always championed peace and brotherhood. By establishing the Ford Foundation, he showed his generosity and compassion. This billion dollar institute is sincerely engrossed in acts of humanity and charity for the deprived.

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**To greed, all nature is insufficient. - Seneca**

freedom fighters in that village. Meetings were held and strategies made for expanding the movement in the nearby villages. When police got scent of this place, they wanted to spread a net for catching all the freedom fighters at one go. The plan was to arrest them all when a meeting was in progress. Shriram got to know of this plan of the police. He resolved to disrupt their plan. About 60 freedom fighters were to gather on 16<sup>th</sup> March. Two vehicles of policemen started from Agra to catch them.

They heard voices of youth five kilometers before Kiravali itself and the police vehicles stopped there. It appeared as though an issue was being argued about. They could not hear clearly because of the noise of the passing traffic. The head of the police force, Janak Singh ordered the vehicles to stop and tried to make out the voices. They understood that the topic of discussion was to cut off the telephone lines of the district office, police station and the court and then attack those places.

Janak Singh immediately cordoned off the place with the police force and slowly tightened

the noose. When they reached close, they saw that a young boy was reading out the conversations from a piece of paper and other boys were imitating him. It looked to be a rehearsal of some drama. Janak Singh shouted at the boys and asked them, 'What kind of drama are you making? You are teaching about conspiring against the government?' The boy who was holding the paper in his hands replied, "No Sir, you have not seen the end of the drama. All the freedom fighters are beaten and defeated at the end. The families of those people face adversity. We are writing this drama so as to encourage people to cooperate with the government."

### **Drama with the police**

Fifteen to twenty minutes were spent in cordoning off the place and in the conversation with the boys. When the policemen came back, they saw that the tyres of their vehicles had been punctured. Someone had pushed nails into all the tyres. Janak Singh understood the whole story and 'the drama within the drama'. When he ran to catch the boys who were rehearsing the lines, he saw that they had already

In course of their stroll in the garden, King Vikramaditya suddenly remarked to the great poet Kalidas: "How creative and talented you are! You are a litterateur *par excellence*. I wish God had given you a matching and beautiful body". The satire was not lost on the wise Kalidas. He did not say anything at that time. On return to the palace, he ordered for two pots, one of clay and the other of gold. Both were filled with water. After some time, Kalidas asked the king. "Now tell me sir, which of the two waters is cooler?" "That of the clay pot", replied Vikramaditya. A smiling Kalidas then said: "Just as coolness does not depend on the pot's outer shell, even so, talent is unrelated to the physical appearance of the body. O King! One should look at the inner gift, not the external wrapping. It is the beauty of the soul that is supreme. Learning and greatness are linked with the soul, not the body".

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**Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean. - Ryunosuke Sator**

vanished. Shriram had chalked out the entire plan to hoodwink the police and take the *swarajis* to safety. He had punctured the police vehicles with his own hands. To learn this art of puncturing, he had sought the help of a mechanic.

Police had grown tired of searching for Shriram. As a last resort, they got ready to nab him in Aanwalkheda. Some messenger had told them that Shriram visited his mother once a week on Sundays. Police started watching his house from Thursday itself. Several police men in plain clothes were taking turns to watch his house. They could not notice any special movements in the house. They tried to find if

A 24 year old boy seeing out from the train's window shouted...

"Dad, look the trees are going behind!"

Dad smiled and a young couple sitting nearby, looked at the 24 year old's childish behavior with pity. Suddenly he again exclaimed...

"Dad, look the clouds are running with us!"

The couple couldn't resist and said to the old man...

"Why don't you take your son to a good doctor?"

The old man smiled and said...

"I did and we are just coming from the hospital, my son was blind from birth, he just got his eyes today."

*Every single person on the planet has a story. Don't judge people before you truly know them. The truth might surprise you.*

Shriram visited home every Sunday or on alternate Sundays, but they could not get any clear answers. From his mansion, someone had sent a message to Shriram in Agra that the police were watching the house and were waiting for him.

### **In the Jail**

Shriram cancelled his plans to visit his home on that Sunday. He sent a message to Taiji through the same messenger that he would come home on the following Wednesday. The police in Aanwalkheda were left waiting for Shriram. At the same time, they found posters with 'Bharat Mata ki Jai', 'Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai', 'Freedom is our Birthright and we will achieve it' on the walls of Agra. The way the sentences were written resembled the writings of 'Sainik' wall posters.

On 5<sup>th</sup> April, 1932 Shriram was suddenly caught. He had just concluded his morning *upasana* when he heard a knock at the door. When he opened the door, he saw four – five policemen standing there. There was an old colleague named Gangadeen who had come to recognize Shriram. This man had disclosed the house of Shriram to the police out of greed for a reward. Arrest of Shriram was a big achievement for the police. Standing at the door of his house, the policeman said, 'You have been playing smart all these days, what have you to say now?' Shriram replied – 'This is the play of the Lord. Probably, he wants me to take rest for a while.' After keeping him in custody for one-and-a-half months, he was sentenced to jail for six months and a penalty of twenty five rupees.

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**Nobody can hurt me without my permission. – Mahatma Gandhi**

## *How To Attain Success In Life?*

Everyone desires to be successful in life and puts in his best efforts to attain success. But there are some people who attain success in whichever task they take in hand, and there are also others who often fail in whatever they undertake. In fact, success depends on many factors. Till we prove ourselves and meet all the criteria for success, we cannot attain the desired success. Here we will discuss some of the important techniques to attain success.

### **Choose your goal:**

The most important point to attain success is - fixing a goal. Many a time we fail simply because we do not know our goal. Our state often is like that of a child who when asked, what do you want to be, replies - 'I want to be a doctor', and then a few days later when the same question is asked, replies - 'I want to be an engineer'. And then, when asked again after a few days, would say some other thing. This is one main difference between a successful person and an unsuccessful one. An unsuccessful person never has a fixed goal, his goals keep on changing. He wants to have one thing one day and another on another. On the other hand, a successful person adopts a very well-defined, fixed goal. He never deviates from his aim. Just like Arjun, the disciple of Drona, he keeps his eye focussed only on his goal and nothing else. A very important cause

for failure is not having a clear, well defined goal. So for success, it is necessary that we have a very clear and definite goal in front of us.

Choice of a goal is a very important process. We cannot choose goals in an arbitrary manner. Most of the unsuccessful people are those who do not choose a proper goal. They live a life of credit, where they just borrow a goal for themselves by looking at others and simply imitating them. Such people get enamoured by luxuries and conveniences attained by others and make that as their chosen goal. However, whenever they face difficulties and obstructions on the way to attain them, they run away, abandon their goal and begin to do something else. Their goals are as shifty as those of kids. It is definitely not wrong to wish to be like others, but it is very important to be sure in our mind that it is really what we want. Do we really want to be like them? Is that surely our true desire? Can we actually go to any extent to achieve it? It is improper to select a goal out of emotional attachment or temptation, because a borrowed goal can never become our own. Goal is that which makes us restless. That, without attaining which makes us feel uneasy, can only be our goal. And for this we first need to understand our own selves.

While choosing our goal we need to understand our own real selves. We must choose a goal by

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**A minute's success pays the failure of years. - Robert Brownin**

keeping in mind our capabilities, interests and circumstances. All these three are very important and none of these can be ignored. Most of the unsuccessful people are not able to assess their own capabilities, or, their goal is not aligned with their interest or the circumstances. It is necessary that we choose our goal according to our capabilities, interests and circumstances. We can take other's opinion, but final decision has to be our own.

### **Be realistic:**

Successful people live in the present. An important reason for failure of many people is that their thinking is not realistic. Their desires are only fantasies which have no basis. Their biggest error is in judging their own true state. Such people often do not want to accept their reality and knowingly ignore it. They keep high expectations of themselves which are almost impossible for them to meet. They live in delusion and do not want to accept that there are tasks that they cannot accomplish. Such people do not learn from their experiences and failures and so cannot finish even the smallest of tasks they take up, and then live in despair.

### **Be practical**

For success it is important to be practical. If our thinking is practical, then our actions will be practical. Being practical means - to know our reality, to accept it and to act accordingly. A practical person is one who has true knowledge of his capabilities. Such persons do not live in fantasies and delusions, but believe in their hard work and accomplish their tasks. They can foresee possibilities, but they don't live in possibilities. They live in reality. They

take up only those tasks which they can start working on today and now. People who live in fantasies and delusions alone, fail. Such people neither wish to understand their reality nor wish to accept it. Often such people take up tasks for which they are not ready today, but have this illusion that they can do anything they want. Though it is true to some extent that we can accomplish whatever we desire, but that requires investment of sufficient time and effort, which we may not be able to do today. For this reason, the fantasy to achieve a lot and being not able to actually do anything becomes a chief cause of failure.

### **Start small:**

It is necessary to have a deep, long-term and grand vision for success, but the beginning must always be from simple, small tasks which can be easily finished. For this it is important that we give a practical outlook to our plan. Its development and expansion would then happen with time. As we gain experience, so would increase our confidence and expansion of our work. All successful people had a grand vision but they started out from simple tasks. This is why it is said, 'No work is small, what is important is the work itself'. Unsuccessful people often have false egos. They keep looking out for big and important tasks even if it is not possible for them to complete them. They live in this delusion that they must only take up important and grand tasks, and not any ordinary ones. They want to attain big success in one shot. They like to take up tasks which no one has taken up before, and in this search waste their precious time and energy. This leads to their failure.

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**You will never win if you never begin. - Helen Rowland**



### **Develop self-confidence:**

To accomplish any task it is very important to have self-confidence. Success we attain is directly in proportion to our self-belief. The power of confidence can help a person make even impossible possible. In its absence even simple tasks look impossible.

Our experiences become the basis of our self-confidence. Truly, the little successes of our lives boost our confidence and on this basis we can complete even difficult tasks with relative ease. Every small and simple task successfully completed becomes a medium to boost our self-belief. This is the reason why simple tasks and small successes have so much importance in our lives. So we must start from easy tasks. Self-belief and success are, in fact, two sides of the same coin. If first is increased, the second increases too and if first is reduced so does the second.

### **Keep a positive attitude:**

Our attitude has a great influence on our lives. We become what we think. So always think of the best. Positive thinking means that whatever the circumstances we face, we accept them fully and attempt to do whatever is the best possible. Only a fearless and strong person can keep a positive attitude, not a lazy and cowardly one. To meekly accept every circumstance, saying whatever happens, happens for the good – is not positive thinking. This is cowardice, laziness and escapism. Positive thinking means to have self-belief under all circumstances and to continuously strive for self-development.

Negative thinking is like a termite that slowly gnaws at us and makes us hollow within. It sucks out our confidence and makes us so powerless that even the easiest of tasks begins to look impossible to us. This is why it is necessary to stay away from negative thinking as much as possible. There are two great ways to attain a positive attitude – good company (*satsang*) and self-study (*swadhyay*). These are the two techniques by adopting which positive thinking grows magically.

Positive thinking provides a strong base to a person towards success, as it does not allow him to falter and deviate even in tough and challenging situations and by maintaining poise leads us quickly towards our goal. Along with positive thinking, clear focus on goal, practicality, self-belief, and keenness to work in the right direction makes us successful in the true sense. Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya says compared to so-called success obtained through unethical and immoral means, it is better to accept failure while walking the path of morality and truthfulness. Morality and ethical thinking, while developing our personality, gives us immense satisfaction and fulfilment, whereas immoral conduct destroys our personality. So success through unethical, immoral means must never be accepted. Such success should always be rejected, and even if failure is attained while treading the path of morality, it should be willingly embraced. To attain success hard work is needed, but often work done smartly and efficiently yields better results than just hard work. So it is good to learn smart-work.

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**For every disciplined effort there is a multiple reward. - Jim Rohn**

## Essential Elements of Gayatri Sadhana

### Importance of steadiness and concentration of mind in Sadhana

A *Sadhak* should remove all disturbing thoughts from his mind and perform *Sadhana* with an unperturbed and quiet mind. He should have firm faith, confidence, devotion and reverence. It can hardly be termed *Sadhana* if the mouth utters the *Mantra*, the hand works on the rosary but the mind wanders wildly. The magnetic field to attract *Gayatri* cannot be created so long as the mind remains wavering and restless.

The other obstacle in *Sadhana* is lack of faith. Some people are by nature cynical and lack in depth of feelings. They have no real faith in spiritual pursuits. Words of praise from someone just arouse some casual curiosity in their minds. They think that by merely chanting a few *Mantras* their most-coveted desires might be fulfilled. Some persons are even seen taking a vow to do prescribed *Jap* after their desires have been fulfilled. Probably they assume that divine powers might be sitting hungry in the absence of their worship. This tendency of crude bargaining is ridiculous and reveals the shallowness of their faith.

However, if persons who are lacking in faith, devotion and reverence and those who have an unsteady mind perform *Gayatri Sadhana* regularly, they are able to overcome these

defects and in course of time, their *Sadhana* starts progressing smoothly. By and by faith and confidence are built up and they achieve concentration of mind. A person should, therefore, get started in *Sadhana*, although his mind may be unsteady. A day will come when he will overcome his defects and will receive Divine Mother's grace. He will then understand that faith, confidence, devotion and reverence have a mighty power with the help of which impossible looking tasks can be accomplished, as was done by Bhagirath.

### Essential Rules to be observed by Gayatri Sadhaks

A person engaged in *Gayatri Sadhana* is required to observe the following rules :-

- 1) The body should be cleaned by taking bath before sitting in *Sadhana*. In the event of any disability, seasonal unfavourableness or illness one can make do by washing hands and face or by taking a sponge bath with a wet cloth.
- 2) One should wear as few clothes as possible at the time of *Sadhana*. If there is excessive cold a blanket may be used instead of putting on tight clothes.
- 3) The *Sadhak* should find out an open secluded place for *Sadhana* where the

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The first and the best victory is to conquer self. – Plato

atmosphere is calm and quiet. A field, garden, temple or the bank of a river or lake are best suited for this purpose. But, if such a place is not available, a clean calm and quiet portion of the house can be selected.

- 4) It is better to put on newly washed clothes while doing *Sadhana*.
- 5) The *Sadhak* should sit in cross-legged, comfortable position so that there may not be difficulty in sitting in that posture for a long time, and the mind is not distracted by a sense of physical discomfort.
- 6) The back-bone should be kept erect so that the spinal column remains straight and there is no obstruction in the flow of *Pran* in *Sushumna*.
- 7) One should not sit for *Sadhana* on bare ground. The energy which is generated flows out into the earth if one sits on the ground. A mat prepared of *Kusha* is best for this purpose. In its absence one can sit on a cotton mat. Woollen and leather carpets are used only for *Tantrik Sadhana* of *Gayatri*.
- 8) Rosary of *Tulsi* or Sandalwood beads should be used. Rosaries of *rudraksh*, red-sandal-wood and conch-shells are used only for *Tantrik Sadhana* of *Gayatri*.
- 9) *Jap* should be started two hours before sunrise. In the evening it should be

finished an hour after sunset. Only *Tantrik Sadhanas* are performed around midnight. The *non-Tantrik Shadhana* should not be performed during the night.

- 10) Special attention should be paid in *Sadhana* to four matters. Firstly, the mind should not run hither and thither. If it does so, it should be gently persuaded to meditate on the beautiful image of the Mother. Secondly, there should be unflinching faith and belief in the Divine Mother. Persons with wavering faith cannot derive full advantage of *Sadhana*. Thirdly, the *Sadhak* should resolutely stick to *Sadhana*. Lack of enthusiasm, dejection, ill-health, delay in getting benefits immediately and other worldly difficulties act as obstacles in *Sadhana*. Ignoring them, the *Sadhak* keeps on advancing on his way. Fourthly, regularity or continuity is an essential rule of *Sadhana*. Howsoever, busy one may be, and even while placed in adverse circumstances, Mother's worship should not be interrupted. Irregularity in this respect is harmful. Due compliance of these four rules makes the progress in *Sadhana* smooth and sure.
- 11) *Jap* of one rosary or one hundred and eight *Mantras* should be performed daily. If more *Jap* could be done it is so much the better.
- 12) Before starting *Sadhana* some experienced righteous person should be made *Sadhana*-

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**A smile is a curve that sets everything straight. - Phyllis Diller**

- guru*. It should be ascertained from the *Guru* which type of *Sadhana* is appropriate. A patient is not competent to diagnose and treat his own disease. He has to seek the help of some physician. Similarly, a *Sadhana-Guru* is needed to suggest appropriate *Sadhana* to rectify drawbacks and solve difficulties.
- 13) The *Sadhak* should sit facing the East (towards the Sun) in the morning and West in the evening.
  - 14) If one feels tired in sitting in one posture there is no harm in changing the posture.
  - 15) On being required to get up in between for answering the call of nature or for any urgent work, *Sadhana* can be resumed after washing hands, face etc. with pure water. In that event, *Jap* of one additional rosary should be performed by way of penance for such an interruption.
  - 16) If on any day there is break in *Sadhana* for some unavoidable reason additional *Jap* should be performed the next day by way of compensation.
  - 17) Performance of *Jap* rosary should be stopped during the period of impurity, in the event of any death or birth in the family. Only mental *Jap* can be done during this period. If such an emergency arises during *Anusthan* of 1.25 lakh, it should be discontinued during this period and resumed after the expiry of the period of impurity. Additional *Jap* of one thousand *Mantras* should be performed for purification in lieu of such an interruption.
  - 18) There is no necessity of taking bath during long journeys or illness. In such an event, mental *Jap* can be performed during the journey or lying on bed during illness.
  - 19) The food and daily routine of the *Sadhak* should be righteous (*Satwik*). In food, the *Sadhak* should eat *Satoguni*, simple easily digestible food prepared by some pious person. Chillies, excessive spices and pungent articles, fried dishes, sweets, stale food-stuffs kept overnight, meat, intoxicants, food prepared from money earned through foul means, and food offered disdainfully should be avoided, as far as possible.
  - 20) It is always desirable to observe *Brahmacharya*, but it is specifically essential to observe it during *Gayatri Anusthan*.
  - 21) It is also desirable to follow some specific disciplines during *Anusthans*. (1) The *Sadhak* should avoid getting hair of his head cut although he can shave himself. (2) He should sleep on a hard, wooden bed or on the ground and not on a cot. (3) Foot-wear of leather should be avoided. (4) Food, if possible, should be taken only once a day. Fruits or milk can be taken in the evening. (5) The *Sadhak* should do his own service himself. He should not, as far as possible, allow his

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**Words are, of course, the most powerful drug used by mankind. - Rudyard Kipling**

body and clothes to be touched by others.

- 22) *Sumeru* (the central big bead) of the rosary should not be crossed while doing *Jap*. After completion of the rosary every time, the *Sumeru* should be touched on the eyes and forehead and after reversing it, *Jap* should be resumed till the *Sumeru* is reached again. Materials of worship should be placed at such a place that they are not touched by others.
- 23) There should be no slackness in maintaining cleanliness of the place and articles of worship. Cleanliness of body and clothes is also essential. *Jap* is more useful if it is done in a fixed number at a fixed time and place.

There is no harm in doing *Sadhana* anywhere at whatever time with unsteady mind, but such symbolic worship is not as beneficial as one which is done with utmost sincerity and with observance of above mentioned guidelines.

### ***Gayatri Sadhana* is never harmful**

There are specific rules and procedures for *Mantra Sadhana* in general by which *Anusthans*, *Puruscharans* are performed. Ordinarily, any *Anusthan* performed in violation of the prescribed procedure may result in harm instead of doing good.

Your success and happiness lies in you. Resolve to keep happy, and your joy, and you shall form an invincible host against difficulties. - **Helen Keller**

There are innumerable instances wherein the *Sadhak* had to suffer on account of certain omissions in the *Sadhana*. People have sometimes become insane. There are also instances narrated in the scriptures and history about people suffering from illness, death or loss of property due to such aberrations. As the story goes, *Vrattra* and *Indra* had to suffer great calamity on account of wrong pronounciation of *Ved-Mantras*.

It is but appropriate that like other *Ved-Mantras*, *Gayatri Mantra* should also be pronounced correctly in a rhythm and its *Sadhana* should be performed in the prescribed manner, so that it may bestow the desired results. Yet, there is one speciality in *Vedmata Gayatri* that an aberration in *Gayatri Sadhana* done through ignorance does not cause harm.

Just as a compassionate, generous, wise mother always thinks of her child's welfare, so also, *Gayatri* always promotes the wellbeing of the *Sadhak*. Children often commit mistakes and behave disrespectfully and rudely towards their mother. Even then, the mother does not entertain any malice nor does she harm them. When worldly mothers are so kind and forgiving, far more so is *Vedmata-Gayatri* who is Mother of the entire Universe and is divine Ganga of righteousness. She is moved by faith and devotion of her devotees. *Sadhak's* aberrations in performance of rituals of *Sadhana* due to ignorance are washed away in the divine stream of Mother's love and affection. Lord Krishna has assured in the Gita that no good action ever reacts adversely. A work done, bona-fide, with good intention is bound to have good results. Righteous action,

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**Making mistakes simply means you are learning faster. - Weston H. Agor**

howsoever small it may be, safeguards a person against perils, fears and apprehensions. Once *Gayatri Sadhana* has been started, the mind is slowly and steadily attracted towards it and if, for some reason, it is given up by the *Sadhak*, a keen desire to resume *Sadhana* again repeatedly surges up in his mind. After tasting some delicious dish once, a person desires to savour it again and again. In the same way, spiritual food is as sweet as nectar and is so tasteful that the soul insists on, craves for and cries repeatedly to get it. It never results in any distress, calamity or hardship. It may be that due to certain omissions or mistakes one may not get the expected benefits but there is not the least doubt that even little of *Sadhana* does not go in vain.

### **No Discrimination in *Gayatri Sadhana***

God has created all human beings. How can there be any discrimination on grounds of caste, creed, colour or sex? All have equal claim on the objects created by God. The sun, moon, air, water etc. are all being liberally used by everyone. No one has the right to cause obstruction or put any restrictions in the free flow of these divine gifts.

*Gayatri Mantra* manifested through *Brahma* in the beginning of the creation. *Brahma* interpreted it by four mouths in the form of four *Vedas*. This knowledge is for the benefit of all mankind. Persons of all castes, creeds, and of both sexes have equal right to adopt *Gayatri Mantra* as means of their *Sadhana*.

Unfortunately, in the dark feudalistic era of middle ages, discrimination on the grounds of high and low, master and slave, came in vogue.

This discrimination created a gulf of high and low castes and mankind was divided into several hierarchical divisions.

Several such practices like pronouncing women and *Shoodras* as undeserving, so that they may consider themselves to be inferior, were initiated in which male members of *Savarnas* (high caste people) enjoyed all the rights, while women, *Shoodras* and slaves were deprived of all of them. Thus, it was proclaimed by feudal lords and priests that women and *Shoodras* have no right to chant *Gayatri Mantra*. *Pandits* interpolated some fake couplets here and there in some scriptural texts, so that people may believe that discrimination on grounds of caste, creed and sex was an ancient tradition duly approved by the *Shastras*.

The present is, however, an era of enlightenment, of fundamental human rights of equality for all. Women and the so-called *Shoodras* are integral part and parcel of mankind. They have been guaranteed equal rights in the constitution. This is equally applicable in respect of *Gayatri Mantra*. It uniformly belongs to the entire human race. Persons belonging to any country, caste, religion or sex can, gladly, adopt *Gayatri Mantra* for *Sadhana* and derive benefit from it. It must not be confined to *Brahmans* or *Dwijas* alone.

[Excerpts from 'Superscience of *Gayatri*' {English abridged version of '*Gayatri Mahavigyan*' (in Hindi) by Pt Shriram Sharma Acharya}, revised edition, 2004, Published by Yug Nirman Yojana, *Gayatri Tapobhoomi, Mathura*]

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**Perhaps time's definition of coal is the diamond. - Kahlil Gibran**

# A Perspective On The Time Of Birth Of A Person

“Astrology is a blend of mathematics – accepted by modern scientists and the knowledge of spirituality – practiced by ancient sages” said Swami Vishuddhananda Paramahamsadev. While saying thus he signalled Mr. Chel to sit next to him. Mr. Chel was hesitant to sit next to the great master, but followed the instruction thinking that it to be the command of the Master. Mr. Chel’s full name was Rohini Kumar Chel and he was staying then at Theatre Road, Calcutta and had a deep interest in astrology. He was worried about some complicated problems in his personal life. To solve these, he approached many, but was cheated. Instead of the light of knowledge, all that he met was darkness. He lost even what he had in his hand. It was during one such day that a friend told him about Yogiraj Vishudhdhananda.

He first did not want to meet him, but later decided to meet him so as to at least test him. Thinking thus, on the advice of his friend Manindra Kumar Bhattacharya, he sent a letter seeking permission to meet Yogiraj. The reply came soon – “Not now”. But his curiosity was not contained; and he left for Guskara (a town, where Yogiraj resided). Reaching there, he sat outside Yogiraj’s house as the doors were closed. Sometime later, the doors opened and Yogiraj stepped out. There was a fragrance of moist lotus emanating from him. Both his eyes

were red, but were filled with wondrous brilliance. When Chel looked closely, he realized that not only was there the fragrance of lotus, but also an aura of white light around him. Before Chel could say anything, he was invited in and made to sit next to Yogiraj.

Munshi Premchand rose to fame as a prominent novelist during the British rule in India. He was seeking to invoke patriotism among the Indian masses through his writings. In those days, it had always been the British Government’s strategy to try to lure Indian intelligentsia into becoming the supporters of the British Raj by offering them lucrative jobs, positions, titles, etc. The government feared that Premchand’s work might incite a spirit of revolt among the Indians. Sir Malcolm Hailey, the then Governor of Uttar Pradesh, devised a trick to win Munshi Premchand’s favour. In those days, the title of ‘Rai Saheb’ was regarded as the most acclaimed honour the government would ever give to anybody. A British Officer delivered this award along with a huge sum of money to Premchand’s house and conveyed a message that it was a reward from the Honourable Governor who had been deeply impressed by Premchand’s work. His wife was happy that it would help ease their financial difficulties. However, Premchand was grief-stricken. He understood the trick of Governor and politely returned the money and the award to him.

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**The bad news is time flies. The good news is you’re the pilot. - Michael Altshuler**

Chel sat down and started searching for his and his wife's *kundalis* (horoscopes) in his bag. Seeing him search for his *kundalis*, yogiraj asked him to stop and took out two *kundalis* from a cupboard in the room and gave it to him. It contained the *kundalis* with their names, time of birth, *Lagna chakra*, *Chandra Kundali*, *Vimshottari Dashas*, *Antar* and *Pratyantar dashas* of both him and his wife. They also contained the predictions for both of them. Now Rohini babu was not just surprised – he was astounded as to how Yogiraj knew his and his wife's life-details. On asking, he was told –

Swami Ramtirtha landed on the coast of America. By the time he disembarked from the ship, his pocket was practically empty. He was a complete stranger in the country, with no acquaintance or helper there. On the ship, an American had become a chat-mate of Swamiji on matters spiritual. While getting down, he asked as a matter of courtesy: "Where would you stay? Please give me the address of your host. If time permits, I will try to contact you". Swamiji put his affectionate hand on the latter's shoulder and replied: "I have only one friend in America, and that is you". The man was dumb-founded. He was greatly impressed by the radiant personality of Swamiji, full of self-confidence and amiable mien. He took Swamiji to his home, and for the whole duration of the latter's stay in America, played a perfect host attending to his comforts and requirements. Such great souls alone are able to win the confidence of the masses and provide inspiring leadership to them.

"When I saw through my yogic vision that you were coming in spite of asking you not to come, I prepared these *kundalis*. Well, compare them with the *kundalis* you got." On comparing, Rohini Kumar found out that while his wife's *kundali* matched, his *kundali* showed different birth time.

On showing this difference to Yogiraj, he said "Chel, the *kundali* I prepared is the correct one. Compare my predictions with the events in your life and check". Chel babu then compared the predictions and found that whatever Yogiraj had predicted matched 100% with his life events. Yet, he was thinking that the *kundali* he had brought along had also been prepared correctly. Seeing him thinking thus, Yogiraj told him "No. That is not the correct time. If that time had been correct, then you would have been as great as Rama and Krishna and instead of you coming to me, I would have come to you and worshipped you".

Yogiraj Vishuddhanandji stood up and continued "The time of a person's birth is very important. It tells us with what seeds of Karma and *sanskaras* a soul takes birth at the confluence which energy flows. The time of birth gives a person a position in this splendid cosmos. It is an unchanging position for the person in the wheel of time". When he was telling this, it appeared as if he was not standing in the room, but at the centre of the creation and seeing this happening clearly. His eyes were filled with the light of a Rishi. He was saying "This entire creation is the *leela* of Bhagwati Adi Shakti. There are innumerable energies flowing here which meet and interact with others every

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**Mountaintops inspire leaders but valleys mature them. - Sir Winston Churchill**



moment and in every particle. It is due to this interaction among energies that creation happens in the forms of humans, animals, plants and minerals. They are sublimated also on the same lines which in lay man terms can be called death or transformation in form.”

“The Rishis who invented astrology divided these energies into 27 stars with 4 sub levels, 12 signs and 9 planets. They have observed the dynamic changes in these energies through *Vimshottari*, *Ashtottari* and *Yogini dashas*. Through their *antar* and *pratyantar dashas*, they have analyzed the transformation of these energies in very subtle levels. Now if someone is born in Guskara or Burdwan at 4:14AM in 1894, then his position in the wheel of time is fixed. This position in the wheel of time is indestructible. Now, according to the effects of time, these energies will shape the person. What this process is and how it unfolds is decided by the *yuti* of planets and their position in the *lagna* chart. This can be understood through the *vimshottari* and through the process of *antar-pratyantar*. In this manner, the *samskaras* lying in the *chitta* of the person and seeds of *Karma* sprout, get catalyzed and manifest”.

“Do not let your fire go out, spark by irreplaceable spark in the hopeless swamps of the not-quite, the not-yet, and the not-at-all. Do not let the hero in your soul perish in lonely frustration for the life you deserved and have never been able to reach. The world you desire can be won. It exists.. it is real.. it is possible.. it's yours.”- **Ayn Rand**

Saying this, Swamiji walked around the room once and sat in a chair and continued – “What I told you about astrology is one aspect of the truth. Listening to this, it appears as if everything is decided *a priori* and nothing can be changed. However, if this is understood properly, then man can unravel his inherent capabilities, identify his real characteristics and then make use of the energies that will beneficially influence him. Then, he can adopt methods and means by which he is not harmed by the dynamic, ever-changing energies. This is similar to how a man, when he knows that earth revolves round the sun, understands its implications and can decide on the various times for sowing and harvesting crops such that each season benefits him”.

“*Sadhana vigyan* is united always with astrology. The Mathematical aspect of astrology – the position and interactions of planets and stars just tell the changing seasons in a man's life. The same is true of *Mahadashas*, *antardashas* and *pratyantar dashas*. The second important aspect of astrology is one which selects the *sadhana vidhaan* necessary at key points in life. The mantras for planets, the process of *daan*, gems and medicines are for this purpose. If a person does not understand all these, then he may do 1000 *Gayatri Mantra Japa* everyday and 24,000 *Mantra Japa* during *Navratris*. In addition, one may also attempt one *anushtan* of 1.25 Lakhs *Japas* in a year. If this is not possible, he may take up voluntary service of the needy or help the underprivileged on a regular basis. If this is done, then all the effects of planets would be beneficial all throughout a person's life”.

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Speech is external thought, and thought internal speech. - Antoine Rivarol

# How To Simplify Your Life?

A simple life has a different meaning and a different value for every person. However, in general, **it means getting rid of many of the things you do so you can spend more time with people you love and do the things that are important to you.** However, getting to simplicity isn't always a simple process. It's a journey, not a destination.

Many experts have given good guidelines for simplification. The following are a few commonly advised steps that may help simplify your life.

## 1. Fix a goal of your life

Figuring out what makes you happy and what is the goal of your life is the first step towards the simplification you aim to achieve. It's only when you know what's really important, you can prioritize your tasks accordingly and get things done without being stressed.

## 2. Analyze your present routine

Spend some time analyzing how you have been spending your time. What is your daily routine? Has it helped in your work? Has it helped your health? Are you able to take time out for family and friends? Have you been prioritizing tasks according to what's really important? Is the routine designed accordingly? If any of these are out of order, it's time to change the routine.

## 3. Cut out negative relationships

You may already be aware of the value of solid, supportive relationships in your life - the friend who picks you up when you are down, celebrates with you when you are happy, and shares events of your life as they happen. However, you may not be aware, as Elizabeth Scott says, of the effects of conflicted relationships - the critical, unpredictable, or

Jatin Mukherjee, who later became known as Bagha Jatin, along with his friend Hemchandra Ghosh once went to meet Swami Vivekanand. They asked Swamiji several questions related to religion and spirituality. Swami ji paused and replied – “Hem, slaves cannot choose to have any religion. Go and first free your Mother India, then think about your deliverance.” These words had a great impact on the sentiments of the young men. Both chose to tread the path of revolution and with their sacrifices, became famous personalities.

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**Personality is to a man what perfume is to a flower. - Charles M. Schwab**

over-competitive friends. It turns out that these 'toxic friendships' actually drain us more than purely negative relationships. This is because we don't always have strong defenses against the people who are sometimes nice to us, so we can get off-guard. If you're wondering how to simplify life, save yourself grief, frustration and drama if you take an honest look at the relationships in your life and decide which are worth maintaining and which should be let go.

#### **4. Pay attention to your space.**

All the experts on simplification say with one voice – De-clutter to simplify. Whether you have a tiny apartment, mid-size house or spacious mansion, if you are like most people, you fill the space you have, so getting a larger

A flock of birds mocked at the clouds, "Brothers! What an awful life you lead. You lift the heavy weight of water from one place and pour it out at another. This is like the life of a laborer." Clouds laughed and said, "These drops of rain water alone create life upon the earth, which you and we enjoy. When we pour out rain, the entire world feels contentment. If we have to labor a bit for the benefit of this beautiful creation by Supreme Soul, we must feel thankful and blessed."

Divine souls also lead their lives like these clouds. They extract righteous inspirations from the divine source and pour them over inner beings of those who bear the desire to serve the society.

space is not the answer. The secret to avoiding a big clutter pile-up is monitoring your home and work areas for clutter every day. Notice your surroundings. Pay attention to what is on the counter, under the desk, and filling the flat surfaces of your home and work areas. Just a little bit of de-cluttering every few weeks helps keep your life manageable.

#### **5. Take "time for self" every day**

If you let the batteries in your camera die, it doesn't work. Don't neglect your own personal batteries. Take what sociologists call "time for self" every day. Figure out what replenishes you — a daily walk, yoga, practicing guitar or a warm bath before bed — then incorporate it into your routine.

#### **6. Live a healthier and spiritually more satisfying life**

From giving back to taking a moment to appreciate each day, NBC's chief medical editor Dr. Nancy Snyderman reveals some simple steps to live a healthier and spiritually more satisfying life. She says – 'If you don't volunteer your time, you've got to figure out a way to do it. Whether it's helping out at your kid's school, a nonprofit or abroad, you have to do something. Wherever you go, it's a great thing to do. Another good option is to give cash if you can't give your time'. Further she advises – 'Find one thing — visual, auditory or olfactory — to focus on and find the gift in it. Every day, try to register something that gives you a pause. I truly believe this goes to the core and makes you feel that you're part of something bigger. It makes you connect with the idea that we share the earth with millions of others and we don't live isolated lives'.

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**The greatest quest in life is to reach one's potential. - Mychal Wynn**

# Distinction Between The Self & The Not-Self -2

## The basic foundation of betterment

It is extremely important to have the habit of looking at the essence of things. How nice it would be if this habit could be acquired right in the childhood itself! This is an outlook which is worth imbibing. Many feel that the science of spirituality has nothing to do with life. Some others feel that even if it has, it should have nothing to do with it. But it would indeed be a happy situation if the distinction between body and the soul could be ingrained through education right since the childhood. Nowadays, bad education is imparting extremely evil *samskaras*. This education does not lift us out of our total identification with the body. We are doing everything to pamper the body. Yet the quality that the body should attain, the form that should be given to it, is found nowhere. The body is thus being vainly worshipped; there is no awareness of the bliss that lies in the experience of the Self. This condition has resulted from the present system of education. Day and night, indulgence of the body is being continually and insistently taught.

Education of cherishing the body begins right from the childhood. When a child stumbles while playing and gets a little hurt, it hardly pays any heed to it. It takes ordinary bruises and abrasions in its stride. But it is not so with the parents. They draw the child near and fuss

over it, saying 'Oh dear! Have you hurt yourself badly? How did it happen? Oh, it is bleeding!' Even if the child is not crying, all this fuss makes it cry. What can one say about it? A child is told not to jump, not to play lest it should get bruised or hurt. It is thus trained solely to think of the body.

When we fondly admire a child, we admire it in reference to the body and when we scold it, it too is in reference to the body. If a child has a running nose, we call it dirty. How greatly it hurts the child! How false the accusation is! It is true that it should be cleaned. But instead of cleaning the nose without making a fuss about it, the child is reproached. It cannot bear this. It feels miserable. When its heart and soul are full of purity and cleanliness, why this wrong accusation of dirtiness? The child is not really dirty; it is the Lord Himself in all His purity, beauty, love and holiness. It is a spark of the divine. Yet we call it dirty! Is the outward dirtiness so important? The child does not even understand what this is all about. It feels hurt. Its mind gets disturbed and agitated; and such a state of mind stands in the way of improvement. We should therefore explain things properly and keep the child clean and tidy.

Instead of this, we impress on the child's mind the idea that it is nothing but the body. It is an

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**When you are grateful fear disappears and abundance appears. - Anthony Robbins**

important pedagogical principle that the teacher should regard the pupil as faultless in every respect. If a pupil fails to solve a mathematical problem, the teacher slaps him. Now, what is the connection between the slap and failure to solve a problem? Likewise, the pupils are thrashed if they are late to the school. Yes, the slap may cause blood to circulate faster, but how will it help in making them punctual? In fact, by such treatment, we only strengthen the animal in them. It hardens the pupil's notion that he is nothing but the body. We thereby build his life on the foundation of fear. Real improvement can never be brought about through coercion and by strengthening identification with the body. It is possible only when one realizes that one is distinct from the body.

There is nothing wrong in being aware of the defects in the body and the mind. It helps in removing them. But one must understand clearly that one is not the body. My 'Self' is altogether distinct from the body. It is wholly beautiful, faultless, pure, sublime and holy. The man, who examines himself to remove the defects in him, does so by making a distinction between the Self and the body. He does not, therefore, get angry when someone points out his defects. Instead, he himself tries to find out whether there are any defects in his body and mind and tries to remove them. He who does not make this distinction can never improve himself. How can one improve himself if he identifies himself with the body, which is nothing but a lump of clay? There can be improvement only when it is realized that the body is but an instrument given to us. Do I get

angry if someone points out that something is wrong with my spinning wheel? I rather try to remove the fault, if there is any. The same is true about the body too. It is like an agricultural implement, an implement to cultivate the Lord's field. If it is impaired, it should be repaired. The body is here as a means. I should strive to purge myself of defects and faults by detaching myself from the body. I am distinct from the body, which is an instrument. I am the master, the owner of the body. I am one who gets good work done by the body. Such a discerning attitude should be inculcated right from childhood.

Just as an impartial spectator can judge the game better, we can observe the merits and defects of the body, mind and intellect only when we detach ourselves from them. We hear somebody saying, 'My memory is getting feeble. What should I do about it?' When he says so, it clearly means that he is distinct from his memory; that the memory is an instrument or tool that is not working properly. Somebody may lose a book or some other thing; he cannot lose himself. Even at the time of death, when the body becomes totally worn out and useless, the Self is as healthy and faultless as ever. This is a vital point to be clearly understood. If we could understand this, lot of our problems will be solved.

### **Attachment to the body wastes life**

Identification with the body is prevalent everywhere. As a result, man has thoughtlessly produced all sorts of ways and means to cater to the body. Even a glance at them is disquieting. Man is always striving to

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**Ostentation is the signal flag of hypocrisy. - Edwin Hubbel Chapi**

somehow prolong the life of the body even after it has become old and decrepit. But how long can this body, this shell be sustained? At most till death; not a moment longer. All the vanity is reduced to naught when death stares one in the face. Still man continues to produce various things for this worthless body; he ceaselessly worries about it. Nowadays, some people are advocating meat-eating to sustain the body. In their view, human body is so precious that one may eat flesh without compunction to sustain it; animals' bodies, on the other hand, have little value. But what, after all, is the ground for believing that the human body is more precious? The only ground is that animals eat anything and think nothing beyond themselves unlike human beings, who take care of the creation around them. This very basis for considering human beings superior is undermined by meat-eating. Human beings are superior because they exercise self-control, because they care for other creatures. Man is superior because of this quality that is not found in animals. That is why it is said to be a rare gift to be born as a human being. How can man be considered superior, if he undermines the very basis of his superiority? When man begins to eat flesh like other animals without any qualms, it is like undermining the foundation of his superiority. It is like cutting the branch of a tree on which one is sitting.

Nowadays, medical science is performing all kinds of miracles. Germs are injected into the bodies of living animals, multiplied there and diseases produced there to watch their effects. Living animals are thus tortured and the knowledge gained is then used to prolong the

life of a worthless human body. All this goes on in the name of compassion and humanitarianism! Inoculation is only one among the many horrid things invented by medical science. But the body for whose sake all this is done is as fragile as glass. It can break at any moment. All these efforts are being made to sustain the body; but what is the outcome? Even as we are trying to sustain this fragile body, we see that it goes on disintegrating. Yet we keep trying to pamper the body.

Rockefeller, the well-known millionaire of America started his career as a small businessman. He wasn't well off enough to attract any worthwhile investment in his business. But due to his honesty, integrity, keen interest and polite nature, he managed to get enough financial support from one of his friends to start a small business. He kept making steady progress through hard work and diligence. His honesty won him support from some big businessmen who lent him money. Rockefeller would always repay the loans in time which earned him a reputation as an honest and trustworthy person in the world of business. Due to his hard work, total dedication, high values and, strength of character, Rockefeller rose to the top to become one of the richest man in the world. His Standard Oil Company and Exxon are among 500 biggest corporations in the world. Revealing the key to his success, Rockefeller said in a press interview, "I never lost my patience even when faced with adverse situations and failures. I never compromised my personal integrity. I maintained my self-confidence at any cost. This is the key to my success."

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**Begin to weave and God will give the thread. - German proverb**

It never occurs to us to find out the kind of food that would make the mind and intellect *sattvik*. Man never considers what should be done and whose help should be sought to purify the mind and the intellect. All that he is anxious for is to make the body plump, to increase layers of flesh thereon. But these layers are bound to peel off in the course of time. Then what is the use of letting the fat accumulate in the body till it becomes a burden and an encumbrance? The body is an instrument at our disposal and we should certainly do whatever is necessary to keep it in order. We take work from a machine, but do we identify ourselves with it? Why can't we have the same attitude towards the body-machine?

To sum up, the body is a means and not the end. Once this is deeply realized, man will not make much ado about nothing. Life will then appear markedly different. Man would not revel in decorating the body. Indeed an ordinary cloth is sufficient to cover the body. But we want the cloth to be soft; we want various designs on it. For the sake of this, we make number of people labor. What is all this for? Does not God the Creator, know His job?

Had human body needed designs or colors on it, would not God have designed stripes on it, as He has done for the tiger? Would He not have given plumage to human beings like the peacock? Was it impossible for Him? But He has thought otherwise. Man, as he is, is beautiful. God does not want his body to be decorated. Is not there marvelous beauty in nature? Man should be content in beholding it. But he has been deluded by artificialities. We accuse Germany of driving natural Indian dyes out of market. Dear friend, you first lost your real color – your true nature – and got enamored by artificial dyes. As a result, you became dependent on others. You have been lured by the superfluous idea of decorating the body and that has led you astray. You should be concerned about making the mind and the heart pure and beautiful, about developing the intellect; but that has been lost sight of.

[To be continued]

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Having focused will-power (or single-minded resolve to do something specific) and keep working hard with dogged determination to realize it are the key to accomplishing any desired goal. Here is a pertinent quote from the famous British thinker Thomas Carlyle's work, "The weakest living creature, by concentrating his powers on a single object, can accomplish something. The strongest, by dispensing his (powers) over many, may fail to accomplish anything. The drop, by continually falling, bores its passage through the hardest rock. The hasty torrent rushes over it with hideous uproar, and leaves no trace behind."

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**Flattery corrupts both the receiver and the giver. - Edmund Burke**

# The Occult Power of Mind

Mind is the tool of soul. One of its functions is to create desires. Suppose the mind wishes to see the Taj Mahal. The moment this desire arises in mind, its subordinate faculties present a conceptual picture of the tomb before it. If the desire is weak, this imagery fades out after a while. On the other hand, if it is strong, the imagery of Taj Mahal becomes gradually more vivid. In course of time, the strong intensity of desire activates dormant occult faculties in mind (as telepathy and psychokinesis) and the conceptual image in the mind begins to "interact" with the actual physical structure of the Taj Mahal. When it happens, the intellect begins to sense many parameters related to the tomb without any conscious effort. In proportion to the clarity of the objective perception and concentration of thought, most of the information acquired by extra-sensory perception turns out to be true. The occult power of attraction generated in the imagery because of continuous input of strong desire to see it materially, gradually overcomes all external hurdles and, creating favorable circumstances, someday brings the subject face to face before the tomb.

We hardly ever come to know how much this paranormal force of attraction in the mind for a desired object (or objective) struggles to clear the way to success in between the inception of a desire to its ultimate fulfillment. The attraction of desire triggers the bioelectric current in mind to forcefully surmount numerous obstacles in the

physical, mental and external environments. If we could somehow observe it physically, we would appreciate the enormous power of bioelectricity working within the human body.

A very small part of bioelectricity is used in biological functions of body. Heat in an average human body itself is capable of melting 40 kg of ice. What is the source of this heat? The temperature of the body is equivalent to the emission from the chimneys indicating that there is a powerhouse working within the body. Soul is a storehouse of tremendous *pranic* energy. For biological functions a very small fraction of this energy is utilized. Exposed to the total energy of the soul, no living being on this planet could survive.

The invisible field of bioelectricity in human body exercises much greater influence on the surrounding life systems than the physical activities of man. The magnetic personalities of great men and women are an expression of this field. The aura of personalities of military commanders subdues the fighting potential of powerful enemies. This aura around the face of great persons is neither the sheen of their face nor is it a reflection of light because of the texture of their skin. Success of one individual in a crowd of a thousand competitors does not indicate the potentiality of flesh and bones of his body. It is the miracle of the bioelectric field of his soul (*Atma Tej*).

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**The only disability in life is a bad attitude. - Scott Hamilton**



## The Purpose & Procedure of Atonement -II

[Translation of a discourse by Pandit Shriram Sharma Acharya on “*Prāyaścīt Kyon? Kaise?*” –  
Continued from previous issue]

Friends,  
(Continuing with the narration of the experiences of a spiritual seeker) During one year of his *sāadhanā* of Bhairav Tantra, Madhavacharya had to face several tests. Bhairav would sometimes appear as a roaring lion to scare him; sometimes he would appear in the form of a woman to divert his attention; sometimes he will come with riches to attract his cravings. But Madhavacharya was not disturbed as he was a devout *sādhaka*; moreover, his guru (the hermit) had also warned him of the possibility of such distractions and told him not to get perturbed by such experiences and remain engrossed in the *sāadhanā*.

“Help others and give something back. I guarantee you will discover that while public service improves the lives and the world around you, its greatest reward is the enrichment and new meaning it will bring your own life.”

- Arnold Schwarzenegger

On the day of completion of his yearlong *sāadhanā*, Madhavacharya experienced the sublime presence of Bhairav near him. He clearly heard the deity’s words — “I am Bhairav; as you have completed my *sāadhanā* successfully so I have come to bless you with some boons. Tell me what you want?” Thinking that it is yet another illusion to test his devotion, he said — ‘My first wish is that you please convince me that you are Bhairav; please appear before me in visible form. I have experienced many attempts of delusive forces during past one year to distract me from the *sāadhanā*. How can I believe that you are really the deity of my *sāadhanā*? So I want to see you; please fulfill this wish; this is the only boon I want from you at present’.

“I am standing behind you; but I cannot appear in front of your eyes” — the invisible power responded. “But why?” — was the natural query of Madhavacharya.

“You have earlier done long term *sāadhanā* of Gayatri — the Omnipotent, Supreme, Divine Force, the eternal origin of all divine powers. Intense radiance of Gayatri *Sāadhanā* is shining on your face, its glare is radiating from your

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The secret to success is constancy to purpose. - Benjamin Disraeli

eyes. I am only a deity of *tantra*, I can't face the powerful glow generated by Gayatri *Sādhanā*. Therefore I am unable to appear in front of you. So, I will remain on your back."

"But why? You are a sublime power, then what is the limitation?" Madhavacharya was so surprised. "Don't have any doubt about whether I am the sublime power you have been attempting to invoke for one year. I have already told you that I am only a power of *tantra*, I cannot stand before the magnificent radiance induced by the mystic devotion of the Supreme divine force of Gayatri." — Bhairav repeated in his subtle form. "You ask me whatever you want as a reward of successfully accomplishing the *tantra sādhanā* focused at me" — he further told the devotee from the backside.

Now Madhavacharya was really amazed! If the radiance of Gayatri *Sādhanā* is so bright that a *tantra*-deity can't stand in front of it and if my Gayatri *Sādhanā* endeavored for thirteen years earlier energized my eyes with powerful glare, then why could I not experience any spiritual accomplishment so far? Why I could not attain divine realization by this supreme *sādhanā* — he thought. He could not help asking this from Bhairav who was present there in subtle form to bless him. "You have kindly offered me to ask for a boon. So please fulfill this wish of mine — please tell me why thirteen years of my *anuṣṭhāna* (*sādhanā*) of Gayatri did not succeed?" — He prayed. "Yes, I can surely fulfill this wish of yours. You just close your eyes and see the reason yourself." — The deity said. As Madhavacharya closed his eyes he began to see some major events of his earlier lives,

the *tantra*-deity was also simultaneously giving him the necessary information. It was like a live-telecast with running commentary. Madhavacharya could see the sins he committed in past thirteen lives. He had committed — murders, cheating, violence, thefts, and what not for selfish motives, sensual pleasures and egoistic drives. It appeared as though there was no misdeed or wrongful action left undone by him. He was appalled! How heinous, disgusting, inhuman deeds he had committed in the past lives. He felt frustrated and frightened. He opened his eyes. The deity (Bhairav) explained to him, "So this was a glimpse of the 'debt' the 'filth' that your inner self was burdened with. In this birth, thirteen years of your ascetic life, observance of fasts, altruistic service and devout devotional activities as part of the Gayatri *Anuṣṭhānas* (*Sādhanās*) were used for the refinement necessary for your spiritual progress. Your sincere endeavors have not gone waste. These have served as atonement that was essential to purify your (inner) self, without this cleansing, you would not be eligible for divine realization. Now you go back and restart your devout Gayatri *Sādhanā* for one more year. You may succeed and attain the beatifying fruits of this supreme spiritual endeavor". With these words, the deity left.

Madhavacharya also happily returned to Vrindavan full of new energy, enthusiasm and devotion to continue his Gayatri *Sādhanā*. Indeed, upon completion of the year (14<sup>th</sup> of the series of yearlong Gayatri *anuṣṭhānas* he had carried out), this time he had attained divine realization of Gayatri and was also blessed

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**Chance favors those in motion. - James Austin**

with spiritual boons. His longtime urge for doing something for people's welfare and augmentation of knowledge was also fulfilled. Inspired by the divine light of Gayatri, he got the wisdom to write a treatise on the Vedic science of medicine and life. This treatise, known after his name as "Madhav Nidan", continues to guide experts and practitioners of Ayurveda.

Friends, now you must have understood when and how your devotion and spiritual endeavors (*sādhanā*) would fructify. The most important point that you must note from this narration is that you must do something good, something benevolent to compensate for the wrongs, the vices you have committed in the present life and/or might have committed in some earlier lives. This endeavor of atonement would be like preparing the ground for laying the foundation of your bright future.

Sincere efforts of devotional practices, ascetic disciplines, penance with *anuṣṭhāna sādhanās*

must continue to neutralize the effects and negative imprints of the sins or vicious attempts of the earlier lives that are not known to you. Sit at a calm place and ponder over the course of your present life. Take an account of your major mistakes, immoral conduct and vicious actions so far. Commonly most people commit two types of deeds: one that directly or indirectly hurts or harms someone; the other type of flaws are more subliminal, the roots of which are hidden within your own habits, weaknesses and negative instincts — for example, greed of the tongue, physical lethargy, mental dullness, making false excuses to escape hard work, etc. When you do so, you will find there is a long list of this stock that has overburdened and weakened you. You should review and analyze your misdeeds, ill-intentions, and negative tendencies without any prejudice or bias. Don't feel inferior or depressed. Look at it positively, as though you have identified the hidden enemies that used to obstruct your unalloyed joy and real progress.

It is doubtful whether dishonesty can yield any long-lasting benefit. If dishonesty seemed to have paid off, it is mainly because one had used honesty as a disguise. Anyone who succeeds in selling dairy ghee adulterated with vegetable ghee, or milk adulterated with water, can only do so as long as he can successfully manage to mislead people into believing that he is an honest trader selling pure products. His success actually came from the elements of honesty and trust (even though fake). If his dishonesty and corrupt dealings get exposed, it will become clearly evident that dishonesty didn't help him at all to sell his products. HMT machines, Seiko watches, Ford cars, Bata shoes, Parker pen, etc. cost a lot of money, yet many people happily buy them because they trust the products made by these companies. On the other hand, the companies manufacturing fake, imitated and substandard products often go bankrupt, lose invested money and tarnish the reputation of their owners.

- Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya

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**Aggression unopposed becomes a contagious disease. - Jimmy Carter**

### Practical Steps towards Atonement:

In order to reduce the burden of your sins and misdeeds, you may write or narrate the corresponding incidents/situations and your actions and express your intentions openly. This will lighten your mind and help you think positively about how to rectify and improve. I know such things can't be discussed with everybody or anybody at random. Doing so would only bring people's hatred, scorn or criticism. Such things should be told or reported only to someone who can help you reduce the burden and render you necessary guidance and moral support for atonement and righteous progress. If you regard me as your guru, your guide, your well-wisher, you may give me the 'report card' of your blemishes, sins, misdeeds or major mistakes and weaknesses. You can tell me everything. What will I do? Will I laugh at you, punish you or discard you? No, nothing like that. I don't waste my time and energy on such things. As a washerman cleans all the dirty clothes brought in his laundry, I also try to cleanup the dirt of your wrongdoings and vices from your subtle mind, give you courage and support to initiate you in the *sāadhanā* of spiritual progress.

Christian religion also has the system of confession. There is a confession room/cabin in the church where a devotee can open his heart and confess the sins, the vices, and the wrongs he has committed. Only the chief priest of the church listens to this confession. The priest also prays to God to bestow peace and courage upon the devotee. Confession of crimes, sinful actions and intentions is a wonderful psychological 'treatment'. It lightens

the burden on the doer's mind and offers instant relief and positive inspiration. You all have come here to do *kalpa sāadhanā* for your spiritual refinement and transformation. So begin this process of refinement by cleansing the dirt inside. For this you must sincerely confess (tell me or give it to me in writing) all your sins/vicious or wrong actions and thoughts. This is the first step of your *sāadhanā*.

Your confession and remorse will not have lasting effect on your agile mind unless there is some penalty that your mind would feel the pinch of. It's like teaching a lesson that your mind will never forget. Unless refined, controlled and (spiritually) awakened, the mind would continue with its natural tendency of running after cravings and bodily pleasures. Discomfort and pain of the body also are predominantly the discomfort and pain of the mind that it does not want to suffer. It does not want to face any difficulty; it tries to escape punishments and testing, unfavorable and strange situations. It therefore requires to be penalized for its sinful tendencies and vicious assimilations in such a way that it would always remember the 'painful' consequences of wrong doings and would therefore stop repeating the grave mistakes of the past.

In order to fulfill this purpose of arduous punishment for the mind, the second important effort required for refined transformation (of your inner self, your mind) is *tapa*<sup>1</sup>. The strict routine and austere conditions under which you are living here are part of your *tapa*. The

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**A well-aimed spear is worth three. - Tad Williams**

*chandrayan vrata*<sup>2</sup> you are observing here is a significant part of *prāyaśchita* (atonement).

Confession and *tapasya* are only part of refinement of your mind and minimization of the chances of repeating the evils and deliberate wrongs. These cannot alter the punishment (against your sins) destined as per the absolute law of *karma*. Nevertheless, these will certainly inculcate courage and strength in you, amplify the voice of your conscience (so that you would listen and follow it) and pave the way for your righteous progress if you also compensate your wrongs by the good deeds and conduct.

A strong burning desire for achieving goal creates such a driving force that cuts through the obstacles, pushes aside difficulties, resolves conflicts and goes ahead in the desired direction uninterrupted. Only dynamic actions can lead to success in any field because only that can induce the desired energy. It is also well known that active role and constant study can develop and strengthen the body, or any organ, or the personality. Right hand of a blacksmith is usually stronger due to more work. People walking more usually have stronger feet. Musicians playing on flute or a clarinet strongly blow air; hence their lungs are comparatively stronger. The only reason behind all these is only the active use of the organs.

- Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya

### Alleviate the Negatives by The Positives:

One more crucial component of *prāyaśchita* is to compensate for your sins by equivalent virtuous actions; to cancel the negatives by the positives. It is like filling the ditch you have dug. Don't try to find an easy way out; don't dream of having any discount or curtailment here. Unless the ditch is filled adequately and the surface above it is brought to level, there will be risk of self-kick and injurious fall while walking over it. If you draw a loan of five hundred thousands from some bank, will you get rid of it by paying back any lesser amount? Certainly not! There won't be a concession of a single penny. Moreover you will also have to pay interest. Delay from your end will also make you liable to penalty. This is what happens in the case of repaying (to an individual, to the society, to the world, to Nature) something good, something worth in lieu of the adversity, the negativity that your wrong doings would have caused. (Let us consider some realistic examples to understand the way of compensation.)

If you had cheated someone in business, then naturally, as soon as you realized your mistake, you must, by all means, not only return the sums with interest that you had earned by deception but also provide additional support to the victim to help expand his business. However, suppose by the time you realized the need of *prāyaśchita* and sincerely began doing some atonement that person had departed from the world. In that case you should return the sums with interest to his family and also help them setup and / or expand the business. If even that is not possible

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Nothing diminishes anxiety faster than action. - Walter Anderson

(e.g. due to no contact with the family), you must generously help some needy and deserving fellow to start a good business or any good activity; or help in educating the underprivileged children, or support and participate in some other philanthropic activities.

If suppose you had cheated a girl in love affair and now that girl is married to someone else, then, you can't attempt to fulfill your promise of marrying her, or even to say sorry to her; as doing so would disturb her married life and thus harm and hurt her further. As part of your atonement, you may help some other needy parents in getting their daughters married to suitable boys hailing from good families and also sincerely contribute / participate in women's empowerment activities, etc.

If you have injured, insulted, or otherwise, physically or emotionally hurt someone, it is not necessary that you compensate to the same person. Don't just keep repenting, rather, getup, ponder over positively and compensate in best possible constructive ways to some others. If you have thrown dirt in some part of the river, it is not necessary that the particular portion be cleaned. The dirt you threw had dirtied the entire river. So you must try to clean largest possible portion. Your vicious intentions and actions (directly or indirectly) generate a kind of wave of evils or negativity in the entire society. To compensate for it you not only need to cleanse and improve your mentality, your conduct, but also to augment and expand the waves of goodwill and positive tendencies, good thoughts and actions in the society.

As I told you in the beginning, your *sādhana* will not achieve the desired goal, unless and until the hurdles of your own sins, the burden of the debt of your wrongdoings are removed. So rise, pledge and start your *prāyaśchita* with full dedication. Once the obstacles are removed, nothing can prevent the eventual success of your devout endeavors of spiritual progress and divine realization.

|| OM SHANTI ||

#### Notes:

1. **Tapa:** Penance, self-restrain and strict observance of ascetic disciplines.
2. **Chāndrāyana Vrata:** A month long arduous mode of fasting (in which the amount of intake for the body varies gradually with the size of moon) the along with certain spiritual endeavors of *anuṣṭhāna*.

Mastery of Intention is a deeply personal process that always occurs in the present. No technology, guru or savior, however advanced, can do for us what only a commitment to evolving and operating out of our own divine consciousness and physiology can achieve. The choice is ours in every now whether to give away our power to something or someone outside ourselves, or to summon the courage, integrity and impeccability to return home by walking the challenging but ultimately enlightening Black Road of Spirit.

- Sol Luckman

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**Storms make the oak grow deeper roots. - George Herbert**

## Let Us Understand the Meaning of Guru

*Guru* – (*gu* means darkness and *ru* means light) – literally is a preceptor who guides the seekers on the path of knowledge (light) and destroys their ignorance (darkness). The *guru* is seen as a sacred conduit for wisdom and guidance, and finding a *Satguru* (True *Guru*) is often held to be a prerequisite for attaining self-realization. *Brahmanda Puran* says – “*Guru* is Shiva sans his three eyes, Vishnu sans his four arms, Brahma sans his four heads. He is *Param Shiva* himself in human form”.

The Upanishads have profoundly underlined the role of the *Guru*. *Mundak Upanishad* says that to realize the Supreme Spirit holding *samidha* grass in his hands one should surrender himself before the *guru* who knows the secrets of Vedas. *Kathopanishad* too speaks of the *guru* as the preceptor who alone can guide the disciple on the spiritual path. On the auspicious occasion of *Guru Poornima*, let us contemplate on what scriptures say about *Guru*:

*Dhyaanamoolam Gurur Moortih  
Poojாமoolam Guroh Padam  
Mantramoolam Guror Vaakyam  
Moksha Moolam Guru Krupa.*

**Meaning:** The *Guru*'s form is the best to meditate upon; the *Guru*'s feet are the best for worship; the *Guru*'s word is the mantra; the *Guru*'s Grace is the key to liberation.

*Brahmaanandam Param Sukadam  
Kevalam Jnaana Murtim  
Dvandvaa Teetam Gagan Sadrisham  
Tatvam Asyaadi Lakshyam  
Ekam Nityam Vimalam Achalam  
Sarvadhee Saakshi Bhutam  
Bhavaateetam Triguna Rahitam  
Sadgurum Tam Namaami.*

**Meaning:** This *sloka* tries to describe the qualities of a true *Guru*. A real *Guru* has the following virtues. He experiences the supreme Bliss of *Brahmaananda* (transcendental divine bliss). He enjoys and confers changeless supreme happiness. He is beyond space and time (there is nothing higher than him). He is the embodiment of wisdom which is the basis for all types of knowledge. He transcends the pair of opposites (such as happiness and sorrow, gain and loss). He is more Omnipresent than space itself. He is the very embodiment of the Divine Principle, which is the inner meaning of the four great pronouncements *Prajnaanam Brahma, Aham Brahma, Tat Tvam Asi* and *Ayam Aatma Brahma*. He is One without a second (*ekam*). He never changes under any circumstances (*nityam*). He is without any type of impurity (*vimalam*). He is steady and motionless (*achalam*). He is the witness of everything. He transcends mental comprehension and verbal explanation. He is beyond the three *gunas*

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**Never interrupt your enemy when he is making a mistake. - Napoleon Bonaparte**

(*satva*, *rajas* and *tamas*). I offer my humble salutations to such a *Guru* who possesses all these virtues.

*Shoshanam Bhava Sindhoscha  
Gnyaapanam Saarasampadaha  
Guror Padodakam Samyak  
Tasmai Sri Gurave Namah.*

**Meaning:** The one who can help us cross this ocean of illusion, the one who can reveal to us the Divine, I adore his *Paadukaas* (hold on to his feet), I salute such a *Guru*.

*Sthaavaram Jangamam Vyaaptam  
Yatkinchit Sacharaa Charam  
Tat Padam Darshitam Yena  
Tasmai Sri Gurave Namah.*

**Meaning:** That *Guru* who can enlighten us about the all pervading consciousness present in all the three worlds or states (of *Jaagrata*, *Swapna* and *Sushupti* ... activity, dream and deep sleep state), I salute such a *Guru*.

*Chinmayam Vyaapi Yatsarvam  
Trailokya Sacharaa Charam  
Tat Padam Darshitam Yena  
Tasmai Sri Gurave Namaha.*

**Meaning:** That revered Master who directs my attention to the ONE divinity existing in all creation – sentient as well as seemingly insentient, I salute such a *Guru*.

The sacred *Parva* of *Guru Poornima* is considered to be very significant in Indian Culture and the spiritual world. Traditionally, this *Parva* is celebrated to augment and strengthen the faith and devotion of the disciple in his *Guru* – the spiritual teacher. On this auspicious occasion, let us introspect ourselves and resolve to imbibe that disciplined life pattern which our *Gurudev* demonstrated by his own example. Our selfless surrender and his subtle guidance will surely awaken divinity within us and pave the way for the descent of heaven on earth.

In ancient times, a king had a boulder placed on a roadway. Then he hid himself and watched to see if anyone would remove the huge rock. Some of the king's wealthiest merchants and courtiers came by and simply walked around it. Many loudly blamed the king for not keeping the roads clear, but none did anything about getting the big stone out of the way. Then a peasant came along carrying a load of vegetables. On approaching the boulder, the peasant laid down his burden and tried to move the stone to the side of the road. After much pushing and straining, he finally succeeded.

As the peasant picked up his load of vegetables, he noticed a purse lying in the road where the boulder had been. The purse contained many gold coins and a note from the king indicating that the gold was for the person who removed the boulder from the roadway. The peasant learned what many others never understand.

***Every obstacle presents an opportunity to improve one's condition.***

**All history is but the lengthened shadow of a great man  
- Ralph Waldo Emerson**