

Outreach

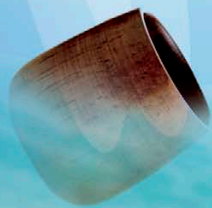
VOLUME 8 EDITION 1

Wait for the Dirt to Settle!

Lord Buddha was once travelling with his disciple, Anand, through the forest. After walking for several hours, they decided to rest by a tree. Lord Buddha asked Anand to fetch some water to drink. Being a devoted disciple, Anand happily set off to search for water.

He saw a small fresh-water pond. Anand approached the pond and started skimming the top of the pond with a vessel to fill it up. Just then, a bullock-cart passed nearby. Unfortunately, the wheel of the bullock-cart landed in the pond. This caused the dirt and sand to stir up from the bottom and mix with water. The water was now undrinkable.

Anand felt a bit dejected knowing that he would have to return without water. When he went back empty-handed, Lord Buddha asked for the water. Then, Anand



replied, "There was a pond nearby. But just as I was collecting the water, a cart passed by and caused the water to become dirty and undrinkable. But please do not worry, there must be a river or lake further down, I will quickly fetch the water from there."

Surprisingly, Lord Buddha told Anand, "I want you to go back to the same pond and retrieve the water from there." This confused Anand. He was wondering why Lord Buddha made this specific request. He knew that Lord Buddha would not randomly say such things, but that any request from Lord Buddha would have meaning. So, Anand put aside any thoughts of doubt and started walking towards the pond.

When he reached the pond, he saw a slight amount of dirt and sand still mixed with the water. Once again, he was unable to collect any drinking water. He returned again without any water.

Anand told Lord Buddha that the water was dirty and that he would quickly fetch water from another river or lake. But Lord Buddha again insisted, "No, I want to you to get water from the pond." Anand was very confused now and felt he was just wasting time. But, because Lord Buddha strongly insisted, he decided to go back to the pond. He made his way towards the pond for the third time now.

As he reached the pond, he saw the water was now clear! He skimmed the water with the vessel and filled it up. He quickly returned back with the water and gave it to Lord Buddha. Then, Anand bowed down and asked, "Why did you send me back to the same pond and how did you know that it would be clear?"

Lord Buddha laughed and replied, "I wanted to teach the virtue of patience. Even though the water was undrinkable, the dirt and sand eventually settle down to the bottom. All you needed to do was be patient. In the same way, problems in life are like such dirt. They can disturb your peace in any moment. In such times, if you impulsively react or respond without thinking, you may make the situation worse or quit all together. But if you choose to remain patient and positive, you will see the problems slowly disappear."

In life, we will encounter difficult problems or situations. Giving up, losing patience, or becoming frustrated will not solve anything and we may end up empty-handed at the end of the day. Remaining calm, poised, and cool-headed will enable us to think creatively and logically for the right solution.

We need to be patient physically, mentally, and vocally. Physical patience means to refrain from taking quick actions without thorough thought. Mental patience

means to refrain from becoming upset or depressed by a difficult situation. Vocal patience means to refrain from initially speaking or using words judiciously when a conversation starts to transform into an argument.

When a demanding situation arises to test our patience, keeping an optimistic attitude and believing that everything is being controlled by God is the best way to remain patient. The more we can develop such faith, the more we will be able to accept a situation and reap the benefits that come along with being patient.

Finally, Anand was able to learn this valuable lesson because he had a saint like Lord Buddha in his life. In the same way, if we have the association of a true saint in our life, then He will guide us step-by-step and give us the wisdom and virtues to live a blissful life.



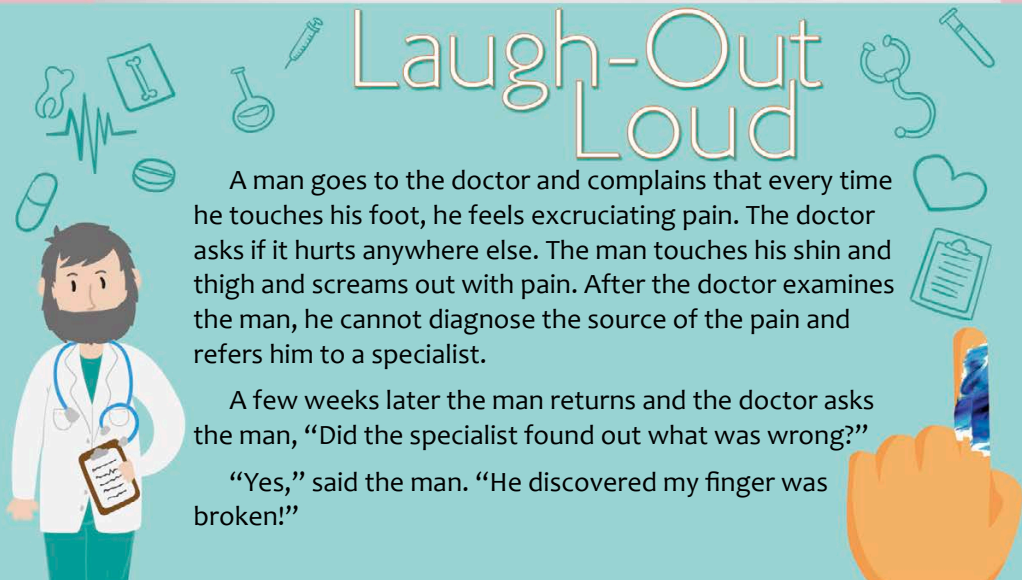
Slowing down while eating has great health benefits. It takes about 20 minutes from the time you start eating for your brain to send out signals of fullness. Recent studies in Japan concluded that eating more slowly results in feeling full sooner, and thus eating fewer calories at mealtime. Moreover, individuals who eat meals very quickly are more likely to gain weight and develop health complications. So if you want to be fit, simply slow down!

Laugh-Out Loud

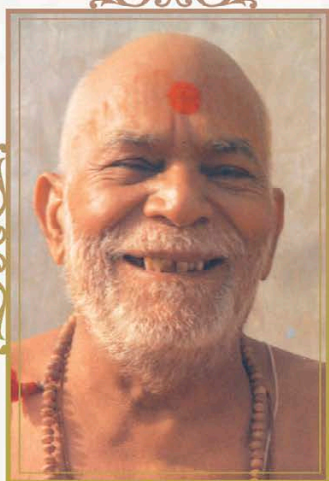
A man goes to the doctor and complains that every time he touches his foot, he feels excruciating pain. The doctor asks if it hurts anywhere else. The man touches his shin and thigh and screams out with pain. After the doctor examines the man, he cannot diagnose the source of the pain and refers him to a specialist.

A few weeks later the man returns and the doctor asks the man, "Did the specialist found out what was wrong?"

"Yes," said the man. "He discovered my finger was broken!"



Yogiji Maharaj: An Idol of Patience



A great philosopher once said, “Patience is not simply the ability to wait, but it’s keeping a positive attitude while waiting.” The thoughts and behaviors during our time of patience define our true character.

Keeping a positive mindset and being patient may prove to be difficult, especially in the midst of certain situations or when talking to certain people. But it is indeed possible by thinking about those individuals who have lived such a life.

The hallmark of patience and tolerance is Guruhari Hariprasad Swamiji’s guru, Brahmswaroop Yogiji Maharaj. Yogiji Maharaj’s life is filled with countless such

examples. His patience and ever-positive attitude has inspired thousands.

In one instance, Yogiji Maharaj was in the town of Gondal. It is customary for saints to undergo a *moondan* (shaving of the head and facial hair) once a month. When Yogiji Maharaj sat on the chair for His *moondan*, the barber applied the water and cream and started the *moondan* by shaving the head first.

After shaving half of Yogiji Maharaj’s head, the barber received a message from his family. So he immediately left without saying anything while Yogiji Maharaj remained seated on the chair. Assuming the barber would return at any moment, Yogiji Maharaj patiently waited. It was two hours later that the barber returned to finish the *moondan*!

Upon seeing the barber return, Yogiji Maharaj did not utter a single word nor did He show the slightest expression of frustration or anger! Such was Yogiji Maharaj’s patience and tolerance. The barber quickly finished the *moondan* and was utterly impressed by Yogiji’s Maharaj’s positive personality.

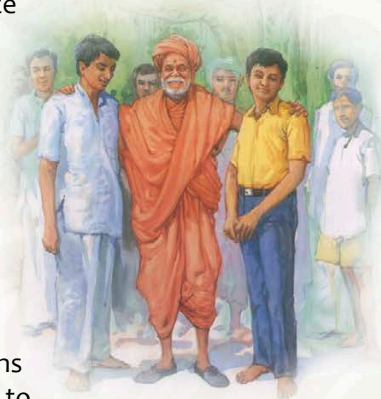
When the actions of our family members or friends bring us physical discomfort, we tend to lose our patience. But Yogiji Maharaj was such an individual who would tolerate any amount of discomfort. He would never lose his patience nor become angry at any individual, regardless of their actions.

In another instance, in 1959, Yogiji Maharaj decided to tour the holy temples of northwest India. It was Yogiji Maharaj’s selfless nature to continuously guide and uplift youths, so He asked several youths to join Him on this tour.

Along with several assisting devotees and a group of youths, Yogiji Maharaj started the tour from the town of Junagadh.

In the morning, they planned to visit the Junagadh temple and the Girnar Mountains, and return to the residence for lunch thereafter. They first visited the Junagadh Swaminarayan temple, which was built by Gunatitanand Swami in 1828. This is a very holy temple wherein Gunatitanand Swami once resided. So, Yogiji Maharaj took special time to walk with the youths around the entire temple campus and explain its glory and significance.

Since it was now lunchtime, the assisting devotees suggested they return to the residence without going to the Girnar Mountains. But the youths wanted to enjoy and continue with the plan of going to explore the mountains. So, it was decided that Yogiji Maharaj and the assisting devotees would return to the residence while the group of youths would visit the mountains in another car.



The youths returned back to the residence around 3:00pm. When the assisting devotees saw the youths return, they scolded the youths. It was because Yogiji Maharaj still had not eaten His lunch. In their rush and commotion of going to visit the mountains, the youths forgot to transfer the bags into Yogiji Maharaj's car, especially the bag containing the pattar. It is customary for saints to eat in a *pattar*, and so Yogiji Maharaj would not eat without a *pattar*.

However, upon seeing the youths at 3:00pm with an empty and growling stomach, Yogiji Maharaj did not utter a single word of this mishap. Instead, He showered them with so much love and started conversing about their experience in the mountains.

Imagine if we had to wait three extra hours for lunch because of someone's mistake. We would not only become upset, but we would probably holler at them and tell them the suffering we endured because of their mistake. But Yogiji Maharaj happily accepted the situation and remained patient and positive.

Throughout our day, we interact with many people and face many situations. Not everyone will behave according to our wish and not everything will happen as we desire. At such times, being patient with a positive attitude will help us tolerate and enjoy each moment. By dwelling into the inspirational life of Yogiji Maharaj, we too can develop a patient and ever positive attitude.

Dwelling into Swamiji's Life

A few years ago, Guruhari Hariprasad Swamiji was scheduled to visit Germany. Upon landing in Berlin from London, Swamiji went to Manibhai's house, which was decorated very beautifully by the devotees for His arrival.

Swamiji awoke early the next morning. When Manibhai entered the room, Swamiji smiled and they had a short conversation. During the conversation, Swamiji asked Manibhai about the weather for that day. Manibhai exited the room, studied the weather report, and then informed Swamiji.

The following morning, when Manibhai entered the room, Swamiji again asked Manibhai about the weather for that day. Manibhai searched the weather forecast and told Swamiji. The weather was averaging around 20°C with cloudy skies and the possibility of rain.

After this interaction with Swamiji, Manibhai thought that Swamiji may ask about weather each morning. So he decided to study the weather for the upcoming day and write it on a piece of paper. And in the morning, Manibhai would hand Swamiji this piece of paper before He would even ask. In this way, Manibhai wanted to ensure that Swamiji would not have to repeat this request every day. For the next several days, Manibhai continued to write the weather on a piece of paper and handed it to Swamiji early in the morning.

One morning, Manibhai handed Swamiji the piece with the weather, as he had been doing for the past week. After a few moments, Swamiji turned to Manibhai and said, "You don't need to use a new piece of paper each day to write the weather. You can reuse the paper from the previous day. In fact, all the weather forecasts from the past week would have fit on a single piece of paper." Manibhai realized his mistake and folded his hands.

Then Swamiji softly said, "I wanted to tell you this last week, but today I finally felt that I should tell you." Manibhai was moved by Swamiji's words.

If Swamiji wants to tell a devotee even the smallest of commands—such as reusing a piece of paper—He has the strength to wait an entire week before telling him. Swamiji does not want to hurt any devotee's feelings by giving them commands or showing them their mistakes, and so He waits. His patience to guide us is truly unparalleled! Thinking of such instances from Swamiji's life will give us the strength to remain patient with the people around us.



Simple ways to Remain Patient in Demanding Situations



Take deep, slow breaths, and count to 10 (or chant the Swaminarayan mantra 10 times). Doing this helps slow your heart rate, relaxes your body, and emotionally distances you from the situation. If you're feeling really impatient, you might need to do a longer count, or do this several times.



Remind yourself that your impatience rarely gets others to move faster and can lead to silly mistakes – in fact, it can interfere with other people's ability to perform complex or highly-skilled work. All you are doing is creating more stress in an already stressful situation.



Make yourself speak and move more slowly. It will appear to others as if you're calm – and, by “acting” patient, you can often “feel” more patient.



Keep at least three examples of Gunatit Purusho fresh in your mind at all times. This will give you strength to overcome difficult circumstances.

Lasting Thought

When a devotee of God experiences hardships of any kind, it should be known that it is not due to the forces of kaal, karma, or maya. But in fact, it is God who inspires hardships to befall upon His devotee to test their patience. Just as a person hides behind a curtain and watches, God resides within the heart of the devotee and observes his patience.”

~ Bhagwan Swaminarayan, Vachanamrut Madhya-62

A Divine Glimpse

“Youths are My Everything” is the life slogan and mission of Guruhari Hariprasad Swamiji. The culmination of Swamiji’s efforts was displayed at the grand Atmiya Yuva Aadiveshan, which was held near the city of Surat, India on January 3rd, 2016. Over a 125,000 devotees from India and across the world attended this grand function, which commemorates Swamiji’s 83th birthday celebration. Here are a few highlights from Swamiji’s speech:

- If we keep full faith in *Bhagwan*, as described in *Vachanamrut Pratham-27*, then *Bhagwan* will forever reside within our heart and soul!
- When we are fortunate enough to have the association of a saint, we should not stay asleep, but we should make an effort to develop a strong friendship with them and listen to their talks.
- If you take the initiative to approach your *pradeshik sant* or *bhagvadi* leaders for guidance and advice, you will start to experience true happiness very quickly.
- *Bhagwan* is available anytime and is just waiting to listen to your prayers so He can give you strength! For any prayer you make, *Bhagwan* will give you the strength to live as such!

