

Self-Satisfaction

Getting Inputs from YAs around the nation

We surveyed the YAs across the nation on their insights on this very important topic. Please see the responses throughout the newsletter.

What does Self Satisfaction mean to you?

1. Being content with what I have, what I am.
2. Waking up in the morning and not being attached to the physical world. Having a cap on desires and being content with the world around me, all my actions and a sense of accomplishment at the end of the day.
3. Being self-sufficient i.e. not depending on others or any external source to make me feel good (or bad) about myself or about my life. Completely aware (not just intellectually but beyond) of the divine presence within myself therefore satisfied, since everything I need is within.
4. To be peaceful within - no restlessness due to jealousy, greed, expectations, disappointments etc.
5. Self-satisfaction to me means that one is completely satisfied in the Higher Self, and the world has no pull or effect, positive or negative on the person.

Once Mahatma Gandhi was challenged by a journalist to reveal the secret of happiness. He expressed it in three words- "Renounce and enjoy". In mathematical terms he gave the following equation: $H=R/N$. H stands for happiness, R for resources at your command and N for needs. The lesser the needs, the happiness quotient keeps increasing. It is all about what we need to make us happy. Similarly, Buddha was once asked: "Who is the richest man in the world?" Buddha replied: "He who has much satisfaction (with what he has) is the richest man." To the question, "Who is the poorest man?" Buddha replied: "He who has many desires."

The consumerist market attempts to convince us that we need it all. Children have mountains of toys, families have multiple cars and desire larger houses, and many chase the latest style of clothing and accessories. Restaurants tempt us with larger portions and increasingly decadent food. Our professions drive us to find ultimate success through more prestigious jobs, higher salaries...and longer hours.

Is all of this bringing us happiness and fulfillment in life? Can we have it all, and *also* be content? The last newsletter centered on building a solid foundation of Self-Confidence. Shirdi Sai Baba has said, "A house must be built on solid foundations if it is to last. The same principle applies to man, otherwise he too will sink back into the soft ground and become swallowed up by the world of illusion." So, perhaps if we have a solid foundation of self-confidence, we can be content without "having it all," or *despite* "having it all".

Moving onto this newsletter, how does being Self-confident lead us to Self-Satisfaction? And how does Self-satisfaction ultimately make us self-realized, and attain a *perpetual state of fulfillment*? Thus, the aim of this newsletter and study circle is to not only read and verbalize what spiritual leaders say about self-satisfaction, but to digest and taste the sweetness of self-satisfaction in day-to-day living. To perhaps take one step closer to

In this issue...

Flower of Self-satisfaction

Page 2

Story of a Stone-Cutter

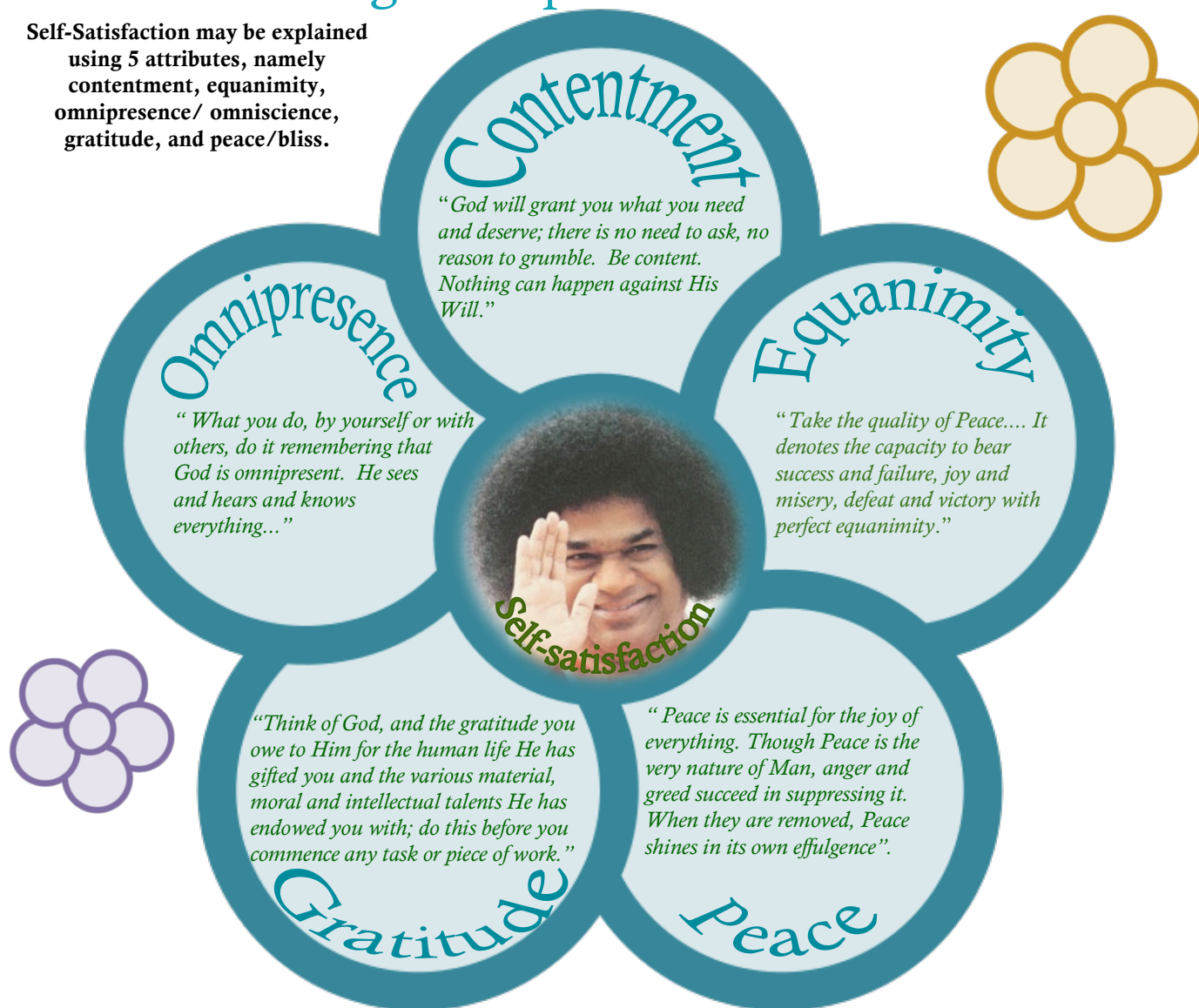
Page 4

T.I.P: Theory into Practice

Page 5

Understanding the topic: What is self-satisfaction?

Self-Satisfaction may be explained using 5 attributes, namely contentment, equanimity, omnipresence/ omniscience, gratitude, and peace/bliss.



To summarize, being **content** is a state of being happy and satisfied with everything we have without having any more desires and wants. In this state, experiencing ups and downs in our lives will not perturb us, and therefore we are able to maintain **equanimity** and balance. When we are in a state of equanimity, we are able to experience our true self and can feel the **omniscience and omnipresence** of the Divine within. We are **thankful and grateful** for what we are given in every moment of our lives. Knowing that our true conscience is in charge gives us the eternal state of **peace and bliss**. This is the power of self-satisfaction!

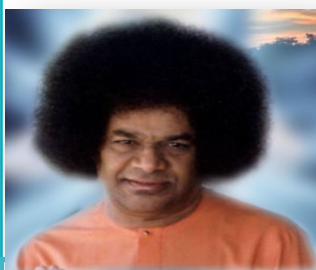
We can understand these five attributes further with scenarios presented in the study circle document.

How do you practice or manifest Self Satisfaction in your daily life?

1. I smile every day, the Self-Satisfaction I receive by having someone smile back at me, is all the joy the world needs today.
2. Start with pure intentions and weed out false intentions, such as competition, ego driven motives, etc. Ask Swami to make me the instrument and work through me so no matter the outcome. I am able to surrender to his will and take any downfall as an experience for spiritual growth.
3. I contemplate on the past events and finally understand that whatever happened was meant to happen that way and I should be satisfied with it because the best is yet to come. And as a matter of fact the best does come and makes me self-satisfied.
4. By turning the awareness within (to the divine) at every moment - such as a conversation or activity or anything else. Try and do this whenever I can remember
5. Confirm to myself that I am living the 5 human values

How do we obtain Self-satisfaction?

Let's read some quotes and prayers from famous leaders and religious books. After reading each quote, consider which values and/or attributes the quote states will lead to self-satisfaction.



"One has to develop faith and self-confidence. Self-confidence leads to self-satisfaction and self-sacrifice and ultimately to self-realization...One can have peace only when one develops faith in God and dedicates all his actions to God. You may study any number of books and sacred texts. You may even lecture on them. But, that is of no use. Whatever you put into practice, only that will become part of you. There are three steps to self-realization, namely, self-confidence, self-satisfaction and self-sacrifice. When these three go together, there will be purnatwa (fullness)."

Guru Purnima, Prashanthi Nilayam, 18-7-2008, Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 41

Fullness in life is marked by the harmony of thought, word and deed.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol 41.

*Live in Joy, In love,
Even among those who hate.*

*Live in joy, In health,
Even among the afflicted.*

*Live in joy, In peace,
Even among the troubled.*

*Look within. Be still.
Free from fear and attachment,
Know the sweet joy of living in the way.*

*There is no fire like greed,
No crime like hatred,
No sorrow like separation,
No sickness like hunger of heart,
And no joy like the joy of freedom.*

*Health, contentment and trust
Are your greatest possessions,
And freedom your greatest joy.*

*Look within. Be still.
Free from fear and attachment,
Know the sweet joy of living in the way.*

- Buddha



"He who knows that enough is enough will always have enough."

- Lao-Tzu



"Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for He has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.'"

Old Testament of the Bible, Hebrews 13:5



*The light of
God surrounds me
The love of God enfolds me
The power of God protects me
The presence of God watches over me
Wherever I am, God is and all is well.*

- James Dillet Freeman



"Happiness is like a butterfly which, when pursued, is always beyond our grasp, but, if you will sit down quietly, may alight upon you."

- Nathaniel Hawthorne

How does Self Satisfaction lead to Self Realization?

1. It's another stepping-stone. You can only become one with God when you are satisfied with yourself.
2. Per Swami, when there is (Higher) Self Satisfaction, that leads to self-sacrifice - the sacrifice or destruction of the self (our ego). When that happens, there is no longer the feeling of separateness between you and me. All is one, there is only I - the Paramatma. That is Self-Realization.
3. When you are satisfied with everything around you whether it's positive or negative, it will make the steps or path towards self realization better
4. I believe that every moment, when lived to the fullest and totally in the present, means that we are living in unison with the Universe's principles. Whenever there is contentment with the self, -- > Blissful feeling, feeling of abundance, joy etc., it is a self-realized state.
5. Swami says we must love ourselves first and have self-confidence. This act of love and confidence towards our self can lead to self-satisfaction. I believe that ultimate self-satisfaction is when we have completely surrendered to Sai; thereby every action becomes His work. This leads to self-realization because at this state we no longer believe that we are separate from God but are one with Him.

STORY TIME

From where does Self Satisfaction originate?

1. Self Satisfaction comes from the knowledge that you don't need anything to complete you; you are already complete and whole.
2. Faith and confidence in Swami. Whatever I am is Swami's will and creation. Whatever I have/do not have is also His will. So I try to remind myself this fact constantly and Be Happy.
3. From within! From contentment with the Self's plan in life and knowing that all will be fine.
4. When you're working in God's will and not fighting against it with your own. If you don't compare yourself to others and are satisfied with the level of ability you have, you can easily experience self-satisfaction.
5. Ultimately, self-satisfaction is a reward from one's actions. However, I like to think that it originates from your own self. Only you can decide if you are satisfied by an action you have taken. No one else has this power. Therefore, you decide your level of satisfaction. However, this must be done carefully and not mistaken with complacency.

The Stone Cutter

There was once a stonecutter who was dissatisfied with himself and with his position in life. One day he passed a wealthy merchant's house. Through the open gateway, he saw many fine possessions and important visitors. "How powerful that merchant must be!" thought the stonecutter. He became very envious and wished that he could be like the merchant.

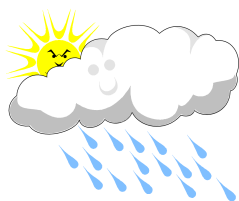
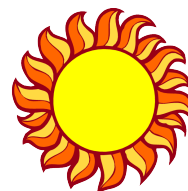
To his great surprise, he suddenly became the merchant, enjoying more luxuries and power than he had ever imagined, but envied and detested by those less wealthy than himself. Soon a high official passed by, carried in a sedan chair, accompanied by attendants and escorted by soldiers beating gongs. Everyone, no matter how wealthy, had to bow low before the procession. "How powerful that official is!" he thought. "I wish that I could be a high official!"



Then he became the high official, carried everywhere in his embroidered sedan chair, feared and hated by the people all around. It was a hot summer day, so the official felt very uncomfortable in the sticky sedan chair. He looked up at the sun. It shone proudly in the sky, unaffected by his presence. "How powerful the sun is!" he thought. "I wish that I could be the sun!"



Then he became the sun, shining fiercely down on everyone, scorching the fields, cursed by the farmers and laborers. But a huge black cloud moved between him and the earth, so that his light could no longer shine on everything below. "How powerful that storm cloud is!" he thought. "I wish that I could be a cloud!"



Then he became the cloud, flooding the fields and villages, shouted at by everyone. But soon he found that he was being pushed away by some great force, and realized that it was the wind. "How powerful it is!" he thought. "I wish that I could be the wind!"

Then he became the wind, blowing tiles off the roofs of houses, uprooting trees, feared and hated by all below him. But after a while, he ran up against something that would not move, no matter how forcefully he blew against it - a huge, towering rock. "How powerful that rock is!" he thought. "I wish that I could be a rock!"



Then he became the rock, more powerful than anything else on earth. But as he stood there, he heard the sound of a hammer pounding a chisel into the hard surface, and felt himself being changed. "What could be more powerful than I, the rock?" he thought.



He looked down and saw far below him the figure of a stonecutter.



Moral of the story: Be satisfied with who you are.

Testimonial on Self-Satisfaction, “You in Me and I in You”

I am destined to be the best sweet experience on earth.

My home is so tough and tall, I can choose to embrace or be in the shade from the sun, the moon, the wind and the rain. As I look around, I can see my brothers and sisters sharing the same destiny but being in different phases of their life sojourn. We all drink from the same source, feed on the same roots and enjoy the same Mother Nature. Yet our shapes, forms and appearances can vary quite a bit. Is it the outside world that forms me, shapes me, identifies with me or is it the inside world that holds me, nurtures me, sweetens me? As I look keenly, the outside world feeds my inside world and my inside world makes me experience the outside world. It is one life! One God truly within, without, in, around, besides, in my beginning, during and in the end of it all. And that thought makes me fully satisfied.

I am the mango, the sweetness destined for the smoothie, lassi, ice cream, milkshake, pickle or just the raw sweet experience for you. Let life enjoy me and let me enjoy life – so are we free and so are we bound! So we begin and so we end; you in me and I in you!

Practical Tips on obtaining Self-Satisfaction



Love yourself unconditionally

- We cannot obtain Self-Satisfaction if we don't love ourselves first. Every day look into the mirror and say to yourself out loud: *“Did I tell you today how beautiful you are and how much you are loved?”*
- Note: This should not be an ego boosting statement and that all are equally beautiful. It's not the external body you are referring to, it is the inner Divinity. Remember, the same Divine Light is also present in all; thus all are beautiful and loved.



Follow the Inner Voice with Confidence

- When we follow the inner guidance and carry out Swami's will in our thoughts, words, and deeds, automatically we will be satisfied with everything that we are and do. There will be no restlessness or sense of comparison with others.



Be Thankful

- Remind yourself of all the things and people in your life that you are thankful for especially when you feel restless and less not content.
- Accept everything in life as gift from God
- Maintain a gratitude journal - On a daily basis find something that you are grateful for and spend 5 minutes daily writing the journal



Remind yourself of whom you really are

- Swami says we are not one person but three: The one that we think we are, the one that others think we are, and the One we really are. The One we really are is God
- **Exercise:** Keep repeating/chanting 'Soham', meaning I am That, throughout the day. If you are working you may repeat silently; Keep reminding yourselves that we are not the doer.

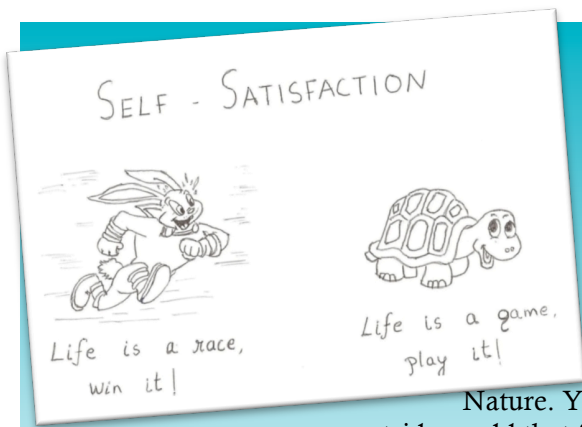
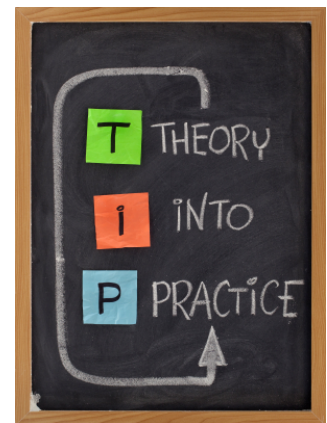


Practice Ceiling on Desires by not wasting Money, Food, Time, and Energy. Be appreciative of all 4 in your life.



Being in the present moment

- Remember the omnipresence of the Divine
- Follow inner voice with self-confidence
- Do your daily chores with focus
- Practice equanimity



Individual Reading of Prema Vahini: Chapters 8-16

<http://vahini.org/downloads/premavahini.html>

The Story Behind Prema Vahini:

It was February 1958, Bhagawan at the age of 32 years, started a monthly magazine, aptly named as 'Sanathana Sarathi' to spread His message of love and divinity. The very first article in the inaugural issue was written by Bhagawan, 'Prema Vahini', or the 'Stream of Divine Love'. For 25 months till February 1960, Swami assiduously penned for mankind the challenges and characteristics, norms and nuances of Divine love. As Prof.Kasturi, eloquently expressed, "while reading the book you are in touch with the very source of Prema; while translating its message into action, you are visibly led by the Grace of the Lord Himself; while enjoying the thrill of Sadhana (spiritual discipline) prescribed here, you are responding to the majesty of the very Ocean of Mercy."

After reading Chapter 8-16 of Prema Vahini, test yourself by answering these questions

Scoring: If you score 15/15 correct (and practice them in life), you quite possibly could be self-realized. If you score 10-14 out of 15 correct, try doing the heart to heart meditation and repeat the quiz, for the knowledge is within you. If you *still* don't receive a perfect score, read the chapters again. Actually, even if you score 15/15, consider reading these chapters daily; this text is sacred and is most definitely worth multiple reads!

TRUE OR FALSE?

1. To serve the supreme Lord, purity of food has to be observed. As regards food, the question is how much and of what quality. **True/False**
2. Only in spiritual pursuits should you use all the strength and talent with which you are endowed, speaking and acting truthfully. The material everyday duties need not be performed in this manner. **True/False**
3. The effulgence of the Atma is obscured by Ahamkaara (egoism). Therefore when Ahamkaara is destroyed, all troubles end, all discontents vanish and Bliss is attained. **True/False**
4. The Lord should be worshipped only in His cosmic form and image worship should not be encouraged. **True/False**
5. God favors those who study the Vedas and Puranas and spend their time in Sravanam (hearing stories of the Lord) and Kirtanam (singing name of God). **True/False**

(1) How does one become a Jnani or realized soul?

- (a) By learning the etymology of the term "Aham Brahmasmi".
- (b) By listening to Vedic renditions of the advaita philosophy.
- (c) By constant practice of the scriptural duties, discipline and devotion.
- (d) By looking for a snake in a rope.

(2) What types of karma can be overcome by sadhana?

- (a) Only samchita(of the past) and prarabdha(present)
- (b) Only agama(of the future)
- (c) Only agama(of the future) and prarabdha(present)
- (d) All three

(3) "There is one secret which if known, lays bare all secrets; if that problem is solved, all are solved." What is this?

- (a) sanathana vidya(ancient wisdom)
- (b) SSE/Balvikas
- (c) Namasmara
- (d) Realizing that God is love

(4) Which of the following will help us get over the cycle of birth and death?

- (a) Shravana or listening to God's name
- (b) By studying the Panchanga (or almanac)
- (c) By being powerful
- (d) Both (b) and (c)

(5) How can we cultivate prema?

- (a) By correcting the faults of others
- (b) By ignoring the faults of others as negligible
- (c) By ignoring our own faults
- (d) By analyzing the faults of everyone around

(6) Why is food necessary?

- (a) To satisfy our hunger
- (b) To remain fit and healthy
- (c) To give us strength for seva
- (d) For glowing skin

(7) How can man attain peace of mind?

- (a) By learning arts and sciences
- (b) By devising machines which increase comfort
- (c) By performing rituals
- (d) By mastering Sanathana Vidya (ancient wisdom)

(8) The worries of the world will not affect us if:

- (a) We develop the "I know" attitude
- (b) We engage in endless argumentation and disputation
- (c) We are flamboyant
- (d) We know the reality of the Paramatma

(9) If a person is a genuine vehicle of power, he can be recognized by

- (a) truth, kindness, love, patience, forbearance, gratefulness
- (b) patience, forbearance, gratefulness, beauty, peacefulness
- (c) gratefulness, extraordinary intelligence, powerful status in the society
- (d) pleasing demeanor, great oratory skills, integrity, perseverance

(10) Permanent happiness can be acquired

- (a) by condemning worldly happiness
- (b) by learning the Sanskrit language
- (c) through the science of God realization(Upanishad Vidya)
- (d) All of the above