

Outreach

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Without Atmiyata we cannot reach our goal...

A publication by the Samanvay Group, a youth group inspired by Yogi Divine Society

ATMIYATA - WORTH MORE THAN BILLIONS OF DOLLARS

Humans are social beings. We need to stay together to live. We need to talk and interact with people throughout the day, either for business or fun. We all have a close group of friends who share similar interests. It seems we cannot live without them. Moreover, things like cell phones, Twitter, Facebook, Skype, and Facetime ensure that we are always connected to our friends and families. This is because the true joy of life is living together.

But now, consider this. Even though we enjoy staying together, most arguments and problems we have in daily life arise with the people we spend the most time with. Think about it. A disagreement with colleagues, a fight with parents, or a misunderstanding between friends, can spark sadness and deflate our mood. Rarely are we influenced by strangers. Most of the time, it is when our close friends and family say something we do not like or if they behave differently towards them, then our mood tends to fluctuate.

So then, the question is: How can we always live joyfully with the people we seemingly cannot live without?

The answer is Atmiyata. The principles and values of Atmiyata help foster an environment of ever-lasting happiness that can be experienced both in our homes and hearts. Atmiyata is the one and only solution for having a healthy and ever-enjoyable relationship with our families. Friendships grow stronger and stronger when Atmiyata is prevalent.

Atmiyata is the life mission and message of Guruhari Hariprasad Swamiji. His life slogan is, "Whether one becomes Atmiya or not, please make me Atmiya." If someone decides to live with Atmiyata and makes a sincere effort, Swamiji showers them with blessings and gives them strength.

Once, a devotee personally sat with Swamiji and asked, "Swamiji, what seva (service/donation) do I have to do?"

Swamiji instantly replied, "You have already performed a seva worth more than billions of dollars." The devotee was confused and started to wonder how this was even possible.

Then Swamiji continued, "You and your son had a difference of opinion and could not get along with each other. But now, you have decided to resolve everything and live together with Atmiyata. This is the biggest seva one can offer to me." In this way, we can realize just how important the values of Atmiyata are to Swamiji.

So what does Atmiyata mean? There are four main stages of Atmiyata:

- 1) Compromising your preferences or personal comforts for serving your family/friends,
- 2) Overlooking any perceived faults in friends/family, and instead, wholeheartedly serving them even if they have made a mistake,
- 3) Keeping a positive and supportive attitude even if your friends/family scold or inadvertently insult you, while not spreading the incident to others,
- 4) Seeing and treating everyone as children of God.

In this edition, we will discuss the first stage of Atmiyata. In today's society that is seemingly self-centered, where everyone has busy schedules, it is difficult to consider the well-being of others.

Going one step further to adjust your personal preferences for supporting your fellow family members and making sure they are happy is even more difficult. But, taking this first step will invite the joy of Atmiyata into our lives, and also the lives of people around us!

A man died and arrived at the gates of heaven. The gatekeeper said, "We've looked over your life, and, to be honest, you did not do anything particularly good or bad. We're not sure what to do with you. Can you tell us anything you did that can help us make a decision?"

The man thought for a moment and replied: "Yeah, once I was driving along and saw a person being harassed by a group of thugs. So I pulled over, took out a bat, and approached the leader of the thugs. He was a big, muscular guy with a ring pierced through his lip. I tore the ring out of his lip and told him to stop bothering this guy or you will have to deal with me!"

The gatekeeper asked, "Wow, that's impressive. When did this happen?" The man replied, "Oh, about three minutes ago."

Laugh Out Loud

COOL FACT

In the cold, hostile weather where the temperature reaches the lows of -50°C , penguins huddle together for warmth. If they remained isolated, they would lose their body heat and risk death. When they're huddling, the penguins slowly and systematically rotate to the outer edge of the huddle, to make sure that the penguins on the edge also get a chance in the warm huddle. It is amazing how penguins innately know the secret strategy of success: supporting one another.

To help us prepare for Atmiya Yuva Mahotsav, Swamiji made one special request, "The things that you see and hear have a direct influence on your thoughts. Therefore, until Atmiya Yuva Mahotsav, please make a sincere effort to stop watching negative movies and TV shows. If you do so, then after AYM, you will be gifted with lifelong strength to never be tempted to watch any movie."

ATMIYA YUVA MAHOTSAV

DEC
30-31
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Three steps to improve teamwork in the family

Trust that your parents' advice is only for your betterment.

Try to sincerely follow through with it at least once before speaking to them about it.

Arrange your schedule to eat at least one meal a day together.

There is a famous saying in India, "A family that eats together, stays together."

Openly share your thoughts about your day.

Daily two-way communication helps each individual grow and come closer to one another.

A NEW NAME AND A NEW LIFE

In today's fast-paced and competitive world, it is very difficult or seems unnecessary to think about other people. But, the first stage of Atmiyata is compromising your preferences and comforts to serve your friends and family. This type of oneness is the stepping stone for living a harmonious and blissful life.

Guruhari Hariprasad Swamiji not only spreads these values of Atmiyata, but His life is the epitome of Atmiyata. Swamiji is always ready at any time to serve His devotees, even if it requires bearing physical discomforts. Let's dwell into one such incident.

Once, Swamiji was at the home of Kunvarjibapa in Rajkot, India.

Kunvarjibapa's grandchildren, Rajnish and Sanjay, were also present. Swamiji lovingly embraced them and asked them their names.

After Rajnish uttered his name, Swamiji said, "Let's change your name today. Your new name is Ashish." Then Sanjay uttered his name and Swamiji told him, "Let's also change your name to Samarpit." Both youngsters were overjoyed. Along with new names, it almost felt as if Swamiji blessed both of them with new lives!

The next day, while Ashish was returning home from school on his bike, he accidentally crashed into the railroad tracks and fell into an eight foot deep trench.

The bike was destroyed, but

Ashish was still alive. Since there was no apparent physical injury, the doctor suggested to rest.

That night, when Ashish approached Swamiji and bowed at His feet, Swamiji said, "Son, be brave like a lion! Bhagwan Swaminarayan will take care of you."

Later that night, Ashish suddenly got a throbbing headache and started vomiting large amounts of blood. The situation became very serious, but his willpower remained strong.

Early in the morning, Swamiji again gave blessings to Ashish, "Son, be brave like a lion! Bhagwan Swaminarayan will take care of you." This unique and powerful statement brought Ashish great relief!

Ashish was rushed to the hospital. Doctors discovered that his spleen was badly ruptured! Ashish required an immediate surgery, and even then, his chances of survival were slim.

But there was another big problem. Blood tests revealed that he had the rare O- blood type, which was extremely limited at the local blood bank. Doctors desperately reached out to his entire family and the community, but could not obtain the O- blood. Ashish's condition was getting worse, but the doctors were helpless. The operation could not begin without blood donors.

At this time, Swamiji was in travelling in another town. But once Kunvarjibapa informed Swamiji of this dire situation, Swamiji immediately changed his journey that night and quickly came to the hospital.

The doctors updated Swamiji about Ashish's condition and the immediate requirement for blood. Without any hesitation, Swamiji extended his arm and said, "Here take my blood. You will find whichever blood type you need."

On seeing Swamiji's selflessness and compassion, Kunvarjibapa felt heavy-hearted. Out of much respect, he refused to accept Swamiji's blood, and instead, only requested Him to give His divine blessings. Then Swamiji placed His hands on Ashish's chest and said, "Son, be brave like a lion! Bhagwan Swaminarayan will take care of you." Swamiji then tells the doctor, "Get ready for the operation, you will get the all blood that you need!"

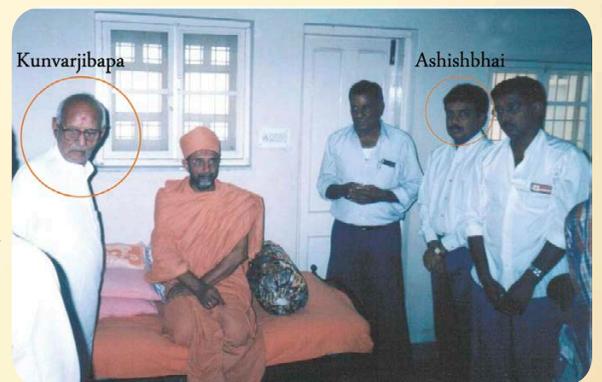
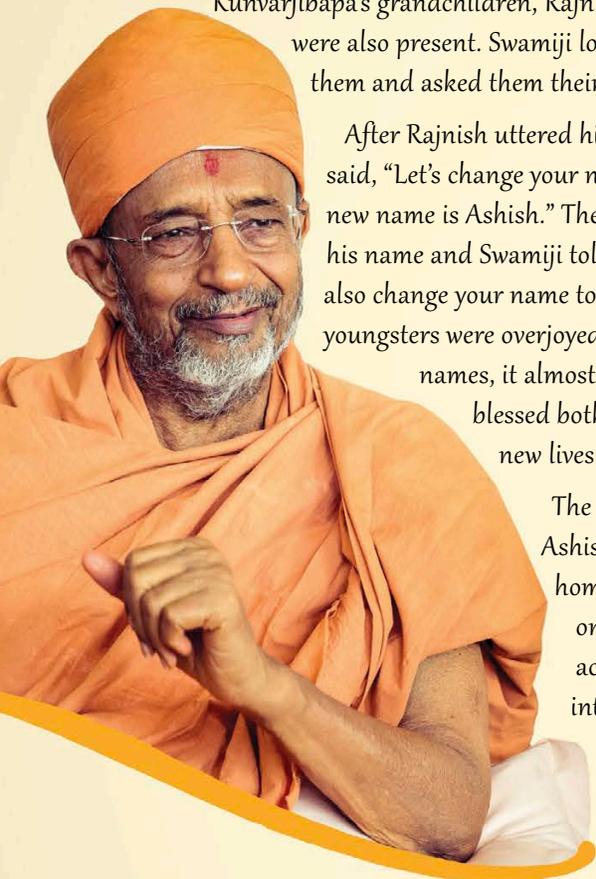
Soon after, the hospital began receiving numerous phone calls from O- blood donors. The doctors were mystified that so many people with matching blood groups suddenly came forward to donate their blood.

The doctors expected a six-hour surgery. Miraculously, the operation successfully finished in less than an hour! The doctors removed a blood clot the size of a cricket ball, and they too were astonished as to how the operation was completed so quickly!

Within two weeks, Ashish made a full recovery. Surprisingly, during this entire incident, Ashish did not shed a single tear. It is because he had full faith in Swamiji's divine blessings and knew that Swamiji would always protect him.

Swamiji is such a divine saint that God truly listens to and fulfills His prayers.

And yet, when the time came, Swamiji was ready to instantly endure any amount of physical discomfort and give His blood to Ashish. Swamiji is willing to sacrifice anything and everything for His youths. The sole purpose of every action, step, and breath that Swamiji takes is for uplifting devotees and youths that seek His guidance. This unconditional and limitless eagerness to serve us is Swamiji's Atmiyata unto us!



Lasting Thought "Everyone has a 100 billion brain cells, but the average person uses only 1% of those brain cells. Someone who introspects and recognizes their flaws uses up to 6% of their brain cells. But if a person lives with Atmiyata, he is gifted with the ability to use 70% of their brain cells. As a result, his energy and happiness is such that nothing in this universe can make him depressed." ~ (Guruhari Hariprasad Swamiji)