

## **Nine Point Code of Conduct (8)**

### **Not indulging in talking ill of others especially in their absence**

*“The tongue is the cause of prosperity or poverty. The tongue, again, is responsible for promoting friendship and kinship, for attachment and bondage, and for death and liberation”<sup>1</sup>*

#### **1. What is talking ill of others ?**

Simply talking negative or bad things about others. Backbiting, character assassination, falsehood about another, trying to belittle or bring down the esteem of one in the eyes of the other, this is the deadly cancer that has destroyed many groups, even great movements and most certainly must be considered an anathema to any spiritual body.<sup>2</sup>

#### **2. Two things man enjoys a lot**

\* Listening to the songs of his praise.

\* Talking ill of others, especially of a person with whom he does not like

You can spend hours and hours to listen to your own glory and, as a result, have the feeling that the person who is talking good of you is the best person in the world. Probably he is the only one who really understands you. You will start liking him right from the start. And if the same person also talks ill of your enemy, wow what else would you need? The conversation will become more interesting and spicy. Amazing thing is you can get excessive stamina and spend numerous hours without a fraction of break even, when it comes to listening to your own glory and the fault of others.

#### **3. Your three Deadly Enemies**

\* Who sings your glory in front of you

\* Who talks ill of you to others in your absence

\* Who talks ill of others to you in their absence

#### **4. Why do you talk ill of others?**

Probably this is one thing which many of us enjoy a lot. Some have amazing stamina for this exercise, i.e., to talk ill of others, continuously for hours and hours.

Sometimes you should doubt your own doubts. Perhaps you have a doubt about whether someone else is good or bad, so look outside yourself and start analysing that other person. Instead, examine your own thoughts and ask yourself to doubt your own doubts. Then the whole problem will vanish; the other person is a good person. Just as you can look at others with negativity, you can also see another's positive qualities. At present you are in doubt and you see both their negative and positive qualities. Which kind of perception and mental attitude do you want to promote in yourself? You have three personalities; the Divine in you, which is a symbol of Love; the Human in you and the animal in you. Which do you want to promote?<sup>3</sup>

#### **5. But from where do these negative emotions arise?**

There are six main streams of emotions, the prime are Kama (desire), Krodha (anger), Lobha (greed), Moha (attachment), Mada (pride) and Ahanikara (ego, I-ness).

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#### **6. From where do these six streams come ?**

They must flow from someplace, since they are not the result of your Divine nature. The origin of these streams is in the four primitive fountains. If you learn this lesson well, it will help you in all area of life. The four primitive fountains are food, bodily pleasures, sleep and self-preservation. All human beings and all creatures have these urges. There is not a very big difference between human beings and animals in these urges. In fact, seat your dog in front of you and you will find that in some ways you are inferior. If the dog was trained not to eat a dog biscuit, it leaves the biscuit there, but we do not have such self-control, any time we wish to eat, we will.<sup>4</sup>

If you eat unhealthy or bad food, then how can you create good and positive emotions? If you eat “Junk food”, it creates indigestion and many ill effects for your body. Then how do you expect to have creative and positive emotions? If you are talking of creative emotions, then you will have to understand something; if you throw a piece of meat on the earth, it will not grow meat; it will be a source of germs and bacteria. It is dead and lacks life force. But if you throw down some grain or seeds, they will sprout and eventually grow other grains. So there is a difference in the quality of these foods, and you should think about that.

#### **7 How does it start?**

That is your attitude which is accountable for that. If you have that attitude or you enjoy listening to the gossip regarding another person, then you are already on the way to that path. Avoid listening to praise of yourself and ill of others. Once, a devotee was passing by a small group of people who were talking to each other. Some of them were speaking ill of Swami. The devotee felt deeply hurt, as he could not bear hearing anything spoken against his loving God. So he went to Swami and said, “Swami, some people are talking ill of You. I wanted to tell them off or . . .” Swami said, “How did you hear?” He replied, “Swami through my very ears” Swami then responded, “Well you also have legs and feet, you should have walked away” The moral of the story is that you should not give any room to listen to the ill of others. You should stop it at the very first place. Swami said, “If any one starts talking ill of others, go away from that place without lending your ears to such evil talk, the acts of speaking ill, listening to evil words, thinking evil and doing evil deeds will cause one’s downfall. Spiritual Sadhana consists in speaking good, thinking good, seeing good, hearing good and doing good.”<sup>5</sup>

#### **8 What are the positive and negative effects of talking ill of others ?**

There is no such positive effect of talking ill of others. Yes, you can always learn from others’ mistakes rather than talking ill of others.

Swami says, when you think about God, God you become, and Dust you think Dust you are. So, the same principle applies here too. Of course you will not be talking about somebody without thinking about the person. Thought must come first in your mind. Even the form of the person must appear in your thoughts. That’s why, as soon as you say, “I do not like that person” the person’s physical form is projected in your mind. In fact, the person’s physical form had already taken place in your mind then followed by your statement. You must understand this subtle principle here very carefully. Does not matter what you think, the thought once created in your mind will remain there for a very long time, even for many births. Swami said, “Thoughts are highly potent. They survive the death of a man.”<sup>6</sup>

This very thought becomes the seed for future *Karmas* or Actions. Depending upon the intensity of the thought or say thought-seed, it will sprout in time to come. As the seed so the

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fruit. As the thought so the Action. As the Action so the Fruit of the Action or Re-action. If the thought is positive the action will be positive. If the thought is negative, the action will be negative. If the action is positive the fruit will be positive. If action is negative then the fruit is negative. This negative fruit can cause further harm to your faith, to your attitude, to your self-confidence, which will affect the further thoughts and actions too. Hence your whole life could be jeopardised by just one initial negative thought. And the life spent on negative actions will further sprout negative rebirths. It is not only the person who is giving you negative thoughts but your own negative attitude as well. You could also see positive side of the person too. The choice is ours. How many births would we like to live like this? Time is right now. That's why Swami says, "Sanctify the present with Holy thoughts, words and deeds". Remember 'Thought' comes first. Control your thoughts right now.

### 9 Transfer of Gunas

All desires create thought forms whether good or bad. That is why we must pay careful attention when we emit negative thoughts for these have disastrous consequences as "Thoughts are the things with airy wings, they go faster than a dove and they bring you back what ever you had in your heart, hate or love." A person of strong will can send forth vigorous positive thoughts that would strike the mark like a bullet. An evil thought can come back to the person who projects it with increased force like a boomerang that returns back to the thrower. That is, why, we must avoid negative thoughts in order to keep our own body healthy.<sup>7</sup>

Plato said, "We do not cure the body with the body, we cure the body with the mind." You must have watered plants, Try this exercise. Get two similar plants of similar height and age. Place them a few meters apart in your house. Now water them daily but separately. Water the first one with absolutely positive thoughts and Love. Then move to the other one, water it with a few curses and negative thoughts. In a few days time you will notice that the first plant grows very fast and the another one starts dying. Why is this so? You were watering them with the same tap water of same quality almost at the same time. Both plants were kept in the same room under same conditions. Yet two opposite results were achieved. As per scientists, the plants can even sense your thoughts for them without you saying a single word physically. Your thoughts have done that. Exactly the same way, when you talk ill of others, your negative thoughts as well as your negative sound waves (both are waves) can do harm to the other person. Your thoughts impregnated with the image of the person and his negative qualities, will act as a seed for your future life. You will indeed become like that person, hence that person's qualities will enter into you, and Transfer of *Gunas* will taken place.

### 10 What should one do when somebody talks ill of others in front of you?

That's the most challenging thing in your life. You must stop enjoying listening to ill of others. Constant practise would be required. First thing you should do is to immediately move away from the very scene. Swami has said, "*If any one starts talking ill of others, go away from that place without lending your ears to such evil talk, the act of speaking evil, listening to evil words, thinking evil and doing evil deeds causes one's downfall. Spiritual Sadhana consists in speaking good, thinking seeing good, hearing good and doing good.*"<sup>8</sup>

### 11 Weapons against evil thoughts

There are seven great weapons against evil thoughts

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- 1) Love
- 2) Faith in God
- 3) Bhajans
- 4) Satsang
- 5) Company of Good People
- 6) Nishkam Karma
- 7) Meditation

They encourage only strong positive thoughts and helps send love to others, even to one's enemy. They will avoid depression and discouragement in one's mind which will boost the heart leading to healthy body organs and good health.<sup>9</sup>

#### 12 Not indulging but can I talk a little bit of ill of others?

Well, what is your intention? Here talking ill or finding faults should not be mistaken as being blind to the genuine faults or mistakes of others. It means simply that you must be totally conscious of your motive when you talk about the fault of others. It simply means that if you do talk about the fault of one to another, than it should only be because you genuinely want to help, to improve and elevate not to degrade and condemn.

#### 13 What principle to follow in life?

Swami has given the golden principal as *"Before pointing to the faults of others, examine yourselves and assure yourselves that you are free from faults. That alone gives you the right; but the wonder is that you discover faults in others only when you have faults in you. Once you rid yourselves of faults, all are pure and good. Whatever you touch becomes gold; that is the Divine Alchemy of Love, Divine Love, Universal Love and Love for Love own sake.*

*Today people are prepared to listen to vain gossip but when the sacred stories of the Lord are narrated, their ears get clogged. People are never tired of going to cinemas but their eyes find it very difficult to concentrate on the beautiful form of the Lord, even for a minute*<sup>10</sup>

*"Vinaashakaale Vipareetha Buddhi (the mind gets perverted in bad times). One should listen only to sacred words which are beneficial to one and all. The words you utter should not cause pain to others. They should be suffused with love. Today is the first day of the Veda Purusha Sapthaha Jnana Yajna. Purusha does not mean one who wears pant and shirt. God alone is Purusha. One with Purusha is Purusha. Understand that all worldly feelings are negative in nature. Divinity alone is positive. It is within you. It is not subjected to change.*<sup>11</sup>

*Do not talk ill of others. Do not talk about others but, **if** you must, talk only of the good in them. All are good; if you see bad in them, it is because there is bad in you. If you do not like some one, do not mix with him; keep away. But, do not try to blacken his name, and relate stories about him to others. Anger is harmful; it makes you do things blindly. You will have to repent much for whatever you do in anger; when your anger cools down, you see things clearer and then, it is too late to correct the wrong you have done!*<sup>12</sup>

#### 14 Speak Not Ill of others

You may sometimes speak the harshest things to a man's face, but do not indulge in the folly of attacking any one behind their back. If men would see their own faults as they see the faults of others, verily evil would come to an end in this world.<sup>13</sup>

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Swami emphasised, *“Along with control of vision, one needs to have control over one’s tongue. There are three lakhs (300,000) of taste buds in the tongue. As man has become a slave to the taste, he consumes various delicacies, and in the process spoils his tongue. Not merely that, he makes his tongue utter unsacred words but also, he hurts others’ feelings by using harsh words.. His life-span is further reduced by the misuse of his tongue in this manner Likewise; all the senses are losing their power as they are being put to misuse, thereby cutting short his life-span. So, first of all, man should keep his eyes and tongue under check. When these two are controlled, man’s energy is revitalised. The power that one cannot attain from years of penance is obtained when man puts his eyes and tongue to sacred use.*

*“O Tongue, the knower of taste! You are very sacred. Speak the truth in the most pleasing manner Chant the Divine Names of Govinda, Madhava and Damodara incessantly. This is your foremost duty.” (Sanskrit verse)*

*Do not cause pain to others by using harsh words. In fact, others are not others but your very own self; as the same principle of Atma is present in all. The one who causes pain and the one who suffers from it are one and the same. So never speak in such a way as to hurt others. That is why I tell you often talk less, but you are not taking My words seriously. You are unable to understand to what hazards excessive talk will land you in future.”<sup>14</sup>*

### 15 Avoid worthless Talk

He who indulges in purposeless talk causing disgust to his company earns universal contempt. This is intended to instill decorum of speech in company and points out the serious consequences of a seemingly venial fault. Indulging in indecent talk in mixed company does greater mischief than even wrongs done to friends. You may hope for charity from friends whom you wrong, but you will earn the contempt of society by lack of restraint in general conversation.<sup>15</sup>

Swami pointed out, *“You should not only avoid evil talk, but should also talk less. Your speech should be short and sweet. Sages like Valmiki, Vyasa and great devotees like Potana composes sacred texts and sanctified their lives. Emulate their ideals and make your life exemplary. Read sacred texts composed by such noble souls. Today, people read books which pollute the mind. It is a very bad practice. Be it reading, writing, seeing or talking, let everything be good. Do not commit any mistakes knowingly. You can experience Divinity in humanity by putting the senses to proper use. One can visualise the Divine manifestations and become Divine himself only through sacred use of the senses”<sup>16</sup>.*

### Source of Quotes Used in this Section

- 1 Compendium, p555
- 2 Youth Conference at Prashanthi, 15 May 1998
- 3 The Art of Joyful Living, Swami Rama, p 82
- 4 The Art of Joyful Living, Swami Rama, p 83
- 5 Sanathan Sarathi, May 1994, p 118
- 6 Summer Showers in Brindavan, 24 May 1990
- 7 Spirituality and Health, p 339
- 8 Compendium, p 554
- 9 Health and Spirituality, p 34110 Dasara Discourse, 20-10-2001, Prashanthi Nilayam
- 11 Dasara Discourse, 20-10-2001, Prashanthi Nilayam
- 12 Sathya Sal Speaks, vol 9, ch 9
- 13 Kural - The Great Book of Tiru-Valluvar

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14 Guru Purnima Discourse 5 July 2001

15 Kural - The Great Book of Tiru-Valluvar

16 Guru Purnima Discourse 5 July 2001