



Sanskar Gurukul Weekly Update



Class Name: Vasishtha

Week#09: Nov 17, 2013

General Assembly (GA)

- We started with the 3 Oms and the Shanti mantra. The year book Yuva Sevak committee members were introduced as they will be taking photos throughout the year. **Please read announcement at the end.**
- We chanted Sage Tulsidas's "Hanuman Chaalisa" after discussing the first verse: Mirror of your mind means – having a clear reflection in your mind which is possible only if mind is "cleaned" of thoughts and this can be done by "cleaning with the dust off of your Guru's lotus feet". This 'dusting' is referring to having the humble attitude to respectfully learn from your Guru who has vast knowledge. We pay respect to our Guru in Hanuman Chalisa and Gurustotram.
- We ended GA with meditation.

Class

- **Opening Prayers**
- **Warm-up:** 3 things you learned and can apply in your life based on last week's lesson on King Dhritarashtra's Character ...Students completed this on an index card.
- **Navratri HW Review:** Discussed specific examples to meet our "mind-purifying" goals since that needs to be taken care of if we truly want to meet *and sustain* our other worldly goals.
 - ❖ We discussed strategies (journaling, timers, commitment, discipline, routines, talking, sharing, reading, seeking to understand, practicing patience by counting to 10, tolerance, kindness etc.) to deal with the negativities that the students had listed for overcoming - laziness, procrastination, anger, strong likes and dislikes, distractions, etc.
 - ❖ We discussed how prayers and faith with sincere devotion will show us ways (practical tools, help in the form of people, some insights or ideas, will-power, courage etc.) to overcome our negativities and purify us.
 - ❖ It is expected that the students will update their HW sheet by writing up to 3 practical strategies for their specific purifying goals and we shall check-in towards the end of the year.
- **Values - Charity:** We discussed that our scriptures do not just call any kind of giving as charity. True charity is much more than that.
 - ❖ **The How - The attitude of giving matters!**
 - **Attitude of Gratitude** - Yes, even the giver should have this attitude that the Lord has provided him/her with an opportunity to be in a position to give or share.
 - **Attitude of Worship to God** - The giver believes that every act of giving is an act of serving humanity which in turn is like serving God's creation and hence serving God!
 - **Attitude of Humility** - The giver should never give anything with a sense of pride or arrogance, because whatever the giver has (money, clothes, food, knowledge etc.) is really there because of grace of God even if the giver has put in the efforts to earn it.



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- **Attitude of Sensitivity** - The giver should exercise some sensitivity about giving especially if s/he is giving to a person asking for help. It is not easy sometimes for a person to ask for help or some may fear losing self-respect. As *Gandhi-ji* had once said "*Give, such that your left-hand doesn't know what your right-hand is giving*". So, don't make a big deal about your gift/charity or spread news about it.

❖ The Why (Intention) - The purpose of giving ("Daan") matters!

- **Rajasik Daan** - This is the "investment" form of charity! Giving with an expectation of getting something in return (as if it is an investment or favor) or giving based on some conditions; bragging about it; becoming competitive about itall these things can lead to focusing on the numbers, keeping score rather than the actual deed and the purpose behind it. It can also lead to giving up the good work the moment somebody criticizes or doesn't appreciate or you run into obstacles. Hence, although this kind of giving is good, it is not considered the purest form of giving. Some examples are - Fundraising and bragging about it; doing volunteering work just for the sake of accumulating some volunteer hours credit or to prove something are some examples.
- **Tamasik Daan** - The "lazy" form of charity. Giving without any thought to the time/place/person or where the 'gift' is going or how it is being used - not bothered if the money is being used for gambling or any vices ...like lending money to an addict/gambler/shopaholic etc. In the short run, it would look like you are being "kind or helpful" but in the long run, this kind of giving does more harm than good. As the saying goes, "*If you give a man a fish, you feed him for a day, but if you teach him how to fish, you feed him for life*".
- **Saatvik Daan** - The "purest" form of charity! Giving for the sake of giving - because it is the right thing to do and because you want to share. Unconditional, thoughtful, sensitive type of giving that is done with great love and compassion and without any expectations or "noise" (bragging) or even a "whisper" - like the anonymous donors, for example.

❖ The What - What are some of the things one can be charitable about? Does it always have to be about money, food, clothes, items or shelter? No. It can also be about being charitable with our time (working in a soup kitchen), knowledge (free tutoring) and talents (fundraising shows) etc.!

❖ The When - Although, there can be numerous informal and formal occasions to be charitable, our scriptures have prescribed certain occasions like birthdays, marriages, any pilgrimages, celebrations to be good occasions to be charitable in order to develop and encourage this disposition. It is considered an act of doing good karma.

Having it as a ritual (like, say, Dakshina, Daana) ensures that the tradition continues, the generosity of man's spirit is cultivated and nurtured, which in turn, refines the individual and prevents him from over-attachments and greed.

• Closing Prayers.

Homework

- Please complete pg. 122-123 on "Charity" Values



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Announcements

Yearbook Art Submission Guidelines (**DEADLINE: December 8th!**)

- Drawing/painting/collage/coloring - 2nd grade and below can color existing drawings, 3rd grade and above should be original
- Art should be of Lakshmi Devi or a representation of her (we aren't doing traits this year.)
- Older classes can choose to write a piece or a poem about Lakshmi Devi as well
- Please make sure that the colors are bold, the pencil marks are dark
- Use printer paper (A4 size)
- Do not write your name on the front!!! Only on the back please!!