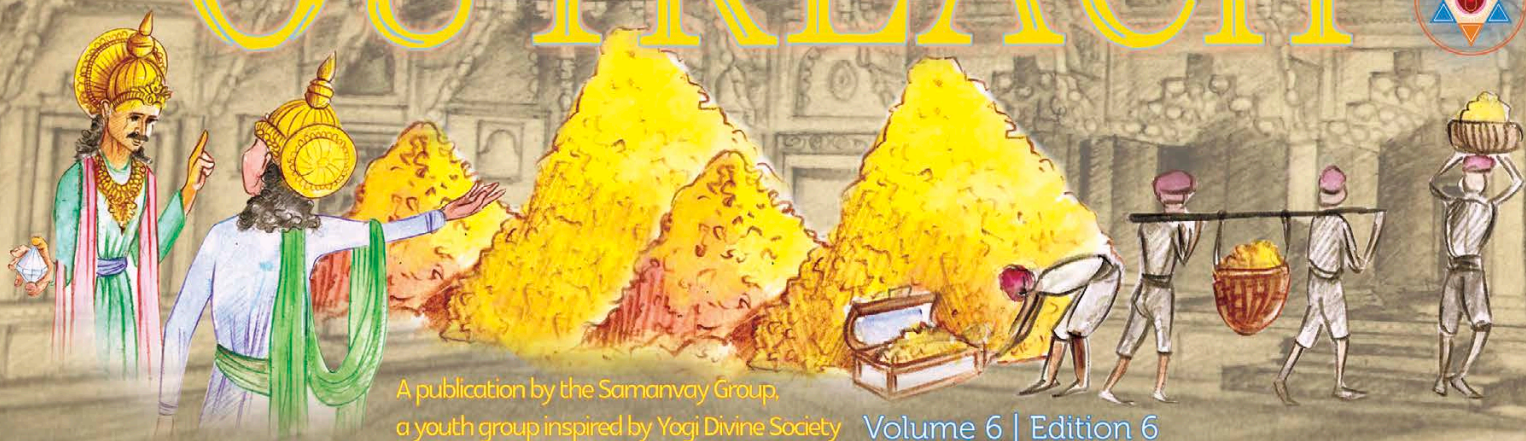


OUTREACH



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A DIAMOND MORE PRECIOUS THAN GOLD

Once upon a time, a poor shepherd was walking with his herd of goats. Suddenly, he noticed something shiny on the ground. It was a diamond! However, he did not recognize this and thought it was simply an attractive stone. So he put it on the collar around his goat's neck.

On his way home, he met a potter from the village, who liked the diamond and offered 200 hundred rupees for it. The shepherd happily agreed and sold the diamond.

After some time, the potter went to the local market to sell this diamond. A businessman happened to notice the diamond and bought it for 1,000 rupees.

Wanting to make a profit, the businessman advertised the diamond for sale. A merchant saw the diamond and offered 100,000 rupees. The businessman easily agreed and sold it.

The merchant tries to sell this diamond all around the kingdom, but gets no buyers. He then took this diamond to the prince of the local kingdom. On examining the diamond, the prince showed interest in buying it. The merchant asked, "How much will you give me for this diamond?"

The prince took a closer look and realized the true value of the diamond. He replied, "Hire a hundred people from the village and, from sunrise to sunset, all the amount of gold they can collect from my treasury will be yours – all for this one diamond."

The merchant instantly accepted the offer. The next day, the merchant brought a hundred strong men to haul away as much gold as possible. In the evening, after collecting a lot of gold, he gave the diamond to the prince.

News about this transaction quickly spread throughout the entire kingdom. Everyone was shocked and thought the prince made a foolish mistake.

During this time, the prince's father was away on a trip. When the king returned, he heard about the one-sided transaction. He immediately called his son and said, "What did you buy in exchange for all the gold in our treasury?"

The prince showed his father the diamond. He carefully examined the diamond and proudly replied, "Son, what a great bargain, this diamond is priceless! What you gave away is virtually nothing compared to the worth of this precious diamond."

This tale was narrated by Gunatitanand Swami (Swami ni Vaato 3/61), and gives a very clear

message. If we possess something of great value but do not realize its true value, we will give it away with ease. On the other hand, when we truly understand the value of something then, just like the prince, we will be ready to sacrifice anything to acquire it.



Satsang is just like that precious diamond, which we all have. Satsang is a unique type of diamond because it is an everlasting source of inspiration, peace, and happiness. Satsang gives us wisdom, a clear vision, and inner confidence.

As experienced by countless youths, Satsang has the potential to transform our lives. Habits or urges that are difficult to let go, can easily be overcome by doing regular Satsang.

Satsang shows us how to live in harmony with our friends and family. Satsang allows us to cherish every second of life without ever feeling burdened or stressed.

Just as the prince realized the true value of the diamond, when we realize the value of Satsang and the great fortune of having a Guru in our lives, nothing will stop us from doing Satsang. It is only when we truly understand the real value of Satsang, will we begin to cherish it and keep it in our possession forever.

LAUGH-OUT-LOUD

A policeman pulled a driver over and asked to see her license.

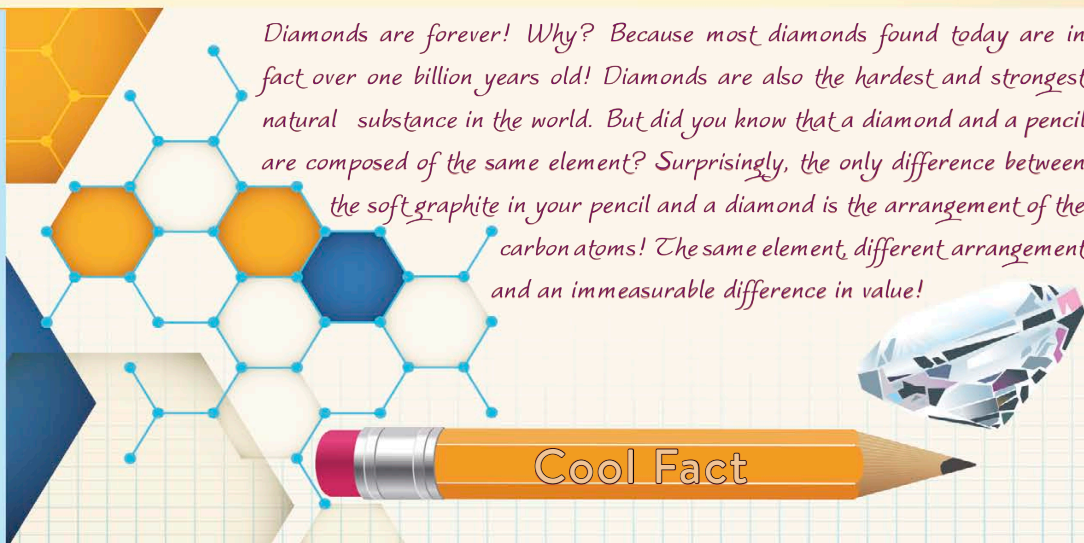
After looking it over, the policeman said to her, "Lady, your license stipulates that you should be wearing glasses."

"Well, I have contacts," the woman replied.

"Look lady, I don't care who you know," snapped the officer. "You're getting a ticket."



Diamonds are forever! Why? Because most diamonds found today are in fact over one billion years old! Diamonds are also the hardest and strongest natural substance in the world. But did you know that a diamond and a pencil are composed of the same element? Surprisingly, the only difference between the soft graphite in your pencil and a diamond is the arrangement of the carbon atoms! The same element, different arrangement and an immeasurable difference in value!



Many youths have already booked their airplane tickets and started arranging their job and school schedule to attend Atmiya Yuva Mahotsav. Some have been denied vacation from work or have visa issues. But they still have made a full commitment to attend AYM because they have full confidence in the divine blessings of Swamiji, who said, "Bhagwan Swaminarayan will arrange all your circumstances if you make a firm decision to attend AYM!"

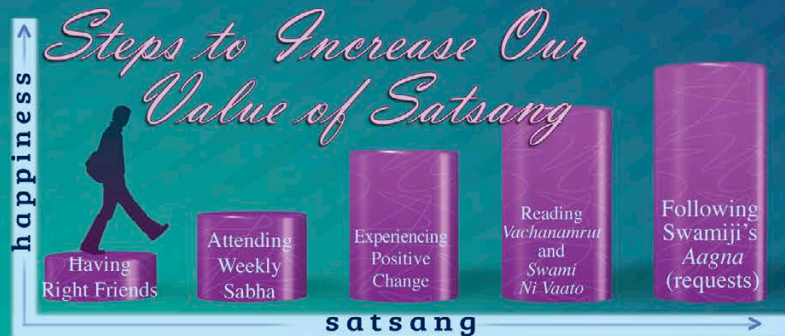
ATMIYA YUVA MAHOTSAV

DEC
30,31
2014



JAN
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2015

The Value of Most Things We Buy



GUIDING EACH STEP OF LIFE'S JOURNEY

A father will do anything to ensure his child is happy and prosperous at every step of life. One such father figure is **Guruhari Hariprasad Swamiji**. He has sculpted and guided the lives of countless youths on the path of true happiness. The uniqueness and greatness of Swamiji is such that He uses the problems in our daily lives to infuse us with practical and spiritual values. Let us see one such incident.

Rutvikbhai, a youth from Vadodara, India, visited Swamiji to seek guidance on his future education and career. Swamiji asked Rutvikbhai to pursue a master's degree in the UK. Rutvikbhai made all the necessary preparations and went for his visa interview to the UK consulate.



A young Rutvikbhai meeting Swamiji

Unfortunately, he was denied the visa, so Rutvikbhai went to meet Swamiji. Swamiji lovingly told him, "Do not worry, everything will work out for the best. But please start attending weekly sunday sabha."

Following Swamiji's request, Rutvikbhai started attending weekly sabha and started preparing for the visa interview. But much to his surprise, his visa was denied again. Frustrated, he came to visit Swamiji. Swamiji asked him to stay active in satsang and perform pradakshina (circumambulation) of Thakorji in the mandir.



Rutvikbhai went to give the visa interview for the third time. But 20 minutes into the interview, the officer asked Rutvikbhai one question, "Why do you want to go to another country for further studies?" Hearing the question, Rutvikbhai felt a sense of nervousness. The interview lasted another 25 grueling minutes, ending with a third rejection!

Once again, Rutvikbhai went to Swamiji and spoke to Him about the interview in detail. The all-knowing Swamiji replied, "Rutvik, although you answered all of the questions correctly, your confidence faded away at the 21st minute. If you wish to instill confidence in your life, then you must develop a strong friendship with a saint."

Taking Swamiji's message to heart, Rutvikbhai developed a strong and open friendship with many saints and youth leaders. Prior to this fourth visa interview, he came to meet Swamiji to pray for something very special. Rutvikbhai prayed, "Swamiji, there is something missing in my life and as a result, my visa keeps getting denied. You are the all-knower and all-doer. You are aware of everything, so please tell me what should I do?"



Swamiji, the true guardian of the soul, replied, "In the country that you are headed, it is nearly impossible to live a morally pure life. If you do not engage yourself in satsang and fail to make the right friends, then your soul will become impure. You will be mercilessly pulled into a disgraceful lifestyle, which will result in nothing but misery. The true son of God has four things in his life:

1. Regular attendance of weekly sabha
2. Physical and mental discipline as per Vachanamrut Pratham 16 & 18
3. Active involvement in satsang activities
4. A strong association and friendship with saints

Now that you have acquired this understanding, you will definitely get the visa."

In his fourth interview, Rutvikbhai received his visa and went on to study at Middlesex University in London. After a year, Swamiji gave Rutvikbhai blessings over the phone and asked if he remembered the four points!



Guruhari Swamiji blessing Rutvikbhai's son

Today, Rutvikbhai is well-settled and continuously advancing in his professional career. But at the same time, his active engagement in satsang through the years has been the true source of his triumph.

Through the journey from Vadodara to London, Swamiji sculpted confidence and moral values within Rutvikbhai's heart. Almost like a syllabus, Swamiji taught him these four important lessons at each step. Being a divine and visionary saint, Swamiji ensures both our social and spiritual well-being in very unique ways. If we truly understand the glory, divinity, and greatness of Swamiji, then there is only joy, bliss, and happiness in our lives.

Lasting Thought "If you have *darshan* of a divine saint just one time, then the strength and energy of a 100 suns gets infused within your soul! Such is His glory!"

~ Guruhari Hariprasad Swamiji