

## SCIENTIFIC VIEWS AND TRENDS ON FOURTH DIMENSION OF PERSONALITY

Human intellect is the source of creation and gigantic expansion of the gamut of activities in life. Sagacity and wisdom are therefore regarded as important for viable success in any area of progressive life as vigor and wealth.

The twentieth century has indeed been the age of evolution and sharpening and expansion of human intellect in many respects. Almost all the major discoveries and inventions of the modern era have taken place during the period of past 200 years. These have stood as the milestones of modern scientific civilization. Despite the ascent and maximum use of might, wealth and intellectual talents in this era, we find something missing in terms of overall development and healthy progress when we notice the increasing trends of strives and disputes — based on skilled arguments and counter-arguments triggered by invidious and egoist thoughts, aplomb and conspiracies — created by wicked planning of ingenious brains driven by selfish motives.

Concerns about this pathetic side of life today remind us of yet another stream of power naturally bestowed on human beings namely, that of *bhāvasamvedanā* — sentiments of empathy, love and compassion. The *rishis* in ancient India had defined the existence of human entity as “*Raso Vaisah*” which implies the immense importance of this fourth and most intimate and deep dimension of personality.

Intellectual development and creativity of talents remains incomplete without the conjunction of emotional

purity and benevolence of inner sentiments. Realization of this fact has given rise to new trends in modern scientific methods of assessment of human personality. A new psychological parameter called **emotional quotient** (EQ) is now used along with the **intelligence quotient** (IQ) as a measure of one’s emotional depth and stability and also of his compassionate and edifying control over the thought process. The EQ is increasingly being given more importance than the IQ in recent studies.

At the edge of steep advancement of science and technology, today, the scientific community has by and large realized that incisive thinking and intellectual talents alone cannot lead to ultimate knowledge. Development of emotional sensitivity and elevation of faith in high ideals of humanity is essential for integrated progress of the world.

Noted psychologists like Dr. Robert Frost opine that the frequency of occurrence of psychosomatic disorders and mental diseases has today risen up to an alarming level mainly because of the negligence of our emotional being. Even a highly successful industrialist, a billionaire, an efficient manager or anyone else, who has accomplished significantly in the domains of intellectual potentials and talents, remains unsuccessful and backward in terms of complete development of personality if he or she does not possess reasonably high EQ. Lack of compassion or emotional depth often gives rise to split- personality. It hinders internal peace and happiness. Such

people implicitly live in a perplexed, restless and dolorous state of mind. Apathetic individuals, despite being successful materialistically, are most likely to face a dissatisfied and unhappy personal life and their distorted emotional complexity impedes the evolution of their own inner self.

Elevated EQ is indicative of healthy development of personality. It is a measure of one's sincerity, fairness, sense of responsibility, cooperativity, integrity, mental stability, patience, perseverance, humane sentiments and sympathetic attitude towards others' grievances. These are indeed the qualities, which lay the foundation for healthy and progressive survival of the human society. Intellectual spheres too are illuminated in the eternal light of pure emotions and altruist sentiments of unconditional love and intrinsic compassion. Persons endowed with high EQ make best use of their potentials, and resources and endeavor for multidimensional progress with dignity of noble ideals. Their foresighted and altruistic activities bring peace and happiness for others too.

In view of the eternal linkage between inner sentiments and subtler forms of consciousness, it is also considered natural that substantial rise in EQ opens up the possibility of sublimation of intrinsic potentials and spiritual talents.

Eveman and Robert Cooper had presented an in-depth analysis of this measure and thereby added new directions to the concept of efficacy in management in their extensively reviewed thesis entitled "Executive E. Q." In their views, unidirectional intellectual development without any attention towards sentiments, transforms human life into a mechanical and cheerless routine. This also accounts

for varieties of mental complications and makes one's mentality prone to addictions.

Many a times it is seen that multitalented scholars, businessmen, officers, managers etc, who are very successful in their skilled creativity and professions, prove to be a total failure on personal and social fronts. Their family life too is disintegrated and broken. The authors also cite many instances of unsuccessful married life or post marital affairs in case of professionally efficient and talented people. Because of the complications in the families their children often tend to adopt whimsical habits and disastrous addictions.

A thorough analysis of the moment to moment activities of daily life of a person would clearly reflect that it is the heart – the emotional center – which plays a more important and prominent role in life than the mind – the source of thoughts and intellectual deliberations. Serene sentiments vibrate the intrinsic centers of consciousness and generate subtle flow of immense energy. A large number of transcendental potentials existing in the inner recesses of human self may be aroused if the thought process is linked with this source of eternal liveliness and heavenly bliss. In-depth research into emotional aspects of personality has lead a significant number of modern psychologists conclude that EQ is a unified measure of one's experiences, wisdom and multiple facets of personality and character.

Emotional Quotient pertains to the evaluation of integration between the external and internal domains of one's life. Strengthening of this integration coupled with compatibility of internal desires and external activities is of utmost importance in the present age. Unification of

*bhāvasamvedanās* with the thought process and intelligence shapes the multi-dimensional growth of personality. It induces the sense of social responsibility, moral duties and awareness and inclination towards dignified ideals of life in awakened minds of the intelligentsia and eminent talents and thus offers a viable solution to the multifarious problems being faced by mankind today.

The criteria for evaluation of executive management faculties have now drastically changed in the developed countries like the United States of America. EQ is increasingly being given more importance in these nations than the IQ in the schemes of assessment normally applied in executive recruitments for scientific, administrative, social and commercial establishments. It is not that EQ contradicts or annuls the importance of IQ, rather, it is a more comprehensive measure which incorporates IQ along with other measures of qualification in a constructive manner. Persons scoring high EQ are found to be successful in the truest sense of the word. Robert Cooper argues that it should be given priority in recruitments in the judicial disciplines as well because the wisdom of a compassionate judge would naturally be more sensitive towards empathetic fairness of justice in human society.

Considering the vital role of emotions in human psychology and hence in every walk of life, the reputed research center of the EC Systems Incorporation at San Francisco, USA had first established the technique of EQ mapping. A group of scientists under the supervision of Esther N. Arelai and Karen Trokey of this organization had surveyed over 2000 organizations in the USA and Canada and prepared this map based on comprehensive

analysis of the psychological makeup, intellectual caliber and performance of the subjects in personal, social and professional domains of life. This map is getting increasingly recognized and used ever since then. It is now being used as a crucial measure of personality evaluation in industrial organizations in almost all European countries and also in Japan. Millions of executives and officers and top ranking managers have so far been assessed by this technique. It is remarkable that those scoring high in this evaluation are found to be more efficient and successful than their colleagues with lesser EQ. The highest mark on the quotient meter of this map is supposed to indicate an ideal combination of compassion, maturity, emotional stability and sagacity.

The notion that proper development of the inner qualities of personality is necessary along with endeavors of progress in external, worldly domains – is gaining more and more recognition in the foresighted sections of modern society. Inspired by this idea, James MacGregor Bern writes that – “People of high intellectual caliber and repute also search for the blissful world of emotional peace which exists beyond the narrow peripheries of thoughts and dry intellectualism”.

Bern has also elucidated the causes of failure of many high profile professionals on personal fronts of life. He argues that IQ covers only about 4 to 7 percent of the intellectual activities. The inner domains of life and the mental expressions are not confined to these activities alone. The remaining 93 to 96 percent of the functions of mind are still unknown. No one has been able to invent a measure of these latent potentials of human brain. Sentiments and intrinsic

feelings play a dominant role in the overall development of character and personality and in the orientation of life. Consideration of this fact has given rise to incorporation of EQ based analysis of personality.

Refinement and strengthening of sentiments and inner emotions is reflected in higher EQ and it also amounts to penetrating the subtle layers of the non-deciphered, latent portions of mind. Assessments based on EQ are therefore proving to be more comprehensive and useful than those involving only IQ.

Victor brothers write in their book entitled "Build Your Brain Power" that most people use only about one thousandth fraction of their mental potentials. The remaining part of the true intellect is beyond the grasp of conscious mind. Similar views are expressed in the volume "Emotional Intelligence" authored by RJ Sternburg. He emphasizes that the world cannot be analyzed or judged by passive intelligence or skill alone. All aspects of daily life cannot be understood by only intellectual thinking. Realization of the impact of sentiments and soft emotions is inevitable in these endeavors. It is only the conjunction of serene thoughts and human sentiments, which can touch upon the deeper depths of the manifold manifestations of the individual self.

The materialistic orientation of the mode of living has certainly put trenchant skill and brilliance at the forefront of success in many respects. Despite its immense importance, this yardstick cannot be regarded as universal. Unidirectional development of talents or intellectual potentials may lead to extraordinary success in particular areas. But, "how fulfilling and stable are such accomplishments?" — is open before every one. Every thoughtful mind knows

the limitations of 'single tracked' developments. Even in this money oriented world, where does one find that wealth has been able to buy peace and love? Which social, economic or educational system has maintained all round development of the society?

What has led to the environment of insecurity, anarchy, dissatisfaction, terror and animosity despite excellent progress in science and technology and excessive expansion of wealth in this world? Searching an answer to this unresolved question lays fingers at only one predominant cause — namely, uncontrolled and unethical use of intellectual talents.

All sensible minds – ranging from those of philosophers to the physical scientists, administrators to artists, psychologists to neurologists etc, have envisaged utter need of collective incorporation of humane sentiments and rational thinking in shaping future course of developments in every walk of life. Robert Cooper has even declared that if IQ has set the milestone of progress in the 20th century, it is the EQ, which will enlighten the bright future of the 21st century.

Lack of emotional warmth makes one apathetic, acrimonious and cruel. If the so called super civilized society of today does not care for edification of sentiments and sustenance of humane values, the trends of progress will sooner or later be reversed towards decline and extinction. According to Dr. R. Dommascheso, chairman of the Neurology Department in Iowa College of Medicine, depletion of compassionate sentiments is the major cause of increase in abnormal attitudes and arrogant and unethical behavior of people today. He emphasizes that although

reasoning and decision-making are principal activities of human brain, they are intrinsically associated with the inner functions of mind reflected in soft sentiments and emotions.

Harmonious blending of sound reasoning, creativity and serene sentiments lays the foundation of the ideal balance in life, which is referred to as – “*Samatvam Yoga Uccyate*” in the Gita. Disruption of this harmony between intellect and internal emotions is at the root of all distortions and disorders in one’s psychological makeup and personality. Dr. Robert Rozenthol, a noted psychologist from Harvard recommends mutual integration of sentiments and thoughts as the best solution for healthy development of personality and amelioration of the aberrations of intellectual potentials.

Only compassionate persons can adopt the principle of honesty, mature understanding and altruistic cooperation in every aspect of life in a most natural way. Individuals endowed with the nectar of *bhāvasamvedanā* enjoy a blissful and progressive life with peace and contentment in every respect.... If conjugated with maturity of thoughts, their intellect too gradually becomes more alert, alive and responsible about the world around.

It should be noted in the present context that emotional sensitivity alone could be as counter-productive as unbridled intellectual supremacy. The flow of soothing sentiments maintains the internal harmony and that of discerning intellect refines the actions pertaining to external domains of life. Emotional Quotient is indicative of the creative balance between the two.

Professor M. Scottfitz Gerald considers that human mind is continuously

activated by two simultaneous streams of consciousness – reflected in emotions and ideas. If the two are harmonized and one attempts to analyze those subtler aspects of inner emotions which are usually beyond the reach of intellect, the intrinsic layers of his wisdom begin to open up which can illuminate all dimensions of life and guide them on the righteous path towards glorious culmination.

Revolutionary thinker of America, P. Sorokin attributes maximum importance to sentimental sincerity and even argues that the edifice of Philosophy and Psychology stands only on the strong foundation of emotions and intuitions. Rushmore Keener, the founder director of Global Ethics institution opines that it was only the unrestrained use of intellect devoid of compassionate control of sentiments, which led to the development of audacious dictatorial personalities like Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin in the twentieth century.

The recent trend of increasing emphasis on emotional fitness in the areas of management is indicative of the fact that scientific community is now recognizing the importance of refinement of sentiments. However, this concept was realized and rigorously implemented in every walk of life thousands of years ago by the *rishis* – the ancient Indian sages, seers and scientists of spirituality and human psychology. These sagacious visionaries had regarded knowledge as meaningful only if it is inspired and induced by pure sentiments and prudence.

The *rishis* had recognized *śraddhā* as the sole source of deciphering the ultimate truth and absolute knowledge – *Śraddhā Satyamāpyate*. The scriptures created by these seers and sages of yore have shown the philosophy of *yajña*–

altruistic attitude inspired by serene love, compassion and illuminated intelligence – as the natural guiding force towards the righteously progressive path of eternal human journey towards light.

Creative adoption of the philosophy of *yajña* in human life is equivalent to inculcation of *bhāvasamvedanā*. Nature has bestowed immense source of *bhāvasamvedanā* on women. This is the reason why, given a chance, women are by and large found to be more efficient and successful than their male counterparts in organizational management and leadership and in many creative fields of human endeavor.

The current scientific trends of research on the fourth dimension of human personality and the consequent emphasis laid on high EQ indicate the unfolding of a new era of revival of the teachings of Indian Science and Philosophy of Spirituality. We, the people of modern age understand the new terminology better and may therefore realize the importance of emotional facets of life in new scientific

light. If we succeed in doing so, the tree of our life would blossom radiantly on the soil of our *bhāvasamvedanās* and endow us with sublimating and ennobling virtues. This would induce mutual co-operation, respect and love in place of jealous competition, strife and hatred pervading in the human society today. The prophecies of “descent of heavens on the earth” or “rousing divinity in humans” etc would then be realized in foreseeable course of time in the new millennium.

Thanks to the afflatus educed in few trend-setting scientific minds so that, though belated, humanity has once again visualized the glow of divine sentiments and is gaining momentum to follow the righteous path of spiritual enlightenment along with the scientific and technological developments.

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Note 1: The word *śraddhā*, in a broad sense, refers to intrinsic faith in moral ideals, devotional insight and pure sentiments inspired through the inner self.

The son asked his father – Why are plants and trees are considered as manifestations of Lord Shiva? His father explained – “Lord Shiva had protected the earth by consuming the deadly poison that was extracted during "*samudra manthan*" (grand churning of the Ocean of Waters of Life at the time of creation of Cosmos). HE had to do it only once. But the plants and trees constantly absorb the poisonous carbon dioxide exhaled by humans and other forms of life inhabiting the earth. Not only that, in return, they release the life-saving oxygen and help running the cycle of life on this planet. This is indeed their divine grace.” Then the trees and plants should be called "Grand Shivas" the young boy exclaimed in gratitude for the trees.

## The key to access cosmic multidimensional energies is *Tapa*

“*Rishis* harnessed enormous powers and became invincible by doing *tapa*.” This is one of the many glories of *tapa* mentioned in Indian scriptures.

The meanings of *tapa* include: to make hot or warm by supplying heat; to voluntarily suffer pain; undergo self-mortification and practice austerities. The first meaning relates to the physical objects, whereas the rest relate to the subtler vital, emotional and mental parts of human being. The principle of *tapa* thus affects both the physical world (matter) and the inner world (the soul).

In the physical world, *tapa* causes the refinement and sublimation of matter. For instance, gold ore has to be processed through fire to convert it into pure gold. Useful metal equipments and instruments are manufactured after melting the metals by heating. For cooking, heat energy is supplied to raw foods. An atom bomb is capable of causing a devastating explosion only when ignited. Heat produced by friction can be used in many ways. Rubbing them against a solid surface sharpens many tools, such as a knife or a stone. The source of energy for the formation of water vapour, burning petrol, photosynthesis, etc. is heat. The cycle of formation, expansion and disintegration of matter is primed and caused by the heat energy of the Sun. Eggs hatch only after receiving heat from the female animal. If we remove from the world, the element of *tapa*, we would be left with awe-inspiring void and darkness.

The outcome of any procedure of *tapa* is the generation of (heat) energy. *Tapa* is the cause of the existence of the animate world. It is the least common

multiple for human achievements. In relation to humans, *tapa* takes various forms, such as hard work, focussed effort, steadfastly meeting adversities, etc., and these all lead to success. Thus, a student, a businessman, a farmer, a labourer, a sculptor, a musician, a doctor, etc. perform *tapa* and succeed in their aims, depending on the intensity and quality of their *tapa*. The more intense the *tapa*, the greater is the success and prosperity. History shows that communities that were industrious for the upliftment of the conditions of their members progressed, whereas those that gave priority to personal pleasures and laziness summoned their downfall.

Sometimes the results of *tapa* contradict the expectations because of *sancit karmas* and *āgāta karmas*. Unknown to the conscious mind of the individual, association with good and bad company leaves some impressions on the psyche. Unless willingly and consciously accepted, *samskars* produced in this process are faint, weak in potency and feebly reactive. The *karmas*, which produce such weak *samskars*, are known as *Sanchit Karmas*. These *samskars* remain stored in some odd corner of the inner consciousness, buried in dormant state. Then there are *karmas* unwillingly, reluctantly performed under compulsion or in a state of helplessness. If one is forced to carry out such *karmas* with revulsion and these are not made into a habit, these too fall in the category of *Sanchit Karmas*. Being extremely feeble, the *samskars* produced by *Sanchit Karmas* may remain in a dormant state in the psyche for thousands of years through successive births. These *samskars* generally remain inactive, but if a suitable

stimulant is provided to them by deliberate, strong, conscious repetition of similar deeds, these, too become active.

Some people achieve stupendous success with a little effort, while some fail despite great effort. *Sancit karmas* are the players behind this apparent anomaly. A person starts getting results that are directly proportional to the degree of his efforts once the store of *sancit karmas* is depleted. The suffering, for instance, from the ill effects of *sancit karmas* stops; so a person who had been failing in spite of the sincerity of his efforts begins to benefit from his efforts. Regardless of the role of the *sancit karmas*, *tapasya* never fails; sooner or later it yields results – this is an irrefutable law.

The source of all energy is *tapa*. Whether man uses this energy constructively or destructively depends on the quality of his emotions and intelligence. Wise and kind people use it for the welfare of the society, but criminals use it for evil purposes, harming themselves as well as the society in the process.

The human body and mind are filled with mysterious and amazing subtle powers, which remain dormant by default. They are awakened by *tapa*. The power of *sūkṣma* (that which is subtle, invisible) is greater than that of *sthūla* (that which is gross and visible). The powers of the human mind and soul are subtle. The power of the mind is greater than the power of the body, while the power of the soul supersedes that of the mind. The development and refinement of the powers of the soul through *tapa* result in the spiritual upliftment of an ordinary person to the level of a divine being. It was the abundance of the divine beings in the golden ages of India (*vedic* and *post-vedic*)

that had made India “the Land of Plenty” and “*Jagadguru*”.

*Tapa* played such an important role in ancient India that the history of the Indian Culture can be said to be the history of *tapa*. Indians have always held in high esteem the successes and achievements in the field of soul-level *tapa*, over and above any other achievements; therefore, they were called *deva puruṣa* (divine beings) and the land of India was termed *svargādapi garīyasī* (more glorious than Heaven).

Everyone, kings as well as the commoners, in the ancient times enthusiastically opted to perform *tapa*. The children of royal families were sent to *gurukulas* to live like *tapasvis* and gain *vidyā*. Today, people have chosen the degrading path of consumerism and greed instead of greatness of the soul, due to which individual and social lives have been infected with the ailments of hostility, intolerance, tension, disturbances and crime. Lasting peace and prosperity would be possible only by *tapa*, for which the spiritual field need mining, along with a diminishing focus on the requirements of the physical body and gross vital and mental urges. The acquisition of simple joys of the world becomes a natural consequence of *tapa*, climaxing in attainment of supreme eternal bliss.

*Tapa* is indispensable for refinement and transmutation of human life. *Gayatri* is the epicentre of *tapa*; it superbly defines the authentic path of *tapa*. The different forms of *tapa* observed in the world originate from *Gayatri*. A building cannot be constructed if its foundations are weak. *Gayatri* is the foundation of *tapa*, as explained in the word “*bharga*” of *Gayatri Mantra*.

## Your Health: Guidelines From Ayurveda – I

*Ayurveda* – the ancient Indian medical - science is believed to be the oldest repository of diagnostic, pharmaceutical and therapeutic knowledge. This Vedic science draws upon an integral approach to healthcare by considering the physical, mental and deep emotional well being simultaneously. It encompasses thorough knowledge of the *Ādhibhautik* (physical, pertaining to the gross body), *Ādhidaivik* (mental, emotional and *prānic*, pertaining to the subtle body) and *Ādhyatmik* (spiritual, pertaining to the astral body) aspects of health. No other branch of ancient or modern disciplines of medical sciences, perhaps, has such deep and expanded foundations as *Ayurveda* has. This ancient science of medicine enfolds the secrets of youthful longevity and is therefore also referred as a comprehensive science of happy and hearty life.

The rising graph of psychosomatic disorders and challenging diseases and the limitations of the widely used modern medical sciences in coping with them on the one hand, and the risks of harmful side-effects of antibiotics and synthesized drugs on the other, have revived new interest in this ancient science. The preventive and remedial measures derived under *Ayurveda* deal with multidimensional complexities and problems of human life and provide solutions in perfect harmony with Nature. It is therefore most relevant and promising towards achieving total health in the present times as well. The *Shastric* scriptures on *Ayurveda* define it as –

*Hitāhitam Sukham Duhkhamāyustasya  
Hitahitam |  
Mānanca Tacca Yatroktamāyurvedaḥ Sa  
Ucyate ||*

Meaning: The grand treatise, which contains the details of healthy and long age (*āyu*) and which defines what is good (*hita*) and what is bad (*ahita*) for the four different types of *āyus* (namely, *hitāyu*, *ahitāyu*, *sukhāyu* and *dukhāyu*, concerning different conditions of diseased or healthy life) – is *Ayurveda*.

The basic purpose of *Ayurvedic* knowledge is cited in the *Shastric* literature as –

“*Swasthasya Swāstharakśanamā ṛ Turasya  
Vikāra Prasamanam Ca*”

Meaning: *Ayurveda* aims at the protection and maintenance of good health of the healthy people and elimination of and control over the ailments and health-disorders of the unhealthy.

The following are the signs of a healthy person according to *Ayurveda*.

*Samadoṣaḥ Samāgniśca Samadhātumala  
Kriyaḥ |  
Prasannātmendriyamanāḥ Swastha  
Ityabhidhīyate ||*

Meaning: Only that person is healthy, whose *doṣas*, *dhātumal* and *agni* (the basic elements and functional energy streams as per one's natural constitution or *prakṛati*) are balanced and free from all defects and disorders and whose mind and soul are in perfect harmony.

The above definition conveys the comprehensive and complete approach of

the *rishis* who founded this great science of medicine and total health.

*Prakṛati Nidāna* – the basis of diagnosis and treatment under *Ayurveda* – describes one's natural constitution (*prakṛati*) in terms of three basic functional elements or physical, mental and emotional energy patterns called the *tridoṣa*: namely, *vāta*, *pitta* and *kapha*. In terms of the physique and physiological activities of the body, the modern researchers interpret *vāta* as the energy of movement, *pitta* as the energy of digestion or metabolism and *kapha* as the energy of lubrication and structure. Harmonious balance of *vāta*, *pitta* and *kapha* is regarded as the sign of normally healthy state. Any disturbance, excess or deficiencies in any of these upsets the normal concentration of vital elements, and physiological and (bio) chemical reactions and functioning inside the body and therefore results in different kinds of diseases. For example, if the waste products inside the body are not discharged properly, these will cause harmful deposits and toxic effects.

*Ayurveda* recommends disciplines in eating habits, sleep, and other phases of daily routine, etc, as per one's *prakṛati* and the nature of the climate and the ambience one lives in. One of the major causes of generally bad health and mushrooming of diseases in the modern times is the haphazard and undisciplined life style adopted by most people today. If we care for natural maintenance of good health, it is worth paying heed to the tips provided under the teachings of *Ayurveda*.

Let us first look at what is described as the ideal routine of the day according to *Ayurveda*. After getting up in *Brahm-muhūrta* (about three hours before sunrise); five to ten minutes *sādhanā* of

contemplation on self-realization, paying respect to mother earth in the form of *Namaskar*, drinking substantial amount of water to fill the stomach for proper cleansing by excretion, cleaning the teeth, massaging the body with oil, morning walk, physical exercises (by suitable *yogāsana*s), bathing followed by *japa-sādhanā* with meditation, *swādhyāya* (study of enlightening books and scriptures) — are the successive steps of the daily routine before having lunch.

Getting up in the *Brahm-muhūrta* is given significant importance in the scriptures for physical, mental and spiritual development.

*Brāhme Muhūrte Hyuttiṣṭhejjīrṇā Nirūpayan Rakṣārtha Māyusaḥ Swastho* | – A. Su. 3  
*Brāhme Muhūrte Budhyet Swastho Rakṣārthmāyusaḥ* | – Bha. Pra. 1 | 24

Implications: In order to enjoy a long, healthy life, a person should get up in the *brahm-muhūrta* with positive thinking. He should also take care of what he eats at night; whether it is digested properly or not? (That means, the night-meal should be light and taken much earlier before going to sleep so that one will not feel heavy and drowsy in getting up so early).

Maharshi Manu has advised –  
*Brāhme Muhūrte Budhyet Dharmārthacānucintayet* |  
*Kāyakleśānśca Tanmūlānvedatatwārthameva Ca* || – Manu. 4 | 92

Meaning: Every man and woman should get up in the *brahm-muhūrta* and think of *dharma* and *artha*. (That means one should determine the righteous mode of utilizing the day ahead and also plan for constructive use of his time and efforts during the day for progressive augmentation of resources and talents). One should also contemplate on his body-

functions and analyze whether it is in healthy state or not. If not, he should try to investigate (by introvert concentration on the body) the cause of what is going wrong. Reading and contemplating on the teachings of the *Vedas* should also be a part of this morning phase.

Today, there is a general habit of eating late in the night, watching television still longer. Then how could one get up early in the morning? But if we want to be away from all diseases and enjoy a vigorous and hearty life, we will have to change this wrong trend. We must inculcate the habit of getting up before sunrise. Human life is indeed a rare opportunity for self-realization. We must make best use of every moment of this precious gift. We should get up every morning with a feeling of having a new birth and plan constructively for the best use of the day, as though the next twenty-four hours would be the entire span of the new life.

Lotus blossoms with bliss with the dawn of the day, birds welcome it with sonorous warbling, wind flows smoothly with a refreshing touch.... Everything in Nature's creation appears to gain new life, new energy in the *brahm-muhūrta*. If we miss these beautiful moments by sleeping, great will be our loss in terms of soul awakening. *Brahm-muhūrta* is said to be the best period of the day. It is most favorable for maintaining good health and also for intellectual and spiritual progress. Nature wholeheartedly enshowers – during this time phase – all that is essential for mental and bodily strength, vigour, happiness, intellectual brilliance and productivity and spiritual benefits.

The ancient scriptures of *Ayurveda* mention the above fact at one place as —

*Varṇa, Kīrti, Mati, Lakṣmī, Swāस्थ्यam  
Āyusca Vindati |*

*Brāhme Muhūrte Sanjāgracchiyaṁ Va  
Pankajam Yathā ||*

Meaning: Getting up in the *brahm-muhūrta* helps gaining beauty, charm, brilliance of intellect, glory, prosperity, health and long life. The body gets energized and blossoms like a lotus flower if one is awake at this time....

We should get up in this supremely energizing phase of the day and do the *sādhanā* of *ātmabodha* (self-realization). The *ātmabodha sādhanā* is performed just after getting up. The conscious mind and all associated faculties go into rest with sound sleep in the night. The visible world ends and one lives in a different world of unconscious perceptions. The soul has only a tenuous connection with the body and the gross world in this phase; which is just sufficient to enable continuity of the vital functions that maintain the living state of the body. The consciousness and its intimate connection with the body is regained the moment one gets up. Thus, the instance of getting up is somewhat like having a new birth.

In order to perform the above *sādhanā*, sit up on the bed or on some cloth piece with erect spine; preferably with legs folded as in *sukhāsana*. Keep both the hands on your lap. (The body may be covered with extra warm clothes in winter). Take a deep breath in a relaxed mode and exhale it slowly (breathing should be through the nostrils only). Try meditating on bluish light during the first breath, yellowish light during the second and reddish light during the third. Thank the Almighty for giving this life and feel happy to have this opportunity of a new lease of life for the day ahead.

Contemplate for few minutes that God is blessing you for the next twenty hours and is going to keep watch on how you plan to make ideal use of this boon. Think positively of doing something constructive and adopting a virtue and/or giving up a bad habit in your behavior and actions that day. (Plan something that is do-able; howsoever small it may be, it will boost your self-confidence if you are able to follow what you resolve).

The next step of your routine should be to pay obeisance to the mother earth. The following *śloka* describes what should be our feeling at these moments (the *śloka* may be chanted like a prayer):

*Samudra Mekhale Devi Parvatastana  
Mañdale|  
Viṣṇu Patnīm Namastubhyaṁ Pādasparśam  
Kśamaswa Me ||*

Meaning: You who wear a waistband of oceans, huge mountains cover whose breasts; who is the eternal Companion of Lord Vishnu, I pay obeisance to you Oh Mother Earth! Kindly forgive me, as I have to commit the sin of putting my feet upon your surface (to begin my journey of life for the day ahead).

The third major step is drinking fresh water. It should be drunk slowly, but continuously, to fill the stomach completely. This should be done before going to the toilet, as it helps in fast and smooth excretion and proper cleansing of the stomach. This activity is called "*uṣāpāna*" and is recommended in *Ayurveda* as – "One who does *uṣāpāna* every day after getting up in the (early) morning indeed protects his body from diseases and makes his body healthy". Generally cold (normal temperature below

lukewarm) water is supposed to give best effects.

It is a pity to note that even in India – the land of the genesis and practice of *Ayurveda*, many people – mostly the so-called educated ones, who are supposed to be more aware of health- are now getting used to 'bed tea' or 'bed coffee' which is harmful for our body in all respects. Normally cold water is good for our teeth and it also strengthens our digestive system. Our metabolic system has the capacity to heat up the chilled things entering the stomach, but there is no process to cool down the hot things up to the healthy or normal temperature. Consumption of hot tea, coffee, other drinks or eatables damages the delicate tissues in our tongue, food pipe and the stomach; these give rise to ulcers at times, which might become cancerous, if neglected.

*Uṣāpāna* in the morning is also useful as it helps curing the indigestion, if any, due to the food consumed during the previous night. The following quote in "Bhav Prakash" also highlights the importance of *uṣāpāna*:

*Savituḥ Samudaya Kale Prasṛati Salilasya  
Vivedaṣṭau |  
Roga Jarā Parimukto Jiveda Vatsaraśatam  
Sāgram ||*

"The person who drinks eight 'anjali' (deep cup made by joining the two hands) water every day at the sunrise time becomes free from all ailments. He lives for hundred years and the (weakness and other problems of) old-age does not even touch him". Indeed, people used to have hundreds of years of youthful life in the *Rishi-Age*.

Complete cleansing of the stomach by *uṣāpāna* not only keeps the body light

but also refreshes the mind. It eliminates problems of white discharge etc. Sexual complexities, boils, ulcers, headache and problems pertaining to eyesight are also found to be naturally cured by regularity and consistency in this simple exercise.

Greater benefits of *uṣāpāna* are obtained if one can (after due practice of "jala-neti" etc) drink about 250 ml of water through the nose instead of mouth. Its positive effects are cited in the Ayurvedic scriptures as –

*Vigat Ghan Niśithe Prātarūthāya Nityam,  
Pivati Khalu Naro Yo Ghrānarandhreṇa Vāri |  
Sa Bhavati Mati Pūrṇaśca Kśuṣāḥ  
Tārksyatulyo, Vali Palita Vihīnā  
Sarvarogervimuktaḥ |*

Meaning: The person, who consumes water through the nose, soon after the darkness of the night is over, gains bright intellect and sharp eyesight; his hair do not become gray or white and he remains free from all diseases.

The water used in *uṣāpāna* may be kept at a lukewarm temperature in the winter seasons to avoid irritation in the nose/throat.

The next step (after *uṣāpāna*) in the daily routine is excretion of faeces (*śauca*). Sushrut (one of the Vedic masters of Ayurveda) has mentioned about its importance as –

*Ayuṣyamuṣasi Proktaṁ Malādīnām  
Visarjanam |*

Meaning: Excretion of the dirt inside the body in the morning before sunrise helps in maintenance of long healthy life.

The Indian style of toilets is most suitable in terms of proper pressure on the legs and stomach. Excretion at the right time in the morning is important as a delay in it leads to harmful deposits of the toxic

and waste substances in the body that eventually cause or support the occurrence of diseases. Everyone desirous of healthy and active body and mind should have *śauca* twice a day – once in the morning after the *ātmabodha sādhanā* and *uṣāpāna* and once in the evening. Some people resist going to the toilets or urination at times against the call of nature. This should be avoided, as it is quite harmful for health. Also, care should be taken to wash hands, legs and face after each visit to the toilet. This is essential for hygiene and also for refreshing the body and mind.

Because of the fast and tension-filled routine, many people have complaints of constipation or unclear stools these days. Apart from *uṣāpāna*, some specific *yogāsanas* and physical exercises would be beneficial in such cases. Use of coarse flour, cereals, fibers, green vegetables and pulses with skins (especially sprouted ones) in food is also recommended as a good remedy against such problems. In severe cases of constipation (e.g. due to some long-term hidden mental tension) taking one spoon of the Ayurvedic herbal medicines, such as *haritaki*-powder every night gives fast relief.

"*Dantadhāwan*" – the process of cleaning the teeth and mouth is also given significant importance in Ayurveda. Root causes of many diseases are said to grow from dirty teeth. Shining white and healthy teeth are often compared to pearls and add to one's charm. Teeth are like the guards sitting at the main entrance of the body. Teeth are cut a few months after the birth of our body. If we do not take care of our teeth through proper eating habits and cleaning, these become the hideouts of germs. The diseases of gums, formations

of cavities in the teeth, toothache, etc are clear signs of the damages caused to the teeth by our negligence. Much before such manifestations, the dirt and the bacteria hidden in the teeth are carried inside the body along with whatever we eat. We must therefore follow prescribed disciplines for keeping our teeth clean and strong.

The *rishis* – the founders of *Ayurveda* – had given due importance to teeth as the key elements of healthy body. They had recommended *dātuna* (small pieces of soft branches of certain medicinal trees) as the best for *dantadhāwan*. The medicinal trees/plants of *Nīma* (margosa), *Babūla* (acacia), *Sihora* (Siamese Roughbush), *Khādira* (Black Catechu), *Kanera* (Indian Oleander), *Mahua* (Bassia Latifolia), *Arjuna* (Terminalia Arjun), *Bādāma* (almond), etc are found most suitable for this purpose. The Scriptures say –

*Aveśyartuṃ Ca Doṣaṃ Ca Rasaṃ Vīrya Ca  
Yojayate |  
Kaṣāyaṃ Madhuraṃ Tiktaṃ Katukaṃ  
Prātarūthitaḥ ||  
Nimbaśca Tiktake Śreṣṭhaḥ Kaṣāye  
Khadirastathā |  
Madhuko Madhure Śreṣṭhaḥ Karañjaḥ Katuke  
Thatā ||*

*Su. Chi. A. 24*

Meaning: A *dātuna* of sweet, bitter, astringent or spicy taste should be used as per the state (determined in the Ayurvedic diagnostics in terms of – *kratu*, *doṣa*, *rasa* and *vīrya*) of the teeth and general health of a person. *Dātuna* of *Nīma* is acrid spicy, *Khādira* is astringent, *Mahua* is sweet and *Kanera* is bitter in taste. Use of these strengthens and beautifies the teeth with shining glow.

Acharya Shushrut has also recommended the *dātunas* of the above kinds for different tastes and effects. *Nīma* is generally good for every one as it eliminates the dirt and mucus in and around the teeth, gums and mouth, works as a disinfectant and removes stinking odors from the mouth.

It is also important to use a *dātuna* properly. The teeth should be brushed gently and the *dātuna* should be pressed beneath the teeth so that its juice is extracted and spread around the teeth and gums and fills the mouth. One should sit and use the *dātuna* with full concentration; whenever needed, the saliva or the used juice of the *dātuna* should be spitted in a pit, bathroom-canal or washbasin without dirtying the surroundings. Usually, a *dātuna* should be about six inches long and have thickness about that of the little finger. After brushing the teeth the *dātuna* should be torn into two pieces from its central axes; one portion of this should be used as a tongue-cleaner. The palate should be cleaned by rubbing the other portion on it with the support of the thumb. Cleaning of the tongue and the palate is as important as that of the teeth and the gums (as cited in the following scriptural quote):  
*Jihvānirlekhanam Raupayam Sauvarṇa  
Vārksameva Ca |  
Tanmalāpaharam Śastam Mṛaduślakṣaṇam  
Daśaṅgulam ||*

*Su. Chi. A. 24*

Meaning: The tongue cleaner could be (if not of *dātuna*) made up of gold, silver or any metal or wood but it should be soft, smooth, flexible and (long enough for proper cleaning of the tongue).

In case people have problems in getting *dātun* every day, they may make use of

(herbal) toothpaste or toothpowder. Use of powdered rock salt, mustard oil, and powders of dry ginger, *sal ammoniac*, dried green-leaf of guava, dry bark-skin of *Molaśri* (Surinam Madler), *Kāyaphal* (Myrtalberry) and *triphalā* etc is recommended in preparation of good Ayurvedic toothpastes or tooth powders. One may make use of a brush and stainless steel tongue-cleaner but the method of cleaning should be slow, consistent and long enough, as it is while using a *dātuna*. The toothbrush should be moved upward and downward on each tooth (on the front as well as back and around). Middle finger could also be used for this purpose. The teeth should be cleaned with the help of this finger with proper gargling each

time we eat something. Sometimes some particles of eatables or grains are stuck in between the teeth; in such cases, the particle should be brought out with the help of the brush or toothpick followed by thorough gargling.

The teeth should also be cleaned before going to bed. Many people have a habit of drinking milk before sleep. They should be extra careful, as the deposited layers of milk, if left unclean, will invite attack of germs. Proper cleaning of the teeth, gums and mouth (including tongue and palate) in the morning and night is a healthy habit that must be adopted by every one who cares for good health.

(To be continued in the next issue).

Disciples used to receive education in the *Gurukuls* without paying any fees in ancient India. The virtuous training and the affection received at the *Ashram* of the *Guru* used to be their life-long precious asset of soul, mind and body. They used to regularly send a part of their income to the *Gurukul* as a token of their gratitude. They used to provide for the essential needs of the *Ashram* and even ask the *Guru*, while leaving the place about how best they would be able to raise support for continuation of the sacred activities of the *Ashram*. They pledged life-long support in specific ways as per their own capacities with respect to the needs of the *Gurukul* and stuck to fulfill this duty. This tradition continued in the handful of *Gurukuls* surviving in the post medieval age as well, despite the drastic changes in the educational and social systems.

When Dayanand was leaving the *Ashram* of his *Guru*, Swami Virajanand, he touched the feet of the *Guru* and offered to dedicate himself for whatever service the latter wanted him to do. Virajanand was greatly impressed by the exceptional talents, nobility of character and conduct and sincerity of purpose of his disciple. He replied – “It would be so nice if instead of spending life in pursuit of worldly allurements, as most people do, you could do something worthwhile to divert the untoward, evil trends of that time and the masses to reclaim their glorious *vedic* heritage. The noble disciple indeed devoted all his energies towards the fulfillment of his *Guru's* wish. He remained a *Sanyasi* throughout his life and made glorious contributions to the reformation and upliftment of the Hindu society and refinement of the world culture. The life and works of this great *rishi*, the founder of “Arya Samaj”, shine with immortal glory as one of the truly great personages of Indian renaissance.

## The Amazing Potentials of *Prāṇic* Energy

At a superficial level blood appears to be the principal regulator of the activities of the body and the internal body functions. If we look a little deeper at physiological, cellular and molecular levels, we find that the enormous functions of the body are run with the help of a specific bio-electrical energy, which is generated in the brain and supplied to all the parts and organs of the body through a fine network of nerves. This source of energy is as vital for the sustenance of the vivid activities of the body as the dynamo-battery for a motor. Under this analogy, blood is like petrol and bioelectricity is like the electrical energy of the motor (of the body system). A continuous supply and distribution of both together advance the flow of life.

The body-electricity is different from the electricity that we see being used around us in a variety of domestic machines and technological gadgets. The bioelectricity flowing in the brain and the entire body, which makes the uncountable physiological and bio-chemical and physical functions possible, is a manifestation of *prāṇic* energy. The *prāṇa*<sup>1</sup> indwelling in our body is a fraction of the eternal, cosmic *prāṇa*. The active presence of this *prāṇic* energy in the body could be enhanced by mental and vital strength. Focused willpower and determined efforts enable outstanding performance of sportsmen, wonders of skilled talents, adventurous expeditions, etc. In a similar way, adept *yoga-sādhanās* effectuate a significant rise in the *prāṇic* electricity level at will. The enhanced level of *prāṇa* also arouses the will power and the external and internal vigor of the *sādhaka*<sup>2</sup>.

The power of a small battery or dry cell is a tiny fraction of the enormous electrical power that could be produced in a grand powerhouse. A battery can be used for lighting a torch or for equivalent small jobs. But, if we need to run a big machine in a factory or lighten up a city, a huge power generator would be essential. Similarly, the ordinary level of *prāṇa* may be sufficient for the sustenance of the routine physiological, metabolic and other normal functions of the body. It would be substantial for one's life if it simply revolves around eating, sleeping and reproducing. Should we require elevation from this animal nature of our life, we would need to elevate, protect and creatively channelize our *prāṇic* energy. Still higher presence of the cosmic *prāṇa* would be required for still greater, august purposes. Specific kinds of *yoga-sādhanās* are needed to attain the desired charging of *prāṇic* energy as per the specific aim.

The spiritual masters of the esoteric knowledge of the science of *prāṇa* transmit their *prāṇic* energy into the deserving disciples and thus enlighten and empower their personalities with exceptional potentials. In the ancient times, people used to go with serene faith to the holy *ashrams* (hermitages) of the *rishis* and benefit from their blessings and the *prāṇic* energy pervading around them.

The *śaktipāta* (transmission of the spiritually elevated *prāṇa* of a *guru*) bestowed by a noble *guru* upon his deserving disciple used to transform the latter's personality into a remarkably brilliant, sagacious, vigorous and talented one. The radiant spiritual transmutation of

Aruni blessed by Rishi Dhaumya, of Jabali by Rishi Gautam, Arjuna by Lord Indra and Nachiketa by Lord Yama, are well known examples of *śaktipāta* cited in the scriptures. This noble tradition was followed by the sages of the later ages too. The *śaktipāta* bestowed by *Paramhansa* Ramakrishna upon Narendra transformed the latter into the globally revered Swami Vivekanand. Sister Nivedita and several other disciples of Swamiji later on received his *prāṇic* energy by a similar process. Maharshi Sri Aurobindo had invited the Mother Mirra Alfassa of France through telepathic signals of his *prāṇa* sent from India while she was living in Paris. She then became aware of the spiritual light of her great soul and came to the Maharshi's *Ashram*. Sri Aurobindo endowed her with a deep knowledge of *yoga* and Indian Philosophy, along with the divine radiance of his spiritual attainments.

It is said with reference to the epic "Ramayana" that when Lord Ram was living in exile in the forest, with Sita and Lakshman, the latter used to transmit the message of their well-being and specific news of the week to his wife Urmila with the help of his transmuted *prāṇic* energy. Thousands of kilometers away, Urmila used to receive it in a state of meditation and then used to convey the message verbally to the other family members. Thus, without having any wireless, radio set or telephonic facility, they were able to communicate quite easily.

An episode in the Puranas describes the angelic *prāṇic* force of Sati Anusuiya. Once the Gods Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh went to her *Ashram* to test the spiritual strength of her piety. They reached the *Ashram* in the form of little

children when her husband Rishi Atri was away. But the aura of her *prāṇic* energy instantly experienced their divine glow and she made no mistake in recognizing the Gods.

Prince Pratardan, the son of King Divoda, had once offered his dedicated services to Lord Indra. In recognition of his worthiness and piety of the purpose, the deity taught him *Prāṇa Vidyā* – the deep science of *prāṇa*. He preached – "*Prāṇa* is *Brahm*. The great *rishis* and *yogis* awaken it in their inner selves and use it for the welfare of the entire world".

In the second chapter of the Kaupitaki Brahmanopanishad, the secret of telepathic communication via *prāṇic* energy is described as under –

"*Atha Khalu Sā Detmevoktha Mupāsīta |  
Yo Vai Prāṇaḥ Sā Prajñā Ma Vā Prajñā Sa  
Prāṇaḥ |  
Sa Yadā Pratibuddhate Sthāagnervisphulinga |  
Vipratithante Prāṇebhyo Devebhyo Lokā ||*"

Meaning: (Different currents of *prāṇa*, responsible for different faculties of the sense-organs, are referred as "*anya prāṇa*" here.) When the mind is engrossed in deep thinking then all the *anya prāṇas* are also absorbed with it in that process. When the eyes are focused on something then the *anya prāṇas* also do the same. Similarly, when something is being thoroughly expressed verbally then all the (currents of) *prāṇas* are linked with the voice. All the *anya prāṇas* are synchronicity with every function of the (principal) *prāṇa*.

The above quote implies the predominant role of *prāṇa* in mental functions. The mental concentration and the intensity of the spiritual force of *prāṇa* create majestic compounded effects and enhance the

corresponding faculty or function in gigantic proportions.

The human body is like a grand powerhouse. From head to toe, the interconnected efferent and afferent nerves circumvent every millimeter of its structure. Dr. Brown, a noted neuro-physiologist of yester years, had once remarked in a popular talk that the amount of electrical power consumed in the daily functioning of the human body and mind is so much that it would be sufficient to run a big factory for the same duration of time. The electricity in the body of a small child alone would be sufficient to run an engine of a train.

Neuroscientist Dr. Karl Leisley has demonstrated that the electrical stimulation of certain portions of the brain could activate specific memory of specific time period of the past. Dr. Roger Sperry of the California Institute of Technology has successfully experimented on certain electrically stimulated centers in the brain to help in weeding out some inclinations and accumulated habits and substituting new behavior patterns. Dr. Holger Hoyden of Sweden has shown that in certain cases, variation in the Ribonucleic Acid (RNA) helps varying the conscious activities (bioelectricity) of the brain.

The currents of *prāna* are of significant importance in Spiritual Healing. Before we elucidate this point, it would be necessary to consider the power of mind in the living body. Every radio set has a special crystal transistor to catch the radio signals of a specific frequency range. With respect to the transmission and reception of the waves of spiritual energy, our mind plays the role of this crystal in our body. The sound waves of what we speak are spread in the ocean of the etheric element in the cosmic space. Their flow and impact

is insignificant in the normal course. But, if amplified and converted by electrical energy, the same sonic waves would expand with greater force. A radio set catches these waves in the frequency range compatible with its crystal and broadcasts the filtered sound waves, which can be heard at long distances. The conversion of specific sound waves into amplified electromagnetic waves and re-conversion into original sound becomes possible with the help of electricity. In the sublime processes of telepathy and spiritual healing, this mediating (connecting) role is played by the *prānic* electricity of the human mind.

We usually conceptualize and experience the mind as a distinct subtle unit embedded in the body but that is not the case. Scientifically speaking, every cell in the body has its own subtle 'mind' (*prānic* core). The ensemble of all these collectively constitute our (total) mind.

Every component, every unit of the body has its own domain of independent and interactive activities but each is under the overall control of the mind. For instance, suppose the cells in the genitals secrete the biochemicals that participate in sexual arousal and reactions. But if the (total) mind does not desire to have this excitation at that moment then it would stop the secretions instantly and pacify the concupiscence. Every individual organ or subsystem in the body often expresses its own will but the total mind adjusts and governs it for the overall regulation and follow-up of its own (collective) will. It suppresses the activities that are against its present conditioning and the current state of the entire system and supports or accelerates the ones in concordance.

As mind is not a single unit, rather, a collectivity of the individual impulses of

the subtle 'minds' of the many units, it is referred to in the spiritual literature as *Manomaya Kośa* (the mind sheath of consciousness). In the state of complete coherence and consonance of all the individual units of the mind and the *anya prānas* with the total mind, the power of the mind is amplified to magnificent levels; it creates wonders in any direction it is focused on.

Because of the concentrated force of *prāṇic* energy, when the conscious mind is engrossed at a specific point with inner determination, all the components of the brain at the organ, cellular and subtler levels work in complete harmony under focused mental control. The compounded power thus generated can also alter the inter- and the intra cellular communication and cure the ailments of the body and enhance its vitality and resistance; if motivated and focused at an external aim, this could also be used to send the mental signals or waves of *prāṇa* to the target for the desired effects.

Treatment of incurable diseases and undiagnosed complications by spiritual healing has been quite common for the saints across the globe. It is said about Saint Macarius, who used to live in the deserts of Egypt around the fourth century A.D., that he used to cure severe diseases including psychological abnormalities by the mere touch of his hand. Once a young man was brought to him with a complaint of some 'ghost problem'. He just kept one hand on the head and one on the chest of the patient and started praying in silence. The young man's body started inflating gradually and almost started floating in the air. Then suddenly he screamed and vomited some watery substances. With this, he was completely cured and became

normal. Similar examples of spiritual healing are known about the power of the prayers and blessings of Saint Augustine, Saint Andrews of Milan, Saint Martin of France, etc.

This healing gift of saints has continued over the centuries and has also helped retain people's faith and reverence towards religion. Saint Francis and Saint Bernard are among the honored saints of this tradition in the twelfth century A.D. The names of Saint Catherine in the fourteenth century and Saint Francis Xavier in the sixteenth century are immortal in this glorious list of spiritual healers, who relieved the sufferers from dreaded diseases. George Fox, the founder of the "Society of Friends" in the seventeenth century A.D., also treated a large number of people in England through this sublime healing power. His experiences of spiritual healing and different types of cases cured by him are reported in his unpublished thesis entitled "Book of Miracles".

Since the time of Saint Paul, the clothes of great saints, spiritual masters and the enlightened martyrs, who sacrificed their lives for noble aims and welfare of others, were used after their death for the purpose of spiritual treatment of severe patients. The ailing part of the patient's body used to be covered and gently pressed by the Scarf, Apron or other clothing of the great departed-soul. In order to protect the sacred belongings (which are supposed to have absorbed the subtle radiation of the elevated *prāṇa* of the great souls), these began to be kept in special Churches and Cathedrals rather than in the graves. The sacred remains of the body of Saint Stephen have been known to offer miraculous healing effects. The remains of several religious sages and

saints of later times are also said to be used for such miraculous effects.

The crown of thorn, kept on the sacred head of Jesus Christ at the time of crucifixion, is worshipped for its healing effects. Touching it with deep and intense fervor is supposed to remove all ailments and pains. Many of the sacred graves of saints have become monuments of tribute (*samādhis*). Hundreds of patients are said to have been cured by spending one or two nights in their proximity with devout faith. All these are the effects of the concentrated aura of the *prāṇa* of the angelic, saintly souls, which, unless weakened by the sinful acts in the surroundings, remains alive and effective long after they have left the physical body.

The awakened radiance of *prāṇa* in a person is the source of his exceptional strength and extraordinary talents. Even with an ordinary physique and insignificant education, people endowed with the awakened energy of this life-spark often accomplish miraculous feats. The radiance and greatness of one's personality depends upon the grandeur of his *prāṇa*.

The enhanced level of *prāṇic* energy plays wonders wherever and in whichever area of life it is applied. The following examples are quite interesting and peculiar in this regard. John Miller of Amstamize lived a healthy life for 124 years. He married several women. His last marriage was with an eighteen years old girl when he himself was about eighty years old. He had ten children from that marriage. Moreover, his silver white hair had begun to grow black few years before his death.

A Chinese farmer of the state of Zhiyangi had to face the ordeal of getting childhood teeth again at the age of 101 years. Bearing all the pain he finally got

sixteen fresh teeth in the lower jaw and eleven in the upper. This unbelievable news was published in the Chinese daily "Venhu Vhao" a few decades ago.

Maxis was a celebrity weightlifter of Germany. His own body-weight was about 147 pounds. In one of his shows, a man of 187 pounds (forty pounds heavier than Maxis!) sat on one of his hands; Maxis stood up with this weight and lifted this hand up above his own head about sixteen times, while holding a glass full of water in the other hand. The water in the glass remained still, demonstrating that there was no external force to pull his hand upwards.

James Bean Colloney was the first American athlete to win the Olympic medal. He participated in a Step-and-Jump competition in 1896 and won it. Surprisingly he had never undergone any professional training or practice in athletics. Facing lot of difficulties, through his own efforts and the demonstration of his capabilities, he was able to get a place in the official team of his country. All he had was a strong inclination towards athletics and an inner zeal. After winning the Olympic award he simply said that it was a pleasant coincidence that his dearest hobby (of running) since childhood got a boosting chance that day.

Thirty-eight years old Joe Giradley had made news in England around the year 1818 because of her fireproof body. During one of the demonstrations, she put some nitric acid in her mouth for few minutes without feeling any burning sensation. When she spat it out on an iron sheet, people could see the flames of fire leaping out of the iron sheet. In a similar show, she easily gulped boiling oil; not only that, when she spat out the boiling oil after holding it in her mouth for some time,

the oil was still extremely warm. She could keep melting wax in her mouth and even sealed her lips with it. What is more, she converted hot, melting zinc into a smooth coin by chewing it for some time!

Joe was born in Italy. Since childhood she used to jump on red-hot iron grids; could even lick them without getting any wound or blister on her tongue; used to tattoo her body by a burning stick and even tried to burn her hair several times. She was able to mold heated iron rods in any desired shape by hitting them with her feet. In some instances she had kept her hands on the flames of eight candles in such a position that flames could pass through in between her fingers. Although smoke would blacken her fingers, there were no signs of burns anywhere. Investigations showed when her skin was touched with hot metal rod there were no signs of reddishness or wounds. That means there was some insulating aura that kept the heat or fire away from her skin and tissues! According to Joe herself, she had several times entered fire with pieces of flesh in her hand. The flesh pieces

would be charred but she would come out without any burn marks on her body.

These are some factual instances of the supernormal physical effects of higher *prāṇic* energy. Its expressions in the mental domains are more astonishing. We shall look at them in some more articles in future. What we should note here is that the super-energy of *prāṇa* is present in all of us but mostly remains dormant and underutilized. We all can protect and enhance the potency of our *prāṇic* energy through strong will and steadfast dedicated endeavors.

Notes:

1. *Prāṇa*: The source of liveliness, consciousness and vitality; the vital spiritual energy that grants us the ability to move, work, think and access wisdom.
2. *Sādhanā*: Devout spiritual endeavor aimed at inner refinement and elevation.
3. *Sādhanika*: Who sincerely performs a *sādhanā*.

*On the auspicious occasion of Guru Pūrṇimā (July, 13, 2003)*

## **The Sacred Ancient Tradition of *Guru - Śiṣya***

The brightest aspect of Indian culture is its tradition of sacred and ever deepening bond of soul kinship between *Guru* and *Śiṣya*. It is through this spiritual medium of teacher-disciple relationship between *Guru* and *Śiṣya* that India once rose to the position of *Jagatguru* (Teacher of the world). This tradition gave birth to *Upaniṣads*. The word *Upaniṣad* is spelt as *Upa+niṣad*; meaning to sit near and to listen - to absorb. An attentive disciple listened to the teachings and experiences of his spiritual master, assimilated them and then succinctly recorded them systematically in the form of unique scriptures called *Upaniṣads*. *Pancāgni Vidyā* has been described in the *Kathopanishad* in the form of a dialogue between *Yama* and *Nachiketa*. This is a unique example of the *Guru- Śiṣya* tradition. Another example of this tradition, which removes the opaque layers of ignorance hiding the spender of the individual souls, has been further exemplified through the medium of Aruni Swetketu. Explaining *Jīvan Vidyā* (art of living) as “*Tatvamasi Swetketo*” (Oh Swetketu! You yourself are made in the image and likeness of that Supreme Being). We resolve to dedicate ourselves to the ideals of this ancient tradition, every year on *Guru Pūrṇimā parva* because it has kept the essence of Indian spiritual quest alive—the sacred relationship between the two souls (one enlightened and other seeking enlightenment) and the path to achieve the ultimate goal of life clear. If we ponder deeply over this sacred context of *Guru*

*Pūrṇimā*, *Vyas Pūrṇimā*, we will realize that we have inherited this festival as an opportunity of refining our faith and devotion and moving in the direction of spiritual progress; and as an occasion for receiving *Gurusatta's* blessings. How blessed is a person who has achieved the proximity of *Guru*, his blessings and subtle protection; can be appreciated from the following lines of Hindi verse “*Guru bin jñān nahin re – nahin re; Guru bin jīvan aisa hotā, jaise prān nahin re – nahin re*”. (Meaning: Spiritual knowledge cannot be attained without the help of the *Guru*. Life without *Guru* is like a body without life-breath).

In India, from the ancient times, the responsibility of selecting the right disciples, removing their darkness of ignorance, guiding them to achieve salvation and serve humanity has been assigned to a self-realized teacher. One can easily understand how essential it is to re-establish this sacred tradition of *Guru-Śiṣya* under the present circumstances when *Jīvan Vidyā* has almost disappeared. If there is anything that can stop today's decline of moral values; it is this tradition of *Guru-Śiṣya* based on dedication and total surrender.

Who should be the *Guru*? What should be his attributes? On this aspect, our scriptures say that *Guru* should be “*Viśārdam, brahmaniṣṭham, śrotriām*”. This means that the one who possesses the knowledge of *śruti* (essence of *Vedas* known through aural transmission), is an

expert in its philosophy; possesses excellent moral character befitting a *Brahman*, that is, whose life is devoted to God and possesses so much spiritual power that he is able to transfer some of the energy to the disciples for their upliftment; can truly be considered fit to be a *Guru*.

Sant Gyanesvar has written in *Bhavartha Dipika* (popularly known as Gyaneshwari) – his Marathi commentary on the *Gita* that one who gets the blessing of a *Guru* may appear to be an ordinary person but he attains a status equivalent to Lord Siva. *Adya Shankaracharya* has compared *Guru* with *Paras* (touch stone) who not only transforms the disciple into his own likeness but also transfers so much spiritual power to him that the latter becomes *paras* itself. When such a disciple comes in contact with an ordinary person who is like a crude iron ore, the latter gets transformed into a virtuous person (precious like gold).

The relationship between *Guru* and *Śiṣya* has been considered to be deeply spiritual in nature. It is extremely pure, full of dedication and is the ultimate in devotion. Among the four types of relationships; namely, physical, mental, emotional and spiritual - only the last one endures everlastingly. It is also essential to know what should be the specialty of a *Guru*? How to identify a *Sadguru*? And, after this, how should the *Śiṣya* present himself before the *Guru*? *Śruti* says that he should take *Samidha*<sup>2</sup> in his hand and in an humble manner go to the learned and accomplished *Sadguru*, who is the symbol of divine light, and beg of him for impartation of the supreme knowledge. *Samidhā* catches fire. It is inflammable. Therefore, it gives an indication that the

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<sup>2</sup> *Samidhā* – wood for *yajña*

disciple should be ready to burn his ego-generated vices and sins by coming in proximity of the fire of *Guru*. One who has removed the dampness of ego in the *Samidha* of his personality; will burn without giving any smoke; its flame will be bright and go high in the air. Therefore, a person who has refined himself to the extent of becoming a true *brahman*, can only qualify to become a disciple (rhetorically called, sitting near the *Guru* with a *Samidha* in hand). Only such a person is worthy of getting the grace of *Guru*.

The *Guru*, who knows the secrets of human-divine consciousness, is capable of transforming and illuminating the consciousness of the *Śiṣya*. The *Guru* comes as a representative of Divine for the benefit of the world. He is on look out for true disciples, tests them properly, endows them with supernormal powers for the upliftment of society. Thakur Sri Ramkrishna Paramhans, who is considered divine incarnation par-excellence, came to this earth with such a mission. He met many people; some of them were curious listeners or else serious *Sadhaks*; but he found a true disciple only in Narendra Nath. Thakur could see the dormant spiritual urge embedded within Narendra Nath who at the time of meeting the master was an atheist (due to his westernized education); though he was deeply interested in philosophy. Thakur could sense that one of the souls of *Saptarsis* (seven sages) had taken birth as Narendra for fulfillment of a specific mission. Therefore, Paramhansa moulded Narenda like a potter. He later became world famous as Swami Vivekanand and was successful in spreading the essence of *Sanatan Dharma* in the entire world. Vivekanand himself used to say – “Alas!

People could know what I have accomplished!" Here is a shining example of *Guru – Śiṣya* tradition at its best. Hundreds of treatises have been written about the lives and mission of this unique pair of *Guru- Śiṣya* tradition, who have been a guiding light and source of inspiration to million of seekers of truth over the past hundred years.

Another pair namely, Swami Virjanand (*Guru*) and Mulsankar (*Śiṣya*) who later came to be known as Maharshi Dayanand, also belong to this historical tradition. It is through the medium of this pair that the foundation of Aryasamaj was laid. The spread and expansion of Vedic religion and culture and the Herculean task of social reformation in Hindu society was accomplished through Maharshi Dayanand. There are hundreds of such examples. However names of some of them are worth mentioning. They are Sant Eknath, disciple of Janardan Pant; Sant Gyaneshwar, disciple of his own elder brother Nivrttinath; Adya Shankaracharya, disciple of Govindpad; Kinaram, disciple of Kaluram; Tailang Swami, disciple of Bhagirath Swami; Chatrasal, disciple of Pranath Mahaprabhu; Chhatrapati Sivaji, disciple of Samarth Ramdas; Rajjab, disciple of Dadu, Pusyamitra, disciple of Maharshi Patanjali; Gopinath Kaviraj, disciple of Swami Visuddhanandji; etc.

In our divine culture, *śraddha* has been logically explained as the power of concentrating the mind and moulding it towards greatness with single pointed devotion. The science calls this process as the integration of mind. It is through this process that the disciple surrenders himself totally to the *Guru* and then becomes one with him. The same thing has been

described by Lord Srikrishna in Gita (8-12) as follows:

*Mayyeva mana ādhatsva mayi buddhim niveśaya!*

*Nivasiṣyasi mayyeva, ata ūrdhvam na sanśayah!!*

Meaning: Oh Arjun! You concentrate your mind and intelligence on me. After that you will dwell in me only. There is no doubt in it.

On the auspicious occasion of *Guru-Pūrṇimā* (July, 13), let each one of us introspect ourselves as a good disciple: "Is there any lack in our devotion?" Revered Gurudev Pandit Sriram Sharma Acharya and Vandaniya Mataji Bhagavati Devi Sharma sowed the seeds of virtues and also arranged for the manuring and irrigating the fields of our minds. *Parijans* who possessed even a little fertility of good impressions, got the opportunity of getting their love and affection and their blessings, too. This festival is an occasion of self-analysis for all such *parijans*. On this *Guru Pūrṇimā – Vyas Pūrṇimā*, let all of us take an oath that we will work together with full devotion towards the attainment of the goal of ushering in the golden era of truth. We will not let our faith in our *Araddhya Satta* (revered *Gurudev*) or his abode Shantikunj waver. Our *Gurudev* always rewarded us for whatever meager *Guru-Dakṣiṇā* (offerings) we offered to him and we should have full faith that in future too, his blessings and protection will be with us always.

**Self-refinement is the foremost step towards global reformation.**

## **A HEALTHY MIND HELPS MAKE A HEALTHY BODY**

All human activities spread over the entire life span are governed by the mind. The subtle and imperceptible thoughts and feelings arising in the mind determine the nature and direction of human actions. The end-results of these actions are also accordingly determined. Together with other aspects of life, physical health too, is to a large extent subject to this power of mind. Our mind can either sap or strengthen the body's defenses, depending on the nature of its frame. Inner malice and ugliness get reflected in poor health. Conversely, good physical health denotes a healthy state of mind.

According to an English proverb, "A healthy mind resides in a healthy body". Even if the body is not healthy the effects of this condition will not be permanent provided the mind is not allowed to get affected. Feelings of depression and weakness grow into a disease syndrome only when they prolong and rooted in thoughts and feelings for a long time. Unlike an ordinary ailment, which requires only a simple cure, this mental syndrome is difficult to remedy. It requires great effort and determination. Mental depression is like an infectious disease and must not be allowed to take deep roots in the mind. A person with spiritual bent finds happiness and pleasure in every situation. Hence, negative feelings of self-pity, defeat and inferiority should be cast aside and one should try to be optimistic and active and keep himself engaged in positive pursuits. If the mind is freed of unhealthy thoughts, the body, too, escapes their deleterious effects.

Healthy mind is the foundation of physical well being. Many bodily ailments have mental and psychological origin. Hence mental health is imperative for physical health. Only noble thoughts lead to a noble life. There should be a constant endeavor not to fall prey to ignoble thoughts and negative emotions of anxiety, etc.; and if such feelings do arise these must be thrown out of the psyche through constant mindfulness.

We should seek out the possible cause of mental agony. It could be anything - a loss in business, not finding a job, estranged marriage, failure in examination, a bad interview, and so on. If the mind does not resolutely break free of the particular agony, it exerts pressure on the body and adversely affects health. We should try to remove such causes of stress. Even some compromise with the situation is not too bad, but you must not remain entangled in this brooding for a prolonged period. If the problem defies solution, just stop worrying about it. There are so many persons in this world who are poor, unemployed and unsuccessful and yet all are carrying on with the business of living their lives. Why cannot we do with some want or scarcity? If you condition yourself to remain happy in all situations, you will realize that these painful situations are really insignificant and not worthy of much bother. You will thus avoid the resulting complications, which are, most likely, to ruin your health.

If you love humor, treat it as God's gift and have it woven into the fabric of your daily life, and then enjoy good health.

Humor gives joy and uplifts the spirits. Full-throated laughter makes the chest and nervous system strong, prevents diseases of liver and stomach and keeps the body, in general, in good condition. Humor dilutes the adverse impact on the body in moments of hardship, anxiety and frustration. To brood over failures is an open invitation to bodily ailments. It unnecessarily burns away mental and physical energy.

Loneliness is another cause of man's sorrow. This is especially so in times of crises when loneliness magnifies one's sadness and misery manifold. If a matter is kept repressed for a long time, it builds up pressure inside leading to physical and mental disorders. Like happiness, loneliness, too, is a condition to be shared; it gets lessened this way. Occasional consultations with the spouse, kins and friends on troublesome matters act as pressure outlets. Their sympathy and cooperation gives courage and comfort and prevents emotional problems. When the mind feels buoyant, health acquires extra glow. So a good prescription for sound health is to share one's pain and sorrow with near and dear ones and make the latter co-participants.

We should be not envy others' progress. Envy is a deadly enemy of mind. It corrodes the mind and makes it weak. Envious persons lose the capability of balanced thinking and right behaviour. Their mind is always full of malicious and self-constricting thoughts. They waste valuable energy in planning futile plots and schemes. All this results in a variety of health problems like irritability, short temper, vertigo, blood pressure etc. One

should feel happiness in other's happiness and find joy in honest dealings with all.

Laziness is another evil that saps body's energies, both subtle and physical, internal and external. As the saying goes, an empty mind is devil's workshop. Devious schemes generally arise and rubbish of all kinds invariably piles up in the minds of lazy persons. So keep the mind free from futile and vile thoughts; the best course is to keep it always occupied in fruitful pursuits.

Just as crooked and mean thinking makes the mind polluted and sick, unrestrained food habits, too, drive the mind on to wrong tendencies and paths. It is for this reason that the *Vedic* way of a life enjoins *Satwik* diet prohibiting the intake of meat, wine and pungent and spicy items with a view to keeping the mind and body both clean and vibrant. It is the purpose of daily physical exercise. Both the regimens are equally important for sound health. Neither is to be neglected.

Good health is the prime requisite for leading a spiritual life and everybody should strive to achieve it. Food, exercise and rest are important for maintenance of physical health. But for inner development, self-confidence, long life and happiness much more important is maintenance of mental health. If the mind is unsullied and pure, it will greatly help in maintaining physical well being and health.

*Socyatam*                      *Yatyasilena*  
*Vidvesenapavitrata* |  
Intelligence and knowledge,  
without morality and modesty,  
get vitiated by jealousy and  
hatred, leading to misery.

## Importance of Good Literature for Enlightened Power and Progress

The urge of human self to evolve in consciousness is a natural expression of its spiritual nature. Evolution is the fundamental and eternal objective of the *jīvātmā* (the soul manifested in the individual self). This is what drives one towards progress. We may differ in regard to the true meaning of progress or the ideal path to be followed, but it is true that each one of us always wants to change, to ascend in the scale of consciousness.

The thinkers and sages of all ages have affirmed that there is no place for weak, inactive creatures in this world. Nature also favors the survival of the fittest. Only the courageous and capable ones succeed in the stiff and stormy struggle of life. Power, energy and strength is essential, in some form or the other, for the sustenance of life. The *Shastras* elucidate this fact as —

*Ya Vibharti Jagatsarvamīśwareccha  
Hyalaukikī |*

*Saiva Dharmo Hi Subhage! Neha Kaścan  
Sanśayaḥ |*

*Yogyatā Vacchinnā Dharmaṇaḥ Śaktireva  
Dharmaḥ ||*

Meaning: God has manifested this world through HIS supernatural power. It is also the duty of a human being (the crown prince of that Almighty) to enhance his abilities and attain greater strength.

By "power" is meant here the zeal, vibrancy and willpower for ascent and success in life. As such, possession of wealth, physical might, human or other resources, etc also make one powerful in the worldly sense. However, if we look at the glorious lives of great personalities, we

find that presence of these resources is not necessary for *samunnati* (enlightened progress). Gautam The Buddha became truly powerful after renouncing all his royal comforts, prosperity and princely powers. The power of enlightenment that he accessed on attaining Buddhahood proved to be immeasurably superior to that of thousands of emperors and the rich and the mighty across the world. Even the ever-victorious Emperor Ashoka had to dedicate himself, his children, along with the resources of his empire for the spread of The Buddha's message of Enlightenment and compassion. Mahatma Gandhi did not have anything that could be materialistically significant. He was even weak physically. But, this lean and thin man of 96 pounds shook the foundations of the grand British Empire, which at that time was the unchallenged superpower from one end of the globe to the other. These immortal examples illustrate that there is some other 'supreme' power, which supersedes and controls all the worldly powers.

The preeminent power bestowed upon human beings is that of thoughts. The power of thoughts shapes the external as well as the internal realms of personality and drives our life accordingly. It is the flow of one's thoughts that generates and propels the triple currents of his qualities, nature and actions. If one wants to become different from what the nature of his thought is, he will not succeed... In fact, it is the flow of decisive thoughts that generates the constructive power to enable corresponding actions of the body. For example, whatever be one's end-goal,

unless there is the willpower-charged thought of becoming healthy and physically fit, he would not be inspired to carry out the laborious physical exercises and devote the necessary time and efforts in adhering to a balanced diet. The energy of his powerful thoughts about *satyagrah* had motivated Mahatma Gandhi to launch in right earnest the non-violent freedom struggle. The irresistible thought waves generated by his self-less, devoted endeavors thereafter had gradually inspired the whole nation to participate in this noble movement and make it a unique success.

The force of focused thoughts is certainly mightier than everything else. In the views of the great philosopher Emerson – ‘Spiritual power is superior to the materialistic or physical powers; (therefore) thoughts rule over our world’. Our thoughts are the architects of our future. Righteous thoughts and their concordant actions always bring good results. The eminent sages and thinkers of all ages have stressed and also demonstrated that thoughts are the source of immense power. Refinement and focused orientation of thoughts is the foremost requirement of higher-level accomplishments. We should give greatest importance to thoughts, as our thoughts shape our lives.

The predominant role the power of thoughts plays in the materialistic, intellectual and spiritual evolution of human life is self-evident. However, we should not forget that the principal cause of one's perversion, decline and fall also happens to be his thoughts. Evil, immoral, heinous thoughts lead to depraved, sinful actions. Because of his wrong thinking one drains out all his powers and talents or wastes them in evil activities. Therefore, we need the power of elevated,

enlightened, discerning thoughts for awakening and rising.

Good literature is a rich source of good thoughts. As we all know, literature plays a crucial role in setting the trends of rise or fall in human society. Concurrent literature is said to be the mirror of the psychological state of a society at a given time. In other words, the collective thoughts and hence the inclinations, nature and character of a society are reflected in its literature. The first step towards individual as well as collective growth in the brighter direction is certainly achieved if the literature that inspires prudent, progressive and illuminating thoughts is available to and extensively accessed by the people.

By good literature we mean the writings or collection of thoughts, reading or hearing of which can inspire inculcation of virtuous tendencies; which can improve one's character. We need literature that has a purifying impact on the inner cores of our emotions for cultivating noble values and thus creation of a dignified life. School or college books, cultural plays, devotional songs and poems and the scriptures propagating religious traditions alone are not sufficient for this purpose. What we require is a lively literature that is scientific and rational in its approach, that inspires moral and ethical values which bring about a positive transformation of people's attitudes and presents prudent solutions to the multidimensional problems of human life. A thoughtful person would hesitate in calling it good literature if a literary work is unable to awaken refined interest, positive thoughts, or if it can't satisfy our inner emotional, mental and spiritual aspirations. The literature, which cannot generate creativity, awakening and zeal in individuals and the society, is

nothing more than a mere intellectual or linguistic exercise. By good literature is meant the literature, which can produce the strength, courage and determination that enable us to face and overcome the adversities with steadfastness, boldness and farsightedness. Good literature is that which bestows the inner self of the reader (or listener) with wisdom and enlightenment and fills it with spiritual fragrance.

History is replete with examples of how an erotic, perverting and valueless literature could degenerate and destroy the vision and strength of individuals, societies and nations and put them into the abysmal tunnel of darkness and downfall. Today again, we can see it happening around us. Be it in the name of modernity, entertainment or because of crass sensuality and base commercial motives, propagation of literature and related arts and culture pertaining to vulgar, erogenous inclinations, valueless luxuries and immoral activities appear to have flooded all facets of our personal and social life. It is frightening to imagine the ultimate end-result of this cultural corruption and declining trajectory of the average individual and the society as a whole. It is high time the savants and awakened minds do something constructive to protect our present and future generations from the dreaded octopus of debased and misleading literature and arts and culture.

Search, review, creation and dissemination of good literature and initiation of thought-revolution thereby have become the dire needs of the day. It is all the more vital in the present times when we hardly find the saints, seers and reformers who, because of the strength of their spiritual thoughts and high character, could provide the necessary support and

guiding light to the society. Good literature and artistic and cultural works derived from the lives, thoughts and works of the visionaries and great personalities could spark the revolutionary change in people's thinking if propagated in the right spirit. Research on the messages of divine-cultural scriptures and spiritual literature and their presentation in new scientific light should also be attempted to revive and reinvigorate our value system. Each one of us who cares for preservation of noble human values and happy future of the world, will have to start this transformative process within himself / herself. Study of good literature and orientation of our thoughts and aspirations in that direction should be an integral part of our daily routine.

Highlighting the necessity of good literature, Sysaro has mentioned at one place — "Reading (good) literature is a source of (mental) nourishment for the youth and entertainment and happiness for the old; it opens up the doors of hope and gives patience and courage in moments of difficulty. Literature keeps one hearty inside one's home and humble outside...".

All the literary works that help refinement of thoughts and emotions; that present prudent analysis of the facts and provide farsighted directions, should be brought under the category of good literature. Just reading the printed words or cramming them is not what corresponds to the study of (good) literature. Howsoever-small portion of it we take up, reading it, understanding its implications, contemplating over its teachings or guidance and adopting it in our behavior and conduct is what completes the study of good literature. Once we develop this habit, good literature will indeed provide

us the guidance, intimate support and inspiring light like a divine mentor.

It should be noted that it is not the high literary standard of the language or intellectual complexity, which counts here. Rather, it is the universality, relevance, virtuous level and emotional and mental impact of the teachings and their implications, which matter in such literature. Let us consider the "Ramacharitmanas", for instance. It describes the divine odyssey of Lord Ram in a simple, folk language in a narrative style. However, so spontaneous and intensive is its effect on those who read or listen to it with serenity, that, even in moments of great dilemma, doubt or influence of accumulated evil tendencies, they experience instant guidance and mental purification from whatever page they read from. If we could set such an intimate linkage of our mind and heart

with an inspiring literature, nothing can stop the empowerment of our thoughts and inculcation of inner strength and righteous intellect thereby.

We ought to be ever mindful to enhance the purity and power of our thoughts for the dual purpose of – protection from untoward diversions, attractions and confusions of mind and for dignified growth towards the path of mental and spiritual evolution. *Sādhanā* (devout endeavor) and not *sādhana* (resources) is required here. Good literature holds the key to our real empowerment and progress. The roots of our talents, our strength, our morality, our majesty, our divinity are hidden here. These could be nurtured by enlightened thoughts emerging from our *sādhanā* of the study of good literature.

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## AFTER ALL, WHY DON'T CHILDREN OBEY?

It is a general complaint of parents that children do not obey them. On account of this they get very much upset. Sometimes they become sad and worried. At times it also causes them despair. They have no idea of what to do and how to guide the children on the right path. The children keep on indulging in mischief, antics, tantrums, throwing and breaking things etc. They never remain quiet even for a while. They neglect their studies. What they do at home, they repeat in school as well. Teachers become upset with their doings and send complaints to the parents that their wards do not listen properly in the class, disturb the attention of other children and indulge in fighting with classmates. These daily complaints further add to the distress of parents.

Searching solution of the problem, the parents quarrel among themselves, too. These quarrels further embolden the children. The helplessness of parents give them added encouragement to increase their acts of mischief. This is not an imaginary concept, but a psychological fact, which the child psychologists all over the world have proved by several experiments. According to the psychologist George A. Miller, our fast daily social routine has weaned the children away from us. The lack of sufficient emotional attention and proper care causes the children to become more and more unreceptive and unresponsive and more and more mischief gets into their activities.

At times this mischief crosses the limit and shapes into a disease, which the experts

in psychology have called "Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)". Experts say that earlier, this disease was found only in children of foreign countries. Its percentage in India was negligible. But now due to breaking up of joint families and both father and mother being working persons, the percentage of this disease in India has increased considerably. According to a research conducted by Vidyasagar Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Science, 74 Lakh children in India are in the grip of this disease. Since, due to ignorance and being busy in work, parents do not happen to pay attention to it, 22 Lakh of these children grow up to become unsocial/antisocial.

As a result of an extensive research survey conducted by experts of Vidyasagar Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Science (VIMHANS), these facts have come to the fore. According to the psychiatrists of this Institute these children should not simply be neglected as mischievous ones, but the activities of those in the age group of 7 to 11 years should be carefully watched with the help of their teachers and if things are found going out of control, psychiatrists should be consulted. The psychiatrists of VIMHANS say that the Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) can be of many kinds. Mild in the beginning, it may grow into Hyperactive Attention Deficit Disorder (HADD).

According to the psychiatrist Dr. Nagpal of VIMHANS there are three main symptoms of HADD. The first one is lack of concentration, second is hyperactivity and the third is need of compulsion to do

something. In addition to these symptoms, scattering of mind, unstable and violent behavior, inferiority complex, doing things that attract people's attention, building castles in the air, tendency of not to stay together, very poor memory, lack of patience, behavior that troubles others, thieving tendency etc. are commonly found in the children affected by this disease. They leave out studies. Often they fail to complete even school education. They get frequent attacks of depression. At such occasions, controlling them becomes very difficult.

Experts are yet to come to a unanimous conclusion about the cause of this disease. However recent research and investigation have brought forth two things. One is that among initial reasons, it happens due to minor harm to the brain caused due to infection either at foetal or childhood stage. In this regard it is a fact that irregular flow of chemicals in the brain causes such harms. But the second and much more important thing is the tendency of not paying attention to children. Attention Deficit Disorder literally means this.

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These days parents or guardians do not or cannot pay as much attention to children as is necessary. Prof. Jean Huston has written a very nice research book about it "Child Care : Its Psychological Meaning". In this book he has presented the research experiments done on the activities of children and the conclusion there of. He says that in one case parents get so busy in their jobs that children are left to be taken care of by servants and material provisions. They do not have enough time to spare for their children. In the other case the parents pay over attention to the children. All their

just and unjust demands are fulfilled or they are kept under too much strict watch, which hinders their independent development

Prof. Huston says that in bringing up children, we should have the skill of a gardener. There should not be so much lack of care as not to provide for the needs necessary for growth nor should there be so much excessive caring as to deprive them from availing natural nourishment. In order that children obey you and become less mischievous, it is necessary for the parents to bring about an attitudinal change in them in certain respects.

\*You should become a role model for the children. In front of children at least, you shouldn't do such things which you forbid children from doing.

\*Instead of meeting each and every just and unjust demand of the children, make them gradually aware of right and wrong.

\*Slowly and little by little teach and tell them daily about practical things such as how to behave with others, how to conduct themselves, simple manners and etiquettes etc.

\*Don't admonish them for each and every thing. Do not ever insult them in front of strangers.

\*On doing good work, appreciate and encourage them.

\*Give them opportunity to develop their potential talents.

An expert in the department of psychiatry of the Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh says that in order that the children obey you, it is necessary that you create in them faith towards you. Make them confident of your love for them. Dr. Savita Malhotra, another expert of this

Institute, says that it is not proper to get scared, taking excessive mischief and naughtiness as some serious disease, but is also not proper to be negligent towards it. If the energy of children spent in naughtiness and mischief can be diverted to creative activities it can bring about commendable improvement in their talent.

What is required in this regard is simply to be alert towards their proper care and keep encouraging them to utilize their vital energy in creative works. By doing so constantly, with patience, love and gentle behavior, children will give up mischief and turn to creative engagements, giving us no room for complaint.

There were three mountains in an unpopulated land. Adjacent to these was a huge mining depression because of which no humans or animals were able to reach the mountains. Once some angels passed flying over the mountains; they asked the mountains "This land will be named after one of you; you may now ask boon for the fulfillment of one wish each for becoming the most deserving for this honour. The naming will be done after one year depending upon the merit of your fulfilled wish.

The first mountain wished to become the tallest among the three so that it could be seen from a long distance. The second one desired to be green and rich in natural resources so that everyone would be attracted to reach it. The third one requested - "Please cut my size and pare me off to fill the dreaded ditch besides us so that there could be a smooth plane surface around; then people would be able to visit this place and also cultivate this land."

The angels returned to see the outcome after one year. The first mountain had gained great heights; it was seen from long distances from all directions, but nobody was able to climb it. Its grand top had to face extremes of cold and heat.

Thick forests, rich in natural resources had grown on the second one; but it was arduous to enter there because of dreaded wild animals.

The third mountain had almost vanished in filling up the neighboring mining depression. But now there was a vast ploughed plane covered with verdant blossoming. Men, women and cattle were benefiting from this fertile region and many families had also begun living there happily.

## THE PSYCHOLOGY OF FEAR

When the disease of stiffness starts it badly engulfs the whole body. Joints become stiff. Sitting, walking and other bodily movements become extremely painful. Mind goes numb. Blood becomes cold. Body refuses to obey the brain. These symptoms may be caused by other ailments too but in otherwise healthy persons they appear in the face of grave fear. The sight of a lion mesmerizes the deer; it is transfixed, forgets galloping and gets killed. The same thing happens when a person is faced with unexpected crisis. He is dumbfounded, his mind stops functioning, his body become cold and limp and consequently mishappenings occur.

J. Krishna Murthi in his work “ The First and Last Freedom” writes that the popular perception about fear and its causes is not what the reality is. Fear can only be caused by the known, and not the unknown. People fear death. But death per se can not cause fear. In normal circumstances, death can not be known or perceived. How can we fear something which we have not seen or of whose pain or severity we have had no personal experience? Then what causes fear? Krishnamurthy explains that the fear actually comes from the imagined pain of permanent separation from the near and dear ones and from the cherished possessions , luxuries and life’s enjoyments. It is this perception of separation that is the real cause of fear.

Suppose a child who has never heard about or seen a ghost suddenly comes across one. What will happen? It is certain that the child will not run away. Indeed the chances are that he would be glad to find a companion. This is the fearlessness of

ignorance. It is for this reason that children all over the world are found much more fearless and bold than adults in general. They have no idea of the all consuming power of fire or the dreadful nature of venomous creatures like snake or scorpion. That is why we often hear of their touching fire or catching poisonous insects and in the process suffering burns or painful stings.

Pious persons, on the other hand, fear God because they are aware of the scheme of *karmaphala* - law of “As you sow so shall you reap”. The presence of lepers, handicapped and diseased persons in the society presents to them visible proofs of the terrible fate, which befalls wrong doers. Hence, they ever remain conscious of avoiding such wrong or sinful acts as would beget them suffering and pain in future time or future birth.

Then there is also a category of persons who are well aware of the risks involved and yet would play with dangerous situations, things or animals. Snake-charmers daily catch deadly snakes, hunters frequently go on tiger hunts. These things do not frighten them. In fact, they keep searching for their prey and are glad to find them, whereas ordinary persons would shiver at the very thought of fiddling with them.

People are scared of darkness. Lonely and forlorn places cause fright. Myriad apprehensions arise in the mind- “What danger is awaiting in the dark? What wild creature is lurking behind to pounce upon?” Heart beat increases. Legs tremble. But when one makes bold to enter with a light and looks around, nothing horrifying is

seen. It is the feebleness of mind, which makes a mountain out of a molehill. It conjures up phantom fears and then inflates and embellishes these into a life-threatening calamity, which is just imminent. In reality, only some minor cause might be there, and that too so insignificant as could be dealt with easily.

Millions of people live and work in the dark. In forest regions, lamp is only occasionally used. Tribal families live in small huts in dense jungles. Farmers everywhere sleep in the fields to guard their crops at night. The very rich live in open bungalows on the city outskirts. No body is devoured by robbers and ghosts. Occasional indents do occur, but they may take place even in broad daylight and anywhere. Real situations of fear are few and far between. Mostly, people create imaginary crises in the mind and fear these self-constructed mental images.

Fear is essentially a reflection of cowardice. As are the facial features, so would the mirror show. It is the inner weakness of a coward that is reflected in the world-mirror. Fear begins only when we accept that we are not capable of facing up to a crisis situation. Those who have confidence in their capacity to negotiate difficult times and meet the problems head on, who believe that they possess necessary prudence, and strength for the purpose, and who are optimistic that their friends and even providence would help them are able to successfully banish all imaginary fears from their minds and feel unburdened.

An eminent Hungarian psychologist Ferange Nadestudy has recounted one more cause of fear in his work "Fear or Freedom". He writes that fear arises only

when there is a desire to live life in a particular mould; there is a craving for a specific kind of life-style. By breaking this mould or abandoning this desire man can get temporary freedom from fear. But for this to happen it is essential to first recognize the nexus between desire and fear, to realize that a particular desire is generating this fear and the fear, in turn, is strengthening that desire. Even after this realization, according to him, the resulting respite would be only temporary, not permanent. This is because a mould-breaking action would have only limited impact. The only difference it makes is that we would leave one life-style to enter upon a different life-style. If we break this one too, we would get attached to another life-style. All these different life-styles would in turn, produce their own respective fears. The fact is that any such effort directed towards mould-breaking would only produce a new mould, a new system, and ultimately a new fear. Finally, we arrive at the conclusion that freedom from fear is not possible through this process of making and breaking. Enduring peace will come only when the root cause, the mind, is disciplined and purified.

A mind always full of malice, intrigues and plots will know no peace. Such a person is always suspicious of others' actions, of being betrayed by them or of their revenge. He lives in constant terror that he would be exposed, that people would become wary of him and would no longer fall in his trap, that their condemnation and non-cooperation would make his future bleak. Such thoughts keep haunting him. Wrong and sinful deeds invite punishments- by the society, by the law and by God. He is sure to get these punishments some day either collectively or

separately. This thought constantly gnaws at his heart and terrifies him. Other punishments may be late in coming but self-punishment begins the moment one steps on to the wrong path and continually torments the mind and soul.

The British psychologist Richard Garnett writes in his book "Psychology of Fear" that physical pain is a function of nerves, a nerve reaction to some pain stimulus. But mental-emotional pain arises in a condition of man's deep attachment to an object. In such a condition, nearness to the object is soothing and comforting. But, conversely, one begins to fear any such person or thing as can separate him from the object. Man is an aggregate of accumulated experiences that act as a bulwark against inner turmoil and disquietude. As long as these psychological and physical experiences are not disturbed they prevent any onset of psychological pain. This being so, man fears all such things as can disturb and deharmonise those experiences. His is thus a phobia of the unknown, a fear of those very experiences which he has accumulated to avoid pain and suffering. In the end, Garnett, too, concludes that this knowledge can at best only alleviate pain; it is not a means to secure freedom from fear.

Ignorance, too, is considered a major cause of fear. Primitive man was completely in the dark about natural phenomena; the eclipses, thunder and lightning, the comets and the like. He feared them, held them in awe and resorted to numerous rites and sacrifices to propitiate these 'deities'. Later, as he gained knowledge of these phenomena, the fear vanished. Interestingly. Even as old fears of ghosts and supernatural things are

dwindling away, their place is increasingly being taken over by new fears.

It is an irony that man unnecessarily remains in fear of those whom he should not fear, but becomes quite bold and uninhibited vis-a-vis that of which he should be really fearful. Man should fear God, His *karmaphala*, divine retribution, sinful acts etc. But he does not. How many people do we see flinching at deceit, conspiracy, backbiting, dishonesty, lying, consuming intoxicants and other immoral acts. Instead we find people living in terror of non-existing ghosts or mortal beings like criminals and terrorists. We should be conscious of this ignorance of ours and refuse to submit ourselves to such persons or things or situations, which are really petty and weak. Fear if we must, should be from God's Law and our malevolent tendencies. The causes of our sorrow as well as the means of real happiness both are inherent in these. The sooner we realize this truth, the better.

*"The trees that stand aloof, howsoever huge they may be, fall and even get uprooted in the forest storms but the shrubs and groups of bushy plants that grow densely with each other's support bear the fierceness of the storms united and remain standing".*  
*Citing the above example, Lord Buddha once preached that mutual cooperation, unity and benevolence protect the human society and pave the way for mutual development and growth. Family-like bonding is created in the Sangharams (Buddhist Ashrams) to give live training in this regard.*

## The curse of unearned wealth

Once Laxmi came on a one-day visit to Earth. She called people of nearby areas and said, "I am Laxmi. I have come to give desired boons to the people of this area. Whatever you people desire you may ask me". The exact programme of this divine distribution of desired bounty was also announced and made known far and wide. All people of that area were agriculturists. Earth also got this news. She collected all her farmer children and advised them not to aspire to get things free. "Go on working hard and I will not let you have any sense of scarcity." But nobody heeded Mother Earth. All were eager to get immense wealth without work. They did not stop. They came in large numbers to Laxmiji at appointed time. Laxmiji fulfilled everybody's desire.

After fulfilling the cravings of as many people as She could, She went back to Her Heavenly Abode at the end of the day. Getting immense wealth people were puffed up. They started using that wealth wantonly and foolishly. They got addicted to many vices. Wealth acquired without hard work is wasted in immoral extravagance only. Farmers had no scarcity of wealth. They started using it as they wished. They stopped doing agricultural work. When immense wealth is in hand what is the necessity of working hard? Everybody stopped farming. Godowns full of food grains started emptying. Cost of food started skyrocketing and within a few years it reached at its peak. Eatables were not available at any cost. It became a famine-like situation. Immense wealth was there but food was not available. People began dying due to hunger. Within a short period, most of the population of that area

including their cattle died of starvation. The few who survived fled to areas where better condition prevailed. Thieves looted wealth.

Mother Earth sadly roamed around that arid area of desolation. It was looking like a cremation ground. Earth started cursing Laxmi. Only she had excited desire in the minds of simple farmers to get wealth without labour and innocent children of the soil fell victims to the allurements of unearned and undeserved wealth and thus invited their own ruin.

This story aptly describes the condition of today's man who is critically suffering from the malecity of getting rich instantly by foul means and squanders the undeserved wealth in gross self-indulgence and self-aggrandisement. Agricultural land is being purchased by the sharks of land - mafias from the farmers at exorbitant prices for construction of multi-storeyed buildings for earning huge profits through manipulative means. The agricultural land area is thus shrinking at a fast pace. A day is not far off when the common man will face the same fate as befell the agricultural community of this story.

"One who does not know the way ahead takes guidance from someone who knows it. One who learns from a truly knowledgeable teacher, gets the right direction. This is indeed a great benefit of learning under the disciplined guidance of a noble *guru* that even an ignorant but disciplined student is endowed with the power of

## **Meeting an Authentic *Guru* -A Unique Act of Grace**

(Autobiography of Poojya Gurudev Pt. Shriram Sharma Acharya - continued)

Ramkrishna had gone in search of Vivekananda to his house. Samarth Ramdas had discovered Shivaji. Chandragupta was caught hold of by Chanakya. Gokhale won over Gandhi. This equally well applied in my case. *Gurudev* appeared before me in my house in his astral body when I was fifteen year old, activated and empowered my faith and yoked all the energies of my being in a specific direction.

While countless persons wandering in search of a *Sadguru* return empty-handed after being deceived by quacks, what was particularly special about me for which a divine being had to appear before me uninvited, and spontaneously showered his grace on me? The only rational answer is that I had earned merit for this benediction by *satvika* austerities over many earlier lifetimes. This does not happen randomly. It requires devout austerities and overcoming of evil tendencies over a long period of self-effort.

A combination of determination, patience and devotion creates the firm background for spiritual awakening. Earning such merit is true discipleship, after which it takes no time to attain fulfilment. It is the attainment of merit, which takes time. No time is taken in finding the *Guru*. Eklavya's Dronacharya, prepared out of clay, proved more effective than the real one. When Ramananda refused to initiate Kabir, as he was an untouchable, he discovered a device. He lay down in the dark on the stairs of Kashighat. When

Ramananda passed through the stairs before dawn to take his bath, his feet suddenly fell on the chest of Kabir. Ramananda was startled. He uttered 'Ram' and drew back. Kabir took this utterance to be his initiation: 'Ram' as his *mantra* and Ramananda as his *Guru*. This is the magic of true faith. When an idol of stone can become God, why cannot an appropriate person be made *Guru* on the strength of faith and devotion? This does not require whispering something in the ear or performing any rituals.

*Guru* is needed in the path of spiritual awakening because he discharges the dual responsibility of father and teacher. A child is brought up and educated through the cooperation of both the father, who spends a part of his earnings on his maintenance and education, and the teacher who imparts knowledge to him. Father can fulfil the physical needs whereas the *Guru* gives guidance for spiritual growth from his accumulated store of divine energy. The disciple can do nothing on his own strength alone. That is the truth behind the saying, 'There is no knowledge without *Guru*'.

There are people who ever remain on vain search of a *Guru*. Even when they are able to find some illumined person they get disappointed because they undeservedly expect the *Guru* to bestow on them their divine gifts; and no true master would squander away his hard-earned attainments on an undeserving person for mere gratification of his ego. A true master is wise enough to judge the worthiness or

otherwise of a seeker.

Dayananda had transformed his life in accordance with the instructions of his *Guru*, Virjananda. Vivekananda relinquished all his desires and took to strenuous *sāadhanā* to please his *Guru*. This is the real surrender and devotion to the *Guru*. Hanuman surrendered himself to Ram and apparently lost everything but became a saint and was empowered to accomplish superhuman tasks that Ram alone could have done. Jumping across the sea, uprooting mountains, setting aflame Lanka were feats that Hanuman could not have been able to do by himself. On his own he was unable even to protect his master, Sugreeva, from the tyranny of Bali. It was unconditional surrender, which created complete integration with the Lord of his devotion. A little water of Ganga falling in a gutter becomes dirty, but if and when a stream of this polluted water embraces the main stream of Ganga, it loses its separate impure existence and becomes holy Ganga itself. Ordinary and ignorant persons lacking any merit become worthy of initiation into the spiritual path by unconditionally surrendering themselves to a competent awakened soul. On embracing fire, a piece of wood becomes identical with and as bright as fire itself.

The aim of devotion is attainment of God awareness, but to establish a link with God, the invisible, it is necessary to take support of some visible symbol. This need can be fulfilled either by idols of God or by some living *Guru* of spiritual attainment. My aspirations were fulfilled all of a sudden. No doubt, my *sāadhanā* had been started long back in previous births to attain worthiness. Awakening of *kundalini* power, God realisation, liberation etc. are all subsequent events. The first and the foremost thing is to acquire the ability to

attain and bear with equanimity the inrush of divine light and energy, otherwise it creates imbalance and complications as it happens when one tries to lift a weight beyond one's capacity or eats what one cannot digest.

Surrender to the *Guru* was accomplished on the very first day of our meeting and my loyalty was immediately tested. Two things were specifically enjoined on me: One, turn a deaf ear to what worldly people say and march ahead towards the goal all alone on your own Strength; Two, practise devout austerity (*tapascarya*) to make yourself progressively more and more purified in heart and brilliant in intellect. For this, sustain yourself only on barley bread and buttermilk during the period in which twenty-four *Gayatri Mahapurascaranas* are performed. You will get all divine gifts, which a pilgrim of spiritual path gets on attainment of competence.

These gifts will be meant purely for being used for benevolent and altruistic purposes and not for fulfilment of petty selfish motives. That momentous day of *Basant parva* became for me a day of adoption of *Gurudev's* discipline and beginning of a new way of life. There is no shortage of beggars in this world but there are also rare benevolent persons who gift away everything to deserving persons. Krishna had gifted away, unasked, plentiful prosperity to Sudama. Meeting of my *Sadguru* was an event of unique and extremely good fortune for me.

A glimpse of past births, which *Gurudev* had unveiled before me related to spiritual masters of rare eminence who were all shining stars in the reformist tradition of Indian saints. They worked for the well-being and upliftment of religion, society, nation and culture of their times.

They were all devotees of God because without divine devotion it is difficult to get rid of sins and impurities and attain spiritual illumination and strength. Along with their own spiritual upliftment, they were engaged in the tasks of transmuting and beautifying this universe, the garden of God.

I had no desire to know more than what I was revealed. I thought it proper to sit on one boat, remain under the benevolent protection and seek support of only one master and not to allow my faith to falter. The events relating to the previous births were quite sufficient for my assurance. Those who undertake the responsibility of performing momentous

tasks have to face and surmount great difficulties at every step of the uphill journey. They have to display extraordinary fortitude. This was required of me also in an ample measure. *Gurudev* has been appearing for my help from time to time. He has been immensely augmenting my own insignificant abilities with his great spiritual force and has been rescuing and uplifting me in critical moments, when my own feeble feet were on the point of staggering. I had decided once for all that my life shall remain surrendered at his feet and I will implicitly comply with his directions.

*Two seeds fell in the lap of mother earth; the soil covered them in its warmth. Both slept in comfort the whole night. When they got up in the morning the older seed had sprouts germinated in it. The sprout started growing... Observing this the 'younger' seed warned the 'elder' that there is a risk in moving out of the soil, if the sprout continues to grow like this, someone would either crush it or pluck it one day. But the other seed did not stop its progress; it grew up as a sapling and crossed the covering of soil and enjoyed the beauty of Nature outside. Lord Sun bathed it in its rays, the morning breeze fanned it with affection; the rain showers fulfilled its thirst with sweet, cold water... The farmer watched and guarded it. It continued to grow, blossom and fructify as ripen crop. By the time of its final departure, it had left thousands of growing seeds like itself. It lived a fulfilling, accomplished life because of its zeal and courage to grow...*

*The other seed, hidden within the soil-shield had nothing but sorrow of loneliness and repenting. Because of its fear, cowardice and narrow outlook, it remained where it was - in darkness and helplessness.*

## The Supreme Significance of The *Gāyatrī Mantra* - II

(Translation of the original discourse, in Hindi, given by Poojya Gurudev  
Pt Sriram Sharma Acharya on the last day of anushthan camp at  
Gayatri Tapobhumi, Mathura: Continued from the previous issue)

Historic evidences show the greatness of the *Gāyatrī Mantra*. All the *yogis* and the *rishis* in India have taken the shelter of *Gāyatrī sādhanā* since the *vedic* times. They were endowed with supramental powers and were the true winners of immortal glory on every front of life. When Alexander the Great came to conquer India; he had a curiosity to meet the spiritual masters of this land. On his way towards the northwest, he found a Himalayan yogi lying on the ground, blocking the march of his army. Alexander was unable to push this *avadhūta* (one who has shaken off himself from the worldly attachments and obligations) off the path and asked him to demand whatever he wanted. The *avadhūta* calmly asked whether Alexander could shift sunrise (from the East) to the West? If not, the *avadhūta* continued, “Then don’t disturb me; let me enjoy the sunlight from the East...”. My children, this was the inner strength, the divine courage induced by the *Gāyatrī Mantra* by which a mendicant saint could so easily put to shame the ‘conqueror of the world’.

When the divine force of the *Gāyatrī Mantra* fills the heart (the emotional core) of a person it clears all shadows of darkness and illuminates the inner self with divine light. It transforms the personality completely. What does that lead to? It is this transmutation, which metamorphosed the royal dancer Amrapali into a devoted

disciple of Lord Buddha. When Amrapali went to Lord Buddha she prayed and asked whether an impure, debauched and depraved person like her could also get shelter under his divine grace and enlighten her life. The Buddha asked her to devotedly start the *sādhanā* of a specific *mantra*. Amrapali, who was a luxury-intoxicated beauty queen of her age, a sex trader, followed the instruction with confidence and determination inspired by Gautam Buddha. This purified her mind and emotions and transformed her into a great disciple of the Buddha. She donated all her wealth and belongings for altruist service through *dhamma*, renounced all worldly comforts and became a *bhikshuni*. She spread the divine message of “*Bhuddham Śaranam Gacchāmi, Sangham Śaranam Gacchāmi, Dhammam Śaranam Gacchāmi*” amongst millions of people across the globe and was instrumental in uplifting their lives.

My children! This is the grace of the divine force of the *Gāyatrī Mantra* that transforms an ordinary mortal being into a great, enlightened, angelic saint. The *mantra* enjoins us as to what should be our devotional sentiments, our prayers through the heart while performing the *japa* of this *mantra*. It says – “Oh Almighty, Omni eminent, Omniscient, Omnipresent God! May Thy supreme radiance be embodied in our souls. May it inspire our intellect towards the enlightened, righteous path”.

Since the time, this cosmic mantra, the boon of Lord Brahma, was beatified in the Vedic Age, there awakened the dawn of the divine culture on this earth. Those who practiced its devotional *japa*, and adopted its inspirations in life received immense peace, blissful contentment, moral dignity, selfless love and amicable cooperation in every phase of life. Even today, every one – including those deprived of everything, living in the filth of immorality, those shrouded by ignorance, infirmity or the challenges of circumstances – rise gracefully out of the clutches of misery with the grace of the *Gāyatrī Mantra*. Indeed many are doing so and marching towards noble and righteous living. Sure, there could be and will be a variation in the time and degree of manifestation of its marvellous effects – depending upon our present level of consciousness, but the elevation begins right from the first day. *Mantras* can't instantly and magically grow trees on palms. However there is nothing illusive or unscientific about their effects; there should be no doubt whatever about this. The spiritual evolution induced by the *Gāyatrī Mantra* progresses gradually and steadily - but certainly, with the progress in *sāadhanā*. Many live examples of the past and present evince and illustrate this fact.

Madhavacharya was a saint living in Vrindavan. He performed the *upāsana* of *Gāyatrī* for twelve years but lost patience thereafter, as he did not get the desired divine benefits. He was quite distressed at that time. He left the *sāadhanā* of the *Gāyatrī Mantra* and began worshipping Bhairav on the advice of a *tāntrika*. In less than a year's time he succeeded in the *sāadhanā* of Bhairav. The celestial body of Bhairav appeared but stood at his back and asked him to demand what he wanted to be

blessed with. Madhavacharya said; “If you are the real Bhairav, please appear before my eyes”. Bhairav said : “I can't appear in front of you, because the brilliance of *Gāyatrī-śakti* infused in you will burn me”. The devotee was surprised and inquired that if *Gāyatrī sāadhanā* was so powerful, why couldn't he get the desired benefits for such a long time? Then Bhairav explained to him how his *Gāyatrī sāadhanā* up till then had destroyed his sins and burnt out the evils accumulated during his past lives and that it was only after this purification that he would have deserved realization and attainment of the divine boons of the mantra. Now there was no doubt left in Madhava's mind. He restarted the *sāadhanā* of the *Gāyatrī Mantra* and was soon blessed with divine boons. With the awakening of inner intelligence and acumen, he wrote the “*Mādhav Nidān*”, which remains till date, a crucial treatise for the education and expert practice of the Ayurvedic System of Medicine.

The effects of the *Gāyatrī sāadhanā* are indeed miraculous. Once the Indian emperor Akbar called his prime minister Mansingh and told him to look for some extraordinary means to protect the construction of his fort in Prayag, which, despite the best of efforts and all precautionary measures, had mysteriously collapsed eighteen times in the initial stages of construction. Mansingh also was puzzled about this mishap. He went to Prayag and stayed there with bleak the hope of getting some clue from somewhere. One day when he was strolling in the forests by the banks of the holy Ganga, he saw a saintly yogi engrossed in meditation. Suddenly he noticed a boa around the yogi which was trying to entrap the latter into its fold and gulp him. Amazingly, the dragon-

folds of the boa were not able to tighten around the yogi, nor his poisonous breath able to have any effect. He stood stunned for a few minutes. Meanwhile, the yogi opened his eyes and effortlessly threw off the python by the power of his yoga. Mansingh could not believe his own eyes; he had vividly and concretely witnessed the supernatural strength of spirituality. His head was on the feet of the seer.

This saint was known as Devmurari Baba. Mansingh narrated the mysterious riddle of the fort before the Baba. He said: “We don’t know what kind of a curse it is that the construction of the fort has been ruined eighteen times”. The yogi went into deep meditation for some time and then kept a dry flower (*manjarī*) of basil on Mansingh’s hand. He said – “Put this beneath the foundation of the fort then there will be no problem”. Devmurari Baba was a *siddha sādhanā* of *Gāyatrī* and was renowned and revered for his supramental powers. He used to give a *manjarī*, empowered by his spiritual energy, to everyone who would come to him seeking some help. That used to have miraculous effects. The *manjarī* given to Mansingh also proved the invisible, indefinable, omnipotence of the *Gāyatrī Mantra* by providing stout foundation and support to the mighty fort.

Friends! The power of mantra is indeed real and immense. That of the *Gāyatrī Mantra* is indeed supreme, astonishing and infinite. The sublime force generated by its *japa sādhanā* can vibrate in the subtle as well as the external world. Nothing remains unattained or unaccomplished after the beatitude of its divine powers. Its immediate benefit of purification and enlightenment of the intellect is the key to spiritual refinement

and evolution of personality. Its *sādhanā* can transform an ordinary man or woman into a great saint, yogi or *rishi*, having angelic potentials. I invite you here and guide you to perform the *Anuśṭhāna* (*sādhanā*) of the *Gāyatrī Mantra* so that the untoward tendencies and vices assimilated during your past lives can be erased and you begin to rise towards the sunlit path. Cleansing of your inner cores is essential so that the new, virtuous tendencies can be cultivated there.

You should adopt the *japa - sādhanā* of *Gāyatrī Mantra* as an integral part of your daily life. It is the *mantra* for the welfare of every being. You should also inspire your friends, acquaintances and family members to perform the *japa* of this universal mantra and spread this light to the people in your neighbourhood, colony, city and so on. Its collective *sādhanā* can arouse collective consciousness and bestow all-round happiness and progress in the world together with the spiritual upliftment of mankind. The *Purāṇās* describe so many instances of global well being through such efforts.

It was rare in the ancient times that the Indian land suffered a calamitous famine. It happened once due to a near total drought across the country. All the ponds and wells dried up. Cattle, birds and even humans began to die of starvation. Panicked savants went to Rishi Gautam for support and relief. Rishi Gautam was a great, accomplished *sādhanā* of *Gāyatrī* those days. He was moved after hearing the agony of the masses; he gave them the *akśaya pātra* (a celestial pot that offers food and water without any limit and is never emptied), which was a boon the divine force of *Gāyatrī* had blessed him with.

Yes, the *siddhas* of *Gāyatrī Mantra* do have such miraculous powers, but they use them judiciously and only for deserving cases. Don't be under the delusive impression that, doing the *japa*, *auṣṭhāna*, *havan*, etc under my guidance during your stay here will magically endow you with extraordinary powers. Nothing can be achieved without developing the necessary abilities and eligibility. It is all the more essential for the invaluable attainment of divine blessings.

Spiritual development can't begin without purifying the body, the mind, the sentiments, and adopting a moral conduct. The gamut of ascetic disciplines, penance and yoga *sādhanās*, etc, were devised and practiced by the *rishis* for this noble purpose. They had accomplished absolute self-refinement and moral elevation through *Gāyatrī Sādhanā*. They had conquered the ego and desires. They wanted instead to serve for the welfare of all beings. A seed cannot germinate and grow into a fructifying tree without dissolving itself in the soil and water; it is only after breaking and softening that it can absorb the fertilizing substances. Blossoming of divine realization also is not possible without the immersion of the identity of the individual self in the cosmic self. How could our personality sparkle unless we remove the mist of vices, blemishes and smog of ignorance? The kinds of *sādhanā* courses you are to undergo here from time to time are meant to help you in this essential process of self-refinement.

You all know that no crop could grow on barren land; ploughing it is a sheer wastage of effort. The same is true of heartless practice of devotion. If your mind and heart are filled with ego, selfish attachments, jealousy, hatred and similar

filth, where and how will the serene sentiments of devotion find place? How would you attain the nectar of devotion of the *Gāyatrī Mantra* without paving the way for its descent? The *guru*, the noble spiritual master, alone can diagnose the inner ailments and help in the cleansing, curing and refinement of the disciple's life. *Guru* means the source of light. There can be no darkness once the light is switched on. You know how Virjanand had elevated his deserving disciple Dayanand, Samarth Guru Ramdas had empowered Shivaji, Ramkrishana had beatified Vivekanand with such remarkable *siddhis*. My guru had eliminated the darkness within me and enlightened me with the grace of *Gāyatrī Mantra*. What *riddhis* and *siddhis* I was blessed by its *sādhanā* are all evident before you.

I also want to annihilate all darkness from your lives, want to illuminate your inner selves by divine light. You empty your accumulated vices and weaknesses here and make place to take in something worthy from here, which will make you a better, a stronger person. I am giving you a warm farewell with something of that kind, with a wish that you learn to live for divine values also. Don't live only for bodily comforts and selfish joys; learn to lift yourself above this ordinary level of life. Your awakening, your nobility will gladden me. It will also please God. Don't worry about your personal problems and the pains that you have narrated before me. I will take care to remove your adversities and worries. Go with full confidence and courage. May God bless you in your efforts towards self-improvement and support the progress of your *sādhanā*.

|| *Om śanti* ||