

GENERATION GAP

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTS & CHILDREN



Gnani Purush Dadashri has helped thousands of parents and their children in attaining harmony at home.

This book is an abridged version of satsnag with him all over the world.

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GENERATION GAP

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTS AND CHILDREN

(1) NURTURING VALUE SYSTEMS

Questioner: Here, living in America we have money but we are lacking in moral value systems. What should we do, when we have to live in such an atmosphere?

Dadashri: Parents should develop ethical value systems that result in a loving family environment. The love from the parents should be such so that their children would want to be with them. If you want to improve your child, you are responsible. You are duty bound to your child. (P.2)

Parents should instill the highest moral values in their children. Many parents in the US have complained to me about their children eating meat and indulging in other unacceptable activities. I asked them, "Do you do that too?" And they admitted that they did too. I told them that children would always imitate their parents and their moral values. Even if you were not, they may still do it unknown to you. Our duty should be to instill good value systems and we must not fail in this. (P.3)

We have to be careful and make sure that they do not eat non-vegetarian food. If we are eating non-vegetarian food, then after receiving this Gnan we should stop. (Gnan is the process by which Pujya Dadashri imparts the separation of the non-self from the Self). Children will follow our conduct. (P.4)

Questioner: When these children grow up, how are we to impart our religious value system to them?

Dadashri: When we ourselves become religious. Children will learn whatever they see in us. Therefore, we must become religious. They learn from watching us. If we smoke, they will. If we drink alcohol or eat meat, they will too. Whatever we do, they will imitate. They want to emulate and even go beyond the deeds of their parents. (P.5)

Questioner: If we place them in a good school, will they not receive good moral values?

Dadashri: Children will only receive good values from their parents. They may receive some from their teacher; their friends, peers and people around them, but the major part will come from parents. Only when parents are moral their children become moral. (P.7)

Questioner: If we send our children away to India for schooling, are we not forgoing our responsibilities?

Dadashri: No, you are not forgoing them. You can provide all the financial support needed. There are some excellent schools in India where even people of India send their children. These schools provide good quality lodging and boarding. (P.10)

Questioner: Dada, please bless us so that our family life goes smoothly and peacefully.

Dadashri: You have a peaceful family life, and children will also become good and moral by observing you. Childrens' misbehavior has come about because they watch their parents. The behavior and thinking of parents is improper. Husband and wife behave inappropriately in the presence of their children. Thus the children become spoilt. What kind of moral upbringing do these children receive? There should be some kind of boundary. Just observe the effect of fire on children. Even a small child respects the boundary of fire. The minds of the parents have become fractured and restless. Their speech has become careless and unkind, that is why the children are spoiled. The wife speech hurts the husband and the husband speech hurts the wife. What is the role of good parents? They should mold their child in such a way that by the age of fifteen, all the good moral values are instilled in them.

Questioner: Nowadays the moral standard is declining. That is where the problem lies.

Dadashri: No, not declining, it is practically gone. Now that you have met The Gnani Purush, fundamental morality and decency of good human behavior will return in your life. Every young adult has the potential power to help the entire world. He just needs the right guidance and support. Without such guidance these youths have turned into selfish beings with a very self-centered view of life. For their own worldly comfort and happiness they will prey on others. He who renounces his own happiness can make others happy.

A wealthy businessman is running around all day, thinking about how to make more money. So I have to tell him "You are running after money. Your family is in ruin. Your sons and daughters are roaming around and your wife heads in another direction. You have not gained anything." He asks me what he should do. I told him not to make the pursuit of money his only goal. Look after your health or else you will have heart failure. You need to pay attention to all these aspects, health, wealth and your children's upbringing. At present, you are only focused on one aspect. For example, what would happen if you kept dusting and cleaning only one corner of the house, leaving the rest of it dirty? How would it appear? The entire house has to be cleaned. How can you live your life this way? You must conduct yourself in a proper manner and enrich them with good moral values. Make sacrifices if you must but give them good moral values. (P.17)

Questioner: We make every effort to improve them, but even then if they do not improve, do we as parents leave it to fate or destiny?

Dadashri : You are making these efforts in your own way. Do you have a certificate that shows that your efforts are correct? Show it to me.

Questioner: We make efforts based on our understanding and intellect.

Dadashri: I will give you an example of what your intellect is like. What sort of justice prevails where a person himself is the judge, the lawyer and the defendant? Your intellect will always take your own side , even if you are wrong.

Do not leave them to fate ever. Take care of them. If you leave them, they will be hurt in their future growth. Children bring with them their personalities from birth but you have to help and nurture them so that they flourish.

Questioner: Yes we do all that but in the end, should we just leave them to their fate?

Dadashri: No, you cannot leave them like that. Bring them to me and I will bless and help them. You cannot let go of them. It is too dangerous. (P.19)

A father was delighted when his child was tugging at his moustache. "Look! How cute! He is pulling my moustache!" he laughs. For goodness' sake if you let him keep doing that, what is going to happen? You don't need to do anything more than pinch him a little so that he understands that what he is doing is not proper, and he begins to know that this conduct of his is wrong. Don't punish him; just a little pinch is enough. (P.20)

A father catches his child taking money out of his coat pocket by standing on his toes to reach it. The father is amazed at this and in his excitement he calls his wife to come and see the child's clever little act. The child feels very smart and begins to think he has learnt something great. In essence, he has become a thief. So what happens next? It becomes instilled in the child's knowledge that to sneak money out of someone's pocket is an acceptable act. Why do you not say anything? Should he do this? (P.21)

You fool, are you not ashamed of yourself being the father that you are? Do you understand the kind of encouragement you have given him? Your child is under the impression that he has done something remarkable. How does it feel to convey such a message to a child? Don't you feel like a failure? You should know what words to use in order to encourage a child to do something positive and what words to use to discourage a child from doing a negative act. You are all uncertified fathers and uncertified mothers. The father is a radish and the mother is a carrot. So how can the child be an apple? (P.22)

Parents, of present times do not know any of these things. They go on encouraging wrong behavior most of the time, without providing a good role model. They go around carrying their children. The wife will order her husband to pick up their toddler so he cannot refuse. If he is bold enough to refuse, she will come back with, "Are you telling me 'junior' is just my kid? We both have to look after him" She keeps nagging so the poor guy has no choice, where can he turn? They are forever carrying 'junior' all over town, the cinema, the mall etc. This excessive attention suffocates the growing child. How can the child grow up normally? (P.23)

Once a bank manager told me, "Dadaji, I have never said a single word to my wife or to my children, no matter what they say or do wrong, I do not say anything." He

looked so self-assured, thinking that perhaps I was going to praise him for his nobility. But instead I was very irritated with him and said, "Who on earth made you the manager of a bank, you don't even know how to take care of your wife and children. You are the ultimate fool on this planet. You are useless." He was shocked. He thought that Dada would praise him if he said such a thing. Should he deserve a medal for this? When the child does something wrong, we have to scold him dramatically. Otherwise he would think that whatever he does is correct because the father has condoned it. By not saying anything you have ruined them all. You can scold them, but do everything in a dramatic (to play the role exactly, without attachment or abhorrence) manner.

You should talk to your children every night. Converse with them and explain things to them in an amicable manner. You need to pay attention to all aspects of their development. They already have a good personality but they need to be encouraged. You have to keep them on their toes. (P.24)

Teach your little ones that each morning, after their bath they should pray to God and briefly ask in prayer to grant this world peace and salvation. If you can do this, it would mean that you have succeeded in instilling good value systems in them. Pray with them, so they will learn from you. This is your duty as a parent. You should also have them sing "Dada Bhagwan Na Aseem Jai Jai kar Ho." (Praise to the Lord within) every day. Many children have benefited from this and their concentration in studies has improved. From a very young age they learn the great fact that their Lord is within them. So many children have changed for the better that they no longer feel the need to seek other diversion like going out to the movies. At first they kick up a fuss, but after a couple of days, after getting a taste of this they respond positively and moreover they remember how good it feels. (P.24)

(2) IT IS MANDATORY SO WHY COMPLAIN?

Marjiyat (to do something according to your own independent will) deserves to be awarded. A person sought reward for his farajiyat (obligatory duties). The whole world seeks to be rewarded for deeds: "I did so much for my kids but they don't care about me!" O fool! Why are you looking for praise? Whatever you have done has been farjiyat (duty-bound).

One such gentleman was upset with his son because he had incurred a large debt from paying for his education. He kept reminding his son, "If I hadn't done this for you, you would be no where!" So I rebuked him, "Why do you keep harping about it?" You cannot talk like that when it is all farajiyat. Your son is wise, but you are lacking in common sense and understanding. (P.30)

You should do your very best for your children. When they tell you that you have done more than enough for them, you should quit. If you do not, what would happen? When the children show a red flag, should you not understand what it signifies?

A day will come when your son may want to start a business. You should help him to do that. It would be unwise to get yourself deeply involved in his affairs. He may even get a job somewhere and not need your help. In that case whatever money you had planned to give him, you should lay aside. Should he run into any difficulty, you may send a couple of thousand to bail him out. But, if you keep interfering with his life, it may aggravate him and force him to say, "I am telling you to stay out of this dad." The father in turn says, "My son is only saying it because he does not know any better. He has a long way to go." I tell the father, "Consider yourself blessed that you have become free from this responsibility."

Questioner: What is the right thing to do? Should we still take care of our children or should we come to satsang for our own spiritual growth?

Dadashri: The children are already being taken care of, so what more can you do? Your goal now, should be oriented towards your own salvation. These children are already cared for. Are you the one raising them? Have you seen how the rose bushes which you had planted, have blossomed in your garden? They grow on their own. You think the roses are all yours, but the rose is its own entity. It belongs to no one. People act according to their own selfish motives and insecurities. Right now you are taking credit for everything you do and that is your ego.

Questioner: If we do not water the rose bush it will wither away.

Dadashri: You cannot avoid watering (taking care of) it. If you don't take care, the child will claim your attention by acting out. (P.39)

How is it possible to keep a balance between your duties towards worldly life and your spiritual progress? Even if your son speaks to you rudely, you should still fulfill your duties. What should your obligation as a parent be? It should be to nurture and bring up your child well, directing him on the right path. When he is disrespectful towards you and you yourself behave in a similar manner towards him, he will be spoilt. So you must sit and talk to him in a loving manner. There should be a spiritual understanding behind all your acts. If you do not allow spirituality to enter, a vacuum is created and something negative will enter. The vacuum will not remain for long. If a house is left vacant in these times, will squatters not trespass and occupy it? (P.39)

What is the true duty of a wife at home? All the people in the neighborhood should be impressed by the way she fulfils her duties. The true religion of a wife is to raise her children with good moral values. And if her husband is lacking in these values, she should help him with it too. To make things better for one's family is called religion. Should you not do that? (P.41)

Some parents get so involved in bhakti (ritualistic devotion) that it irritates them when their children disturb them while they are engrossed in it. They become irritated with their children in whom the 'Real' God resides while they continue worshipping God's

idol. How can you ever become angry at your children? There is a living God present within them. (P.41)

(3) DO NOT FIGHT IN THE PRESENCE OF CHILDREN

If you are a vegetarian, do not drink alcohol, and treat your wife with respect, your children will notice what a good father they have. You may hear your child say, "My friend's parents are always fighting, but my parents never do." Just through simple observation they learn this. (P.47)

Everyday the husband fights with his wife in front of their children. While they observe this, they begin to think, "My dad is the problem." Your son may be small, but he has a keen sense of justice. Girls on the other hand, will tend to side with their mother because their sense of justice is not as good. Boys however, will place judgment on their father on account of their ability to judge better. As the son grows older, by listening to others, his conviction grows, and he resolves to get back at his father when he grows up. His later act towards his father is to avenge the abuse of his mother. (P.48)

Do not fight in front of them. Have some standard of conduct. If the wife makes a mistake, the husband should tell her it is all right and vice-versa. When the children witness this they will be all right. If you want to fight, you should put it aside for a while, at least until the kids are away at school. Perhaps then you can resume your fight for an hour or so. Once children witness the parents fighting, they begin to develop a negative attitude towards one or the other parent. The child loses his positive attitude and starts instead, to develop a negative one. So it is indeed the parents who are responsible for ruining their children these days.

If you have to fight, you should do so in your own privacy, but not in their presence. In your privacy, behind close doors, you can even have a fistfight if you want.(P.49)

The father sits down to eat a sumptuous meal prepared by his wife. He finds the soup too salty and makes a big fuss over it. -Why don't you just settle down and eat your food? - He thinks that just because he happens to be the head of household no one can stop him if he kicks up a terrible fuss. The children are terrified with his outburst, thinking, "Papa has gone mad!" They cannot utter a single word so they remain suppressed, but in their minds they form an opinion about how crazy their father is. (P.51)

All the children are fed up of witnessing what goes on between their parents. When I ask them why they have decided not to get married they tell me about how their parents fight everyday like cats and dogs. In observing this, they have come to the conclusion that happiness does not exist in marriage, so why bother getting married at all? (P.53)

(4) UNCERTIFIED FATHERS AND MOTHERS

A father complains to me that all his children have become defiant. So I tell him that his worthlessness is showing through. "If you were worth something, why would they go against you? You are spoiling your own reputation."(P.57)

If you keep nagging your children, they will become spoilt. If you want them to be good, entrust them to me. I will talk with them; mold them so that they will become good.

The disobedience of children reflects on the parents. Parents are unqualified. So I have labeled them, "Unqualified fathers and unqualified mothers". It is no wonder the children turn out the way they do. That is why I say that first become certified as a parent and then get married. (P.59)

The father does not know the first thing about how to live life. Nor does he have a clue about how the world runs, so he keeps beating his child. Some fathers keep thrashing them as though they were dirty clothes. Help them to improve, but to beat them is dead wrong. I have seen people physically abuse their children as though they were whipping up dough for bread. (P.62)

Real parents are ones who, even if their child engages in dreadful deeds, manage to change his behavior with love and understanding. But this love is missing and so they are loveless parents. This world can only be won over with love. (P.63)

Questioner: Should we not be concerned at all about our children's upbringing and value system?

Dadashri: There is nothing wrong with showing concern.

Questioner: They can get their education from school, but what about molding their character?

Dadashri: Entrust the development of character to the goldsmith, the Gnani, the One who is adept in the art of shaping character. Until he reaches the age of fifteen years, you can mold him the way you want to. After that leave the task for his wife. She will do the job. Even though people are not skilled in the art of molding their children, they still try doing that, do they not? That is why they are failing miserably and the results are far from agreeable. The sculpture is not working out right. Instead of making the nose only two inches long they end up sculpting it four inches too long. When he gets a wife she will end up cutting off the extra two inches. They will both try to chop off one another's noses. (P.64)

Questioner: What is the definition of a certified mother or father?

Dadashri: Uncertified parents are those, whose children do not obey them or have love for them. Can we not label them uncertified?

It is a sure sign that the parents have not fulfilled their duty to their children when their children become disobedient. Such is the soil, such is the seed and such, therefore is the yield. The parents are uncertified. They boast, "My kid will grow up with very good moral values". How on earth can that happen? If the father of the child is incompetent, we can overlook that. We cannot do so in the case of the mother (P.70)

Does this appeal to you?

Questioner: It is appealing and that is why it is effective.

Dadashri: Some people claim that their children simply do not pay attention to what they say. I tell them that the reason that they do not listen is because their speech does not appeal to them. If they liked it, it would definitely be effective. You people do not know how to be fathers. Look at the state you are in.

You should speak in such a way as to make the children interested in what you have to say. Then only the children will listen to you. You find what I say appealing. Therefore you will act on it.

Questioner: Your words have such a strong impact on our life. What could not be solved by our intellect is solved by your words.

Dadashri: Words that touch the heart. Such words convey motherly love. Words that touch the heart are motherly. A certified father is one who can touch his children's hearts with his words.

Questioner: These children will not easily listen and accept our words.

Dadashri: Would they listen to any harsh and forceful language of authority? Such a tone in words does not help.

Questioner: They do listen but only after we do a lot of explaining.

Dadashri: That is all right. It is quite normal. The reason why you have to explain to them a lot is because you yourself do not understand. A person with understanding has only to explain once. After you explain to them so much, do they understand?

Questioner: Yes.

Dadashri: That is the best way. You want to make him understand in anyway you can. Whereas, whenever you use force or authority in making him understand, you are acting as if you are the only father in this world. You think that you are the only father in the world. Those who treat their children with understanding, I call them certified parents. (P.73)

What sort of conduct is required from a father? What is expected of a certified father? A father is never bullies a child, nor is very strict with him.

Questioner: What if the children keep tormenting him? Even then should he be lenient with them?

Dadashri: Children become troublesome because of the father. They would only bother him if he were uncertified. The law of the world is that unless a father is unfit, the children would not bother him. (P.74)

Questioner: What if the son does not listen to his father?

Dadashri: He should realize that the fault lies within him only, and leave it at that. It is his deficiency that they do not listen. If you know how to be a good father, your child will heed you. But you really have no idea about how to be one.

Questioner: Once one becomes a dad, will the little ones ever leave him alone?

Dadashri: How can that be? It's impossible! Just look at how those puppies scrutinize their parents for the rest of their lives. They keep watching the male dog roam around barking while it is the female that goes around biting. A dog never ceases to bark.

The father is always the one who is blamed. The children will always tend to side with their mother. So I warned one man that unless he behaved himself and treated his wife well, his children when they are grown up would take him to task. Children observe their father when they are young. Until they become old enough, they are helpless. Once they grow up they are likely to get back at him. This has been the experience of many parents. From childhood they decide that as soon as they grow up, they will repay their dad no matter what it entails. (P.74)

Questioner: Does that mean the fault is entirely the father's?

Dadashri: Yes, the father's alone. When a father is not worthy of fatherhood, his own wife opposes him. He will learn his lesson the hard way. For how long are you going to let society threaten you? For how long is she going to be suppressed by the society?

Questioner: Is it always the father who is wrong?

Dadashri: The father is always in the wrong. Because he does not know how to be a father, everything is wrecked. To be a father requires so much purity from him that even his own wife will respect him and revere him. Only when he attains this stage can he become a certified father.

Questioner: If a father does not assert his fatherly authority, is that a mistake on his part?

Dadashri: Only then are things solved.

Questioner: What guarantee is there that the children will obey their father?

Dadashri: Of course there is. Your good character will have its effect and impact on the children and the world.

Questioner: What can a father do if his children are of the worst possible kind?

Dadashri: There again, the root of the problem is the father. Why does he suffer? He suffers because of the bad conduct he displayed in his previous lives. If in past lives he had not lost control and abused his children, he would not be suffering this way now. How did you bind your previous karma? It was because you did not have any control over them. So here, I am emphasizing control. In order to practice control you must understand all its laws.

Your child is your mirror. It reflects your faults. (P.75)

If we possess a moral and ethical character, then even tigers would not harm us. So imagine what an impact it would have on our children. Our morality is displaced and so we suffer. Do you understand the value of morality?

Questioner: Would you please explain in detail what morality is, so that everyone can understand?

Dadashri: Morality is the bhaav (deep inner intent) never to hurt anybody even to the slightest extent. Not even the bhaav to hurt your enemy. Shilvaan is one who is sincere, moral and does not harbor any intention to hurt any living being to the slightest extent. Even a ferocious tiger will be pacified in his presence.

Questioner: Where are today's parents to get these qualities from?

Dadashri: They should still possess some. At least they should strive to have twenty-five percent of these qualities. Owing to effects of our present era people have become indulgent in worldly pleasures. (P.76)

Questioner: What sort of character should a father possess?

Dadashri: When children can say, “Dad, we prefer to be with you more than anywhere outside.” This is how a father’s character should be.

Questioner: Nowadays it is quite the opposite. When the father is at home his child is out and vice-versa.

Dadashri: Children would not like their father to be away. That is how it should be.

Questioner: So, what should a father do to become like that?

Dadashri: Once people meet me, whether they are children, old people or even teenagers, they do not want to stay away from me.

Questioner: We all want to be just like you.

Dadashri: You can, if you just observe me and act the way I do. If I ask for a Pepsi and if they say there is none, I settle for water instead. But in your case you would yell, "Well why didn't you buy some?" See how you go about upsetting the situation. Even at lunchtime if there is nothing prepared for me to eat, I will say, "That's all right. I'll just have some water!" When you say, "Where's my lunch! Why haven't you made it? You become demanding instead. (P.76)

(5) CHILDREN IMPROVE WITH UNDERSTANDING

Instead of nagging all the time, it is better to maintain your silence. Your attempts to improve your children by this persistent nagging, only makes them worse. It would be better not to say anything at all. If they become spoilt, the responsibility is yours. Do you understand this? (P.84)

If we tell them not to do something, they will do it even more. They will be worse than before. We will end up losing them altogether. These parents have no clue about how to live their lives. They don't know the first thing about fatherhood and yet they become fathers. I have to explain to them using every possible means available, even through books. Those who have received this Gnan are able to raise their children well. Sit with him, and with affection ask him, "Son, do you not see these acts as a mistake?" (P.87)

The general mentality is such that when one parent rebukes the child, the other parent will take the child's side. So if there were any hope of improving the child, it would be immediately crushed. This would lead the child to develop fondness for his mother and antagonism towards his father. When the child grows up, he will retaliate against his father. (P.88)

To guide your older children, you must follow my agnas (principles/instructions). Unless the children ask for your advice, do not say anything to them. You should tell them that it would be better if they did not ask you. If you start thinking negatively about them, you must immediately do pratikraman (apology coupled with remorse for any wrongdoing)

In this age, the power to improve others is lost; so don't expect to improve anyone. Give up any hope of improving others. Unless there is unity within the mind, the speech, and the body your efforts will be futile. This means that whatever is in your mind, you should say and you should act accordingly. Only then the other person will change. In this era is far from the case. Bring normality into your interaction with every member of your household

People do deep harm to themselves and others in their efforts to improve others. First you must improve yourself, only then can you improve others. (P.93)

We should constantly persevere within us, the bhaav (intention) for the betterment of our child's intellect. We will notice the effects after some time. They will gradually understand. You just have to keep praying for them. If you keep pulling and nagging at them, they will go against you. One must make a compromise and allow things to run the way they are. (P.96)

If you come complaining to me that your child drinks alcohol, I will tell you to put up with it because the fault is your own and not to let your bhaav deteriorate. The law of nature and the law of the world are two different things. People will always tell you that the child is at fault and you will also believe the same. Nature's law says, "The fault is yours!"

If you make friends with your children they will improve. But if you assert your parenthood you are taking a great risk. Your friendship should be such that the child will not go looking for comfort and guidance elsewhere. You should do everything a friend would do, with your child; play games, sports, drink tea together etc. Only then will they stay yours, otherwise you will end up losing them. Have children ever died for their parents? These children are not really yours. You think this because of your illusionary belief. From the very beginning you should decide that you want to be friends with them. Only then you will be able to live with them like that. If your friend is doing something wrong, how much will you tell him? Just enough to help him, but do not nag him. You do not want to hurt your friend's feelings. To be a friend you must first accept that in vyavahar (relative world) you are the father. From within, however, you should think of your roles as being reversed, where you become the son and your son becomes the father. Any other way, it would not be possible to be a friend. When can a father be a friend? When he comes down to the level of his child, he will be accepted as a friend. Then his work is done.

Questioner: You have said that after our children turn sixteen we should become their friends. Why not become friends much earlier?

Dadashri: That would be very good but you cannot be friends until the age of ten or eleven. Until then, they may make mistakes, so we may need to give them guidance and even a smack if needed. Those who tried to exercise their authority as a father have failed miserably. (P.100)

Everyone should make an effort to improve their children and these efforts should bring results. You have become a father, but are you ready to let go of your authority as a father? Can you give up the responsibility fatherhood has placed upon you to improve your children? Can you forget that you are a father? Can you forget “ I am his father, and I have to improve him?”

Questioner: If there is a scope of improvement, all attempts to improve him must be made without a sense of doer ship or abhorrence.

Dadashri: You have to let go of this sense and feeling that you are his father.

Questioner: Am I to believe that he is not my son and I am not his father?

Dadashri: If you can believe that, that would be the best rule. (P.101)

Some people greet me casually, while others heartily express their fondness and call me Dada. I devised a way to reciprocate their feelings by balancing it out. When they would address me as Dada, I would simultaneously in my mind think of them as Dada, thus I would balance it out. Once I began to do this, I felt better. I felt lighter and people were more attracted towards me.

If I think of them as Dada, my words reach them and they feel delighted at the love and concern they are receiving from me. This is indeed a very subtle and important matter, which is worth the understanding. You are fortunate to get this. If you can manage to do the same, it will be to your benefit (P.103)

Questioner: The father thinks, “Why can't my children adjust to me?”

Dadashri: This is because he continues to assert his fatherhood. This is a wrong. Fatherhood is a wrong belief. Husband-hood is a wrong belief.

Questioner: Moreover, the father will stress his fatherhood by saying, "I'm your father, obey me."

Dadashri: I overheard someone yelling at his child, "Don't you know, I'm your father?" What sort of madman are you to say such a thing? Do you need to say that? The whole world knows it, so why do you have to repeat that?

Questioner: I have also heard children tell their parents,“ Who asked you to give us birth?”

Dadashri: How can they hold their heads up when their children talk like that? (P.107)

(6) WIN THEM OVER WITH LOVE

Questioner: Should we not alert them when they make mistakes?

Dadashri: You should simply ask them if they are satisfied and understand what they are doing. If he says that he does not feel right about it, we should ask him, "Then why must you do this?" They are all able to judge with their understanding. If they do something wrong, they will understand instinctively. When you start criticizing them, they will become stubborn and rebel. I am giving you this key. (P.110)

The ego of the other person must not be awakened by your words. When you speak to your children, do not use an authoritative tone. When I speak to others, their ego does not arise because I do not use a commanding attitude. (P.111)

Questioner: In our daily life we must fulfill certain obligations and duties. While we are doing so, we have to use hurtful language. Is that a paap(negative karma)?

Dadashri: When you use bitter words what does your face look like? When your speech comes out such a way as to make your face appear ugly, know that you have sinned. You must never use bitter or ugly words. Instead, you should speak gently and calmly. Speak sparingly, with love and affection and one day you will win the battle. It can never be won through bitterness. Bitterness on your part will incite retaliation from him and he will harbor animosity towards you. He feels helpless right now, but his intention towards you will turn into hatred as he grows up. So don't nag at them. Love will work wonders for you although you may not see results immediately. Just keep showering them with love and affection. Later you will be rewarded with the fruits of love.

Questioner: If we constantly try to explain to them and they still don't understand, what are we to do?

Dadashri: There is no need to explain at all. Love them and make them understand gently. Do we ever speak harshly with our neighbors? (P.112)

What do we do to remove a burning log? Do we not grip it with a pair of tongs? What would happen if we tried to hold the log with our bare hands?

Questioner: We would get burned.

Dadashri: So a tong is necessary.

Questioner: What kind of tong should we use?

Dadashri: One person in a house is like a tong. He manages to avoid getting burnt. He will be capable of supporting the one who is burning. We should ask such a person to be present when we talk to our child, so that he can reinforce whatever we say. He will help you settle the problem. We must find some way to solve the problem at hand or else we will burn ourselves. (P.114)

If what we say does not make a difference, we should give it up. We are foolish. We do not know how to speak so we better stop. Our speech is ineffective anyway but even our mind becomes spoiled. Who would want that to happen?

Questioner: At times when parents display affection toward children, they tend to overdo it.

Dadashri: All that is emotional stuff. Even people who demonstrate very little can also be called emotional. It needs to be normal. Normal means dramatic. With your co-star wife in a drama, you must act out a realistic role. So realistic in fact that people will not see a single error. But when the drama is over and you come off stage, if you ask your co-star wife to go home with you, she will not do so. She will tell you that this was only a drama. Do you understand? (P.118)

There is only one way to make this world better, and that is through love. What the world calls love is merely attachment. Where is the love when your child breaks your china plate? You become irritated, so therefore, it is not true love. Children are looking for true love. They do not receive it, so only they understand their strife. They cannot bear it or even express it.

I have a way out for the young people of today. I know how to guide them. I have love that remains constant. My love neither increases nor decreases. Love that fluctuates is not true love. It is attachment. One that is constant is God's love. It wins everyone. I for myself do not wish to subdue anyone, but they surrender to my love. People have not yet seen true love. It is revealed in the heart of a Gnani Purush. This love is absolute and unconditional. The Gnani's love is God's love. (P.119)

I get along very well with children. They make friends with me. As soon as I enter their house, even the little toddler would come and welcome me and take me inside. You pamper them whereas I treat them with love. I do not pamper them.

Questioner: Dada, can you explain, with examples, the difference between pampering and giving true love to your children?

Dadashri: One dad after being away from his toddler for two years clasped him in a tight bear hug. The toddler felt suffocated from his hug; so in order to be released he bit his dad. Is this the way to show love? You do not even know how to be a dad.

Questioner: So what does a loving father do?

Dadashri: He would be gentle. Maybe he would stroke him on the cheek softly or caress the child's head gently. That would make his child happy. (P.121)

Do not ever hit your child. Gently run your hand over his head and explain to him calmly. When you give him love he will become good. (P.123)

(7) WRONG HABITS ARE OVERCOME THUS

Dadashri: Do you pollute your body with alcohol?

Questioner: Yes, sometimes when there is stress at home. I'm being quite honest and open.

Dadashri: Stop drinking immediately. You have become a slave to it. It is not for us. Do not touch the stuff. This is my agna so don't touch it. Only then your life will run smoothly and you will no longer need alcohol. If you read the Charan Vidhi (booklet given after Gnan Vidhi), you will not need to drink. The Charan Vidhi will fill you with bliss. (P.126)

Questioner: How can I be free from an addiction?

Dadashri: You must be convinced that the addiction is wrong. This will free you from the addiction. The conviction should not falter at all. Your resolve should never change. Only then you will overcome it. If you give it some slack and say there is no harm in what you are doing, you will remain addicted. (P.127)

Questioner: It has been said that if a person drinks or does drugs for a long time it will affect his brain, so even if he stops, the effects will still continue. How does one become free of the chronic effects? Is there any way out of this?

Dadashri: These remaining effects are reactions of addiction. All the parmanoos (subtle subatoms within the body) need to be cleansed. He has finally stopped drinking. What is he to do now? He needs to keep repeating to himself that it is wrong to drink. He should never say that alcohol drinking is good. He must be thoroughly convinced that drinking alcohol brings ruin and is wrong. This way he will be free from the addiction to alcohol. If he ever supports the drinking of alcohol by thinking or saying, 'there is no harm in it,' he will suffer a relapse.

Questioner: What damage does alcohol cause to the brain?

Dadashri: He loses awareness. At that moment avaran (veil) comes over his jagruti (awareness). This avaran accumulates. He will think it has gone but it does not go anywhere. His avaran will get thicker as the layers accumulate and he will become blunt and ineffective as a person. He will not be able to think positively or think right. Those who have overcome the habit have developed in the positive direction.

Questioner: Once the alcohol has created this veil over awareness, how can it be removed?

Dadashri: There is no solution for that. Only time will mend. As time passes in the alcohol free state, in abstinence, he will notice the difference. It will not be discerned immediately.

Pleasure is experienced while eating meat and consuming alcohol. This pleasure gained has to be repaid. This repayment occurs by birth in tiryanch gati (non-human state, like birds, animals, insects, plants etc.) We must understand this obligation. This world is not false. The world does not accommodate false adjustments. The justice of Nature is exact. It comes with a price of repayment. We should understand that every external pleasure taken from this world has to be 'repaid'. This is our responsibility. This law of repayment of borrowed happiness is applicable to all. Borrow however much you want now, but just remember you will have to pay it back. Only this inner bliss does not need to be repaid.

Questioner: In our next life we will have to repay by becoming animals, but what happens in this life? What is the result of eating meat and drinking alcohol in this life?

Dadashri: In this life his avaran (covering over awareness) increases. This makes him callous and beastly. People around him will not respect him because he will have lost his prestige. (P.127)

There is no difference between eating an egg and eating a baby. Does eating someone's baby appeal to you? (P.129)

Questioner: Dada has changed the eating habits of so many children in the USA. Some people believe that eggs are part of a vegetarian diet.

Dadashri: No. It is a false belief. They call these eggs nirjiva (not containing any life). How can you eat things that do not contain any life?

Questioner: This sheds a different perspective on diet.

Dadashri: This is the exact perspective. Scientists discovered that you could never eat nirjiva (non-living) things. If they have jiva (living things), then it could be eaten. The jiva contained in those things has a potential for life. People have misconstrued this. You must not not eat eggs. If you feed eggs to these children, what happens? Elements of restlessness and passion are introduced within their body, which then lead to loss of control. Our vegetarian food is good for you even when eaten raw. Doctors are not to be blamed either because they act according to their science and understanding. We have to look after our spiritual development. We belong to a highly moral and principled culture. (P.130)

Dadashri: Yes, parents complain about their children who are eating non-vegetarian food and wonder what should be done? I tell them, " Do you eat meat?" The

father answers "Sometimes." He also admits to drinking alcohol. The kids assume that it must be beneficial, because their dad does it.

I asked the children if they have any difficulty in chopping, apples, potatoes, papayas, cucumbers, etc. They said that they would not have any difficulty. So I asked them, "Do you become emotional about it?" They replied no, that it would not affect them emotionally to cut up fruit or vegetables. Then I ask them if they can cut a goat or a hen. They categorically replied that they would not be able to do that.

Therefore, you can only eat those things, which while cutting, your heart can readily accept. Do not eat those things that your heart cannot accept. Otherwise the results of such an act will be negative and those vibrations will affect your heart. The children understood this very well and stopped eating meat. (P.131)

Someone once asked George Bernard Shaw (Playwright) why he did not eat meat. He replied, "My body is not a graveyard! It is not a cemetery for chickens. I want to be a civilized man." (P.132)

Questioner: When people keep feeding magas (home made candy with butter) to their kids, is it okay for them to do so?

Dadashri: No, people should not. They cannot give magas and such heavily fat-laden sweets to children. Their diet should be simple. Even their intake of milk should be limited. People keep stuffing their child with dairy products. These foods promote passions. Even at the age of twelve, they experience sexual thoughts. You should give your child the kind of diet that will decrease such hyperactivity. Children have no idea about all this. (P.132)

Questioner: We really do not want to say anything but if we suspect our child is stealing, should we allow it?

Dadashri: On the outside you should demonstrate opposition and disapproval towards his action but internally you should have sambhav (equanimity/remain undisturbed). When he steals, we should not be merciless towards him. If you lose sambhav, you will become ruthless. The entire world becomes merciless. (P.135)

The parent should tell his son to do pratikraman. The son must be taught to repent and apologize for his action. Also he must inform the parent of the number of these pratikramans performed. Only then he will improve. Make your son take a pledge to you that he will not steal again by getting him to say, "I will not do this again and ask to be forgiven". If we keep explaining this to him every so often, this understanding will work in him. In his next life he will not steal. This is because he will accept the fact that it is wrong to steal. The effect of the acts of stealing will complete its role and a new 'account' will not be established. (P.136)

This young boy confesses all his mistakes to me. He even admits to stealing. People will only do alochana (confession) to someone who is outstanding, distinguished and noble. With this process, India will be in a position of lofty spirituality, for all other nations to admire.

(8) A NEW GENERATION WITH HEALTHY MINDS

Dadashri: Every Sunday there is a satsang held very near to you so why do you not attend?

Questioner: We have to watch TV every Sunday.

Dadashri: What relationship do you have with your TV? Now you have aged and need eyeglasses, and still you watch TV? In our nation, there is no need to watch TV or go to theatres and cinemas because it all happens out in the streets.

Questioner: When we get to that stage, we will stop watching TV.

Dadashri: Lord Krishna has said in the Gita that humans waste time unnecessarily. To work to earn money, is not really a waste of time. Until you attain true Vision (knowledge; Gnan) you cannot avoid wastage of time.

When do people smear reeking mud over their bodies? When they feel burning pain. In the same way all this TV, cinema etc. is "filthy, smelly, mud". Nothing useful or helpful will come out of it. I do not have any objection to your watching TV. You are free to watch anything, but if two programs satsang and a favorite show were on simultaneously, which would you prefer? If you have an exam at noon and you also have a luncheon to attend, what would you do? That is the kind of understanding you should have.

Questioner: When these kids watch TV late at night, they deprive themselves of sleep.

Dadashri: You are the one who bought it for them so why would they not watch it? You yourself have allowed them to become spoilt. You added a problem where there was none. (P.142)

This young boy ogles at his reflection in the mirror and goes on admiring himself in his new pants. What are you looking at? Who are you trying to imitate, a spiritual person or a materialist? You don't even have the right qualities. So why do you even bother? No one cares or even has the time to look at you. They are all preoccupied with their own work and worries. (P.144)

If you ask each generation if their elders constantly nagged them, they would say yes. The cycle repeats itself. Children are not ready to accept our orthodox thinking. That is why we have problems. I ask parents to become modern in their thoughts. How is it possible? It is not easy to become modern and leave your old ways. (149)

Nowadays the generation is broad-minded; unlike the narrow-minded, superstitious and petty generation that preceded it. In previous ages, Brahmins did not mingle with people of an inferior caste. They treated other castes with contempt. In comparison this generation is open and receptive. Very healthy!

Keep positive bhaavs (intentions) for your children. This will bring good results. They will turn for the better, and this will happen naturally. Today's generation is the best that has ever been.

Why am I saying this? What special qualities do they possess? They are not bigoted like the superior castes of olden days. Their only weakness is their fascination for the material world, whereas children of previous generations had so much prejudice against other children of lower castes.

Questioner: Nothing like that exists nowadays.

Dadashri: They come with clean 'accounts'. They have no greed and care little about pride. Until now people have been full of pride, greed and anger, but these poor beings are just obsessed with material things.

Questioner: You say that this generation of youth is healthy minded but on the other hand they have some form of substance addiction and other associated problem.

Dadashri: They may seem addicted, but only because they do not find a right path for themselves. It is no fault of theirs. They do have healthy minds.

Questioner: What do you mean by a healthy mind?

Dadashri: Healthy minds are those who care very little for possession. When we were young we would immediately pounce on things we thought we could keep. If we went out for dinner at someone's house, we would eat more than we would at our own home. From young to old, everyone was possessive in nature. (156)

Should double beds exist in our culture? What sort of people are you? In the past, Indian couples never occupied the same bedroom. They always lived in separate rooms. Just look at the parent of today. They furnish a room with a double bed. Children come to perceive this as being a natural thing. (P.158)

(9) PARENTAL COMPLAINTS

One person complained that no work got done in the house because of his nephew, who got up everyday at 9 o'clock. The rest of his family also objected to this. I asked them if he woke up when the sun rose and they said he would get up an hour after it. So I said, "He must be quite an important person not to show respect to the Surya Narayan (Sun God)". They ask me to reprimand him. I tell them that I am not here to do that. I am here to give him understanding. I am not here to rebuke anyone; my business

is to make them understand. I blessed him and asked him to pray for the strength to wake up early. After he did this, I requested the others in the family to ask him earnestly if he needed an extra blanket when he did not wake up early. Be careful not to make fun of him though. Within six months, they began to see positive results. (P.169)

Questioner: Today's children seem to be more interested in playing than their schoolwork. How should we guide them towards education without creating any conflict?

Dadashri: Start a reward system. Tell him you will give him so much for being first in the class, so much for being sixth and so much for passing all his exams. Give him some incentive. If he sees immediate positive reinforcement he will seize the opportunity. Another approach is to love them unconditionally. If you give them love they will do what you tell them. Children listen to me and are ready to do whatever I say. We should always try our best to give them the right understanding. We should never give up on them. After that, whatever happens is correct. (171)

Questioner: The main question was how we should get them to understand the importance of education. They still don't listen to us.

Dadashri: That is because you do not know how to be a mother. If you knew how to be a mother, why would they not listen? They refuse to listen because you yourself did not listen to your parents.

Questioner: Is it the effect of cultural environment too?

Dadashri: No, it is no fault whatsoever of the environment. The parents do not know how to be parents. To be parents is the biggest responsibility; even a Prime Minister does not have as much responsibility on his hand.

Questioner: How can that be?

Dadashri: If a Prime Minister were to go wrong, he hurts the country. However, if parents go wrong anywhere, they will harm their own child. As soon as parents enter the house, children should be glad to see them. Nowadays kids just don't want their father to be around. What can he do about it? (172)

That is why I tell people that, after their child turns sixteen years old, they must accept him or her as their friend. If you speak to them in a friendly manner your words will be more appealing. But, if you simply assert your fatherhood everyday, it will not work. What happens if you assert your fatherhood when he turns forty? (176)

Questioner: But Dada, old people's conduct towards us is so set, orthodox and at times hurtful. How are we to deal with them?

Dadashri: If our car's tire has a puncture in it when we are in a real hurry to go somewhere, are we to get out and start kicking the wheel?

Questioner: No.

Dadashri: We simply need to hurry up and tackle the problem at hand. The car can get a puncture at any time and so can old people. Therefore, we must learn how to deal with them. Can you go on kicking your car? (177)

Questioner: If your two older age sons are fighting amongst them selves and you realize that neither of them is going to let go, what should you do?

Dadashri: Have a talk with them and tell them it is not worth fighting. Such internal fights will result in financial ruin.

Questioner: And if they are still not ready to listen, then what?

Dadashri: Let it be. Let it be.

Questioner: When it becomes a huge problem, we wonder how it got so out of control.

Dadashri: Let them learn their lesson. By fighting they will come to their senses eventually. If you keep telling when they are not receptive, they will not listen, or learn their lesson. This world has to be observed only. (177)

They are in reality, no body's children. You have been buredened with them, from your past life accounts. You should try your best to help them out but in a dramatic manner. (178)

Who is the first to complain? In Kaliyug(the current era in which unity of thoughts, speech and acts, is lacking), it is always the guilty one who complains first. In Satyug(the past era where unity of thoughts, speech and acts existed), it was always the innocent person, who complained first. In this Kaliyug, the people who dispense the justice always favor the person who comes forward first and is the first to speak. (178)

In a family of four children, two never do anything wrong, but the father still keeps getting annoyed with them. The other two who keep making mistakes are never scolded. All this stems from the past root (main) causes. All the children should be treated equally. If you favor a particular child of yours, you will spoil everything. All should be treated equally. Do you still have that partiality? (179)

Questioner: My son gets upset easily and frequently.

Dadashri: That is because we give too much importance to boys and not enough to girls. The girls are less likely to sulk. (The female child in India is given less importance than a male child).

Questioner: Why do they sulk, Dada?

Dadashri: This is because you give into them again and again. Just let them come to me and sulk. No one sulks with me because I never yield to him or her. Whether or not they eat their food, I will not give into them. I do not coddle them to eat. When he's hungry, he'll eat by himself. I know that if you give in, you will encourage bad habits in them. You should not do this, even if he becomes obstinate to the point of refusing to eat anything. Do not support any temper tantrums.

Questioner: Can you show us how to deal with them when they sulk? This sulking has become a routine with them. If you gave us a key on how to deal with it, it would help us all.

Dadashri: They sulk because of your own selfish interest and expectation. Why should you have so many selfish motives?

Questioner: I don't understand what you mean by selfishness, whose selfishness?

Dadashri: A person who is sulking does so because he knows that you want something from him.

Questioner: Should we keep our selfish expectation hidden?

Dadashri: There should not be any such motive, why should there be any expectation? You will get whatever your karma have in store for you. If you harbor any expectations from him, he will become even more obstinate. (179)

Questioner: How can we pacify a youngster who throws a temper tantrum?

Dadashri: How will it help the situation by getting rid of his temper?

Questioner: He will not fight with us.

Dadashri: As parents, live in such a way that they do not detect any anger in you. He sees you when you fight and decides that he can be angrier than his father. If you quit doing it yourself, he will too. Look at me. Since I have conquered my anger, no one fights with me. Even when I tell them to get angry with me, they shrug their shoulders. (181)

Questioner: We have to get angry with our kids to encourage them in the right direction. Don't we have to fulfill this duty as parents?

Dadashri: Why must you become angry? What's wrong with simply explaining things? You are not creating anger, anger just happens. Anger, which is dramatic, is not considered to be anger at all. Dramatic anger that is displayed just to scold someone is not actually anger. It is acceptable to demonstrate anger dramatically, without becoming angry. Demonstrate anger but do not become angry. (181)

Questioner: What is the reason behind anger?

Dadashri: Weakness. Anger is weakness. It is this weakness that makes him angry. He does not get angry of his own accord. After he gets angry, he realizes that it was a wrong. He is remorseful, "I should not have done this." This goes to show that he does not have control over it. The machine has heated up, so you should wait for it to cool down and then you can pursue the matter. (182)

When you become angry with your children, it means you are binding a new karma for next life. There is nothing wrong in showing irritation dramatically, but your involvement in this irritation is wrong.

Questioner: They don't shut up unless we scold them.

Dadashri: There is nothing wrong in scolding them. Go ahead and scold, but do not get involved in the scolding. If your facial expression worsens while scolding, you are involved. This results in charging a new karma for next life. When your facial expression changes, your ego has arisen, and this hurts both the child and you.

Questioner: The kids will then think we are just scolding them lightly.

Dadashri: Even if they think that, it is enough to affect them. Otherwise, it will have no impact on them at all. If you keep scolding them a lot, they will think you are a weak person. They come and tell me so. (183)

Questioner: We should not scold them to the point where it begins to affect our minds negatively.

Dadashri: You should not scold them with so much intensity. Scolding should be superficial like playing a role in a drama. So it does not affect you mentally. (186)

Questioner: We need to scold them for something specific. This scolding hurts them. What should be done?

Dadashri: We should then ask for forgiveness from within. If you have over-reacted in anger towards someone, go straight to that person and ask to be forgiven. If that is not possible and you cannot go in person, ask for forgiveness from within, from his Shuddhatma. You are Shuddhatma. Therefore you must make Chandulal do pratikraman (apology coupled with remorse for any wrongdoing). Remain separate from Chandulal. You should privately tell yourself from within not to utter any words which would hurt

your child. If they still feel hurt by our words we should tell: "Chandulal, do pratikraman."

Questioner: How are we to ask forgiveness from our young children?

Dadashri: You should ask for forgiveness from within. In the presence of "Dada" (Shuddhatma), with Dada as your witness, you should do alochana (confession), pratikraman (ask forgiveness) and pratyakhyan (resolution never to repeat the mistake again) of your faults. Its effects will be immediate. (186)

Questioner: If we scold our children for their own sake, are we committing a sin?

Dadashri: No, you are acquiring punya (karma of merit). If you scold or beat your child for his own good, you acquire punya. Even though you become angry, you are acquiring punya because you are doing so for the good of your child. There is no injustice in God's realm. If use of harsh words were a sin, all the sadhus and acharyas (monks and preachers) would never attain moksha (liberation). The master who keeps reproaching his disciples all day long acquires punya, because he does so with good intention. He has their highest good will at heart. To get angry for one's own selfish need is sinful. How beautiful this justice is! Everything is so just.

When you scold your child for his own benefit and improvement you are acquiring punya. But understand that if you do so with a sense of authoritative fatherhood, sin (karma of demerit) is simultaneously acquired.

Questioner: The father may get annoyed but what if the son also gets annoyed in reaction?

Dadashri: The son commits sin. In the kramic (step by step) path, if "Gnani Purush" (Self-realized master) becomes annoyed with his disciples, he acquires the greatest punya. This is punyanuanubandhi punya (good deeds which lead to more and greater good deeds). His annoyance is not wasteful. He wants nothing from them for himself, so he acquires punya.

I tell them not to reprimand their children at all. If they do, the children will begin to hide things and not tell the truth. They will become deceptive. All the deception in the world commences this way. There is no need to reprimand. If your teenager goes out with his friends without your permission and you scold him, the next time he will concoct an alibi. If the mother is too strict in the family, the child will not learn interpersonal relationships. (188)

Questioner: When they eat too much chocolate and drink too much Pepsi I scold them.

Dadashri: Why do you need to scold them? Just explain to them how unhealthy it is to eat too much. Who scolds you?

This is false assertion of your authority as a mother. You have no idea about how to be a mother and you keep yelling at them unnecessarily. If your mother-in-law were to scold you, then you too would realize. Does it feel good to scold your child? Even your daughter will think her mom is worse than the mother-in-law. So stop nagging her. You can tell her gently for her benefit, that what she eats is spoiling her health. (191)

If he is doing something wrong, do not beat him. If you beat him when he does anything wrong, what will happen? I once saw someone whipping his son as though he were a washing rag. What kind of father are you to put your child through such abuse? The child will swear internally that when he grows up he will repay his father with the same abuse. He will do that when he is old enough. (196)

No one in the world improves through physical or verbal abuse. They benefit from being shown the right way to act. (P199)

A man I once knew would return home after indulging in all kinds of decadent and shameful activities. All the others in the family convened to decide whether to reprimand him or not allow him into the house. His elder brother tried to talk some sense into him, but the latter threatened to kill him. His family came to me for advice. I told them all, not to utter a single word of reproach to him, because he would react adversely. If they banished him from the house, he would turn into a criminal. I told them to let him live the way he wanted. Let him come and go as he pleased, without any opinions about right or wrong, and to try not to feel raag (attachment) or dwesh (abhorrence) towards him; to be indifferent to his actions and empathize with him. After three to four years this man changed his behavior and became a good person. Today he is indispensable in their business. The world is not useless; we need to know how to extract use from it. All beings are divine and each has his own duty to fulfill. So do not foster dislike for anyone. (200)

I witnessed another man kicking the door of a toilet and I asked him why he was doing it. He told me it was because the toilet smelt so bad even after he repeated cleaning. How foolish it is to keep kicking the door because the lavatory smells. Whose fault is it? (201)

So many parents keep beating their children. Are they punching bags? They are fragile like glassware. So you must handle them with care. What would happen if you threw the glassware? You must handle them gently. (204)

You worry about your children but what became of your children of your past life? What did you do with them? In each lifetime you have left your children behind. In some previous lives you have abandoned them while they were still helpless infants. Even though you never wanted to, you were torn away. You forgot them and in this life you began another family. Why are you so bothered about your children? Why don't you just turn them in a spiritual direction? They will improve. (209)

There was a toddler who was very difficult to handle. He did not like bitter medicine. He refused to swallow the medicine his mother gave. One day when she tried to give him some bitter medicine, the little one resisted, so the mother craftily pinched his nostrils shut and placed the bitter syrup into his mouth. The medicine gurgled down his throat. The next time around he spat the medicine right back out on his mom's face! These are the qualities of kids you are faced with. Room and board rent free for nine months, and this is how they pay back! (221)

A father came complaining about his problem to me. Out of three sons, two did exceptionally well while one was reckless and a failure. He said, "I do not have any problems with two of my sons but this one is making my life a living hell!" He continued with his complaint, relating to me how this son would come home drunk every night. I asked him what he did at the time. He said, "I silently spy on him from behind the window because, if he sees me, he yells abuses at me." I asked him what the son did after coming home so late at night. He told me that his son would be so intoxicated that he would not eat anything and just collapse on his already prepared bed and fall asleep snoring without any worries. I asked him, "Then who is the one worrying?" He replied, "I am. I can not fall asleep seeing him in that state." I then informed him that the fault was his because he was the one suffering. "You are responsible for getting him hooked on the bottle. From the karma of your previous life, you pushed him into an addiction and then abandoned him. So this is your result of your karma in this lifetime. You will simply have to pay your debt and bear it!" "The fault is of the sufferer!" The son doses off merrily while the miserable father stays up in agony. He cannot utter a single word. He is even oblivious to his father. The father suffers, so it is the father's fault. (222)

A father-in-law overhears his daughter-in-law gossiping about him as he enters the room. It disturbs him. How should he approach this? It would not have affected him if he were elsewhere in the house. He heard something that was not meant for his ears. He should erase his fault by telling himself he did not hear a thing even though he was present at the time. So his fault will be dismissed.

People gossiped about Lord Mahavir also. Let them say whatever they want. They can only say it if it is ordained in your karma. We need to demolish our mistakes and be free of them. (223)

Once the ego becomes established in the child, we can no longer say anything to him. He will learn from his mistakes. You can regulate them until they are five years old. From the ages of five to sixteen years you can admonish them. But to a youth of twenty, nothing need be said. To do so is a mistake. He might even shoot you. (225)

Do not give advice unless it is asked for. You can give your opinion on a matter if they ask, but you should also tell them that they are free to do whatever they deem is right for them. That way it does not hurt their feelings. Whatever you need to tell them, you should tell them with humility and respect for them.

In this age, it is better to speak sparingly. These days, peoples' speech is abrupt and abrasive. Their words are thrown out like rocks. It is better to speak as little as

possible. It is not worth saying anything to anyone. By speaking we make things worse. People will always act contrary to what we say. So if we remain quiet, they will do things right. Everything will run smoothly, even in our absence. All this stems from our misplaced ego. The day you stop your arguing and nagging, your children will begin to improve. Because your words do not come out right, they get aggravated. They do not embrace your words; they simply throw them back at you. We have to fulfill our duties without saying a word. Do you get the gist of my words? Now they are all grown up, it is not as if they are going to fall down the stairwell. Why are you forfeiting your spiritual progress? It is not worth fooling around with your children. All these relatives are temporary. With conflict you will ruin your mind and your child's too. (226)

You will keep exchanging bad and hurtful words and it will charge the atmosphere with discontentment and tension. So be positive towards him, in the sense that after all, he is a good person. (228)

Questioner: When there is conflict how should we behave with our children?

Dadashri: You should not feel any attachment or abhorrence towards him. If he damages or spoils things you should not have negative feelings towards him. See him as pure Self. If you do not have any attachment or abhorrence, your troubles will end. And this Gnan is such that you will not feel any attachment or abhorrence. (228)

If we become confused it is our own fault. No one else is responsible. We should understand that this is our puzzle. This has happened because we did not know what to look at in the person. We should only see their Shuddhatma. We must solve this puzzle. I have provided you with the solution: "I am Shuddhatma(pure Self) and everything else is vyavasthit (scientific circumstantial evidence)!" (229)

After your son marries, it will not help you to start any conflict with his wife. You must therefore, start things with your best foot forward. If you all live together it will cause friction, which will make each of your lives miserable. If you want your children's love, let them live their own life. Your love for each other will grow if you remain apart. When you all live together, your son will obviously take his wife's side and not pay attention to what you say. In doing so your love for each other will dwindle. When your daughter-in-law complains about you to your son and he sympathizes with her, you will be hurt and all the domestic problems will begin. Better to be happy and away from each other. (234)

Questioner: I miss my children, who live abroad, and keep worrying about them.

Dadashri: These kids must be having a great time. They may not even be thinking about you. So do not make yourself ill from worrying.

Questioner: The kids keep writing to us, asking us to come and live with them abroad.

Dadashri: Yes, but is it in your hands to go? It is better to let things be the way they are. Just because you gave them birth, does it mean they are yours? If they were yours, they would be with you even after death. But is that possible? (235)

There may be fifty people in the house but because we cannot understand their nature, we interfere. Should we not recognize differences in their nature?

In Satyug (Age of Truth) in a household if one was a rose, they were all roses and if in another, one was a dandelion, they were all dandelions. These days, a house will have so many different flowers (prakritis, nature). Do you understand my point? The crop fields of satyug have turned into the wild gardens of kaliyug. But how can one perceive this? If you do not know how to see this difference in nature, you are bound to be hurt. The world does not have this insight. No one is truly bad. All this conflict arises because of your own ego. Your ego stems from not having this insight. If you could perceive things as they are, there would be no pain. I have no conflict with anyone in this world. I can perceive all the different prakritis whether they are roses, lilies, tulips and any other flower. (239)

Because people cannot recognize different prakritis I have said in a book that, “The houses have become gardens, so make the best of it.” If a father is very noble and generous and his son is stingy, he will resent his son and do his best, to make his son just like him. It is not possible because he comes with his own distinct personality. Parents attempt to make their children like themselves. Let them bloom on their own. Know their strong points and nurture these instead. Just observe the prakritis, why fight?

It is worth getting to know everyone in the garden. When I speak of a garden the parents begin to understand and recognize their children's prakritis and act accordingly. There won't be any problems if you act according to his prakriti. Do you adjust to your friend's prakriti? That is how you have to look at the prakriti, and have to recognize it. What happens when you understand their prakriti? There will be no problems in the house. Nowadays parents go to such an extreme to make their children just like themselves. How is this possible? (243)

The whole world is looking for this knowledge of vyavahar (social interaction). This is not religion. It is the way to live in harmony in worldly life. It teaches how to how to adjust. It even shows you how to adjust with your wife and children.

If there are problems at home, they are remedied with these words. My words will bring harmony and bliss in your life and home. People search for words that comfort them and help them in their lives. No one has ever shown them such simple applicable remedy. (247)

(10) THE SUFFERING DUE TO SUSPICION

A man, who had one daughter, used to visit me. From the very beginning I had cautioned him that he should expect to see effects of current social environment on his daughter.

Therefore remain cautious. He understood. Later when his daughter eloped with someone, he remembered me. He returned and began to say, "What you had told me was true and if you had not explained this to me I would have killed myself." Whatever happens, is justice and we must accept it. Should one take poison over it? No. You will be considered mad. Taking poison is a pretense of false nobility. You only pretend to be noble. What is the point of showing off your prestige through your fancy and expensive clothes? Real nobility is internal. (249)

A relative of mine had four daughters who were going to college. He was very alert and concerned and he wanted to know what he should do so as not to have suspicions about their behavior. So I told him, "Go with them! Follow them around to the gate of the college, and when they leave, follow them home. You might go for perhaps one day, but what will you do the following day? Send the wife! Fool! Don't you even know whom to trust? All you need to do is talk with them and explain to them that they are part of a well-respected, good family and that it is part of their duty to uphold the high repute of the entire family. We should caution them in this way. Then, whatever happens is correct. Do not be suspicious. If you continue to be suspicious, how will you overcome anything?"

Therefore, whatever suspicions arise in your mind, you should eradicate them immediately. You doubt your daughters when they go out to have simple fun. This doubt makes you unhappy. (250)

Do not let suspicions take hold within you even when your daughter comes home late. If you abolish your suspicions, it will be to your advantage. What is the point of your mental anguish? Nothing will change in just one lifetime. Do not hurt your daughters and sons. Just tell them frankly and directly, "You should not be so late in coming home, when you go out. We are respectable people and this does not suit us. So please don't come home so late, my dear!" We should talk with them and explain things to them calmly. You cannot afford to become suspicious and think, "Who is she seeing? What is she doing?" If even then, she comes home at midnight, the next time she goes out, we should again tell her the following day, "Dear, this shouldn't happen again!" If we kick her out of the house, there is no telling where she will go. What will one achieve? Is it not better to cause as little hurt as possible? I tell people to allow their daughters into their homes even when they return late. Do not throw them out.

What strange times we live in! A time filled with so much mental anguish! Besides, it is kaliyug. So explain to them in a calm manner. (255)

Questioner: If someone were to be suspicious about us, how should we deal with it?

Dadashri: We should dismiss thoughts of him being suspicious of us. Just dismiss your suspicion.

Questioner: If someone has suspects us, should we ask him or her about this?

Dadashri: It does not do any good to ask that person. You shouldn't ask. You should immediately realize that there must be some error on your part. Why should anyone have any suspicion about you? (256)

"The fault is of the sufferer." This sentence will solve the problem. Who is suffering? Is it the person who doubts or the person who is the target of the doubt? Just ask yourself this. (257)

(11) HOW MUCH INHERITANCE FOR CHILDREN?

Questioner: What happens when we get more money than we need, because of our punya?

Dadashri: You should spend it well and not keep too much aside for your children. Once you fulfill your duty to educate and give them a good upbringing, and they are well established in their life, you need not give them financial support. Just remember that only your punya comes with you in the next life. Money that is spent for other than blood relations acquires punya. (259)

Questioner: Can a wealthy person take any money at all with him for his next life?

Dadashri: What is there left for him to take now? Whatever he had, he has consumed. Now, if he acquires the knowledge of the Self from me, his work is done. It is still not too late.

What do can you carry forward into your next life? So far, whatever you have done for yourself, for your pleasures and comforts, has all gone to waste in the gutter. Only that, which you have done for the benefit and good of others, is your overdraft (savings) for your next life. (260)

One man asked me, "Should we not leave anything for our children?" We should give to our children, all that we inherited from our parents. Any surplus should be spent on helping others.

Questioner: According to Indian law whatever I inherited has to go to my children. Whereas, I am free to do whatever I wish with my own earnings.

Dadashri: Yes, you can decide to use it the way you want it. Therefore, whatever you earn yourself put it aside and use it to help others. Only that will proceed with you into the next life. After attaining this Gnan, you still have one or two more births remaining and you will need something for your self. When you go away on a trip, you take some food along with you; likewise, you will need something here too.

All you need to give to your children is the house you live in, if you own it. You should inform him that he would become the owner only after your death. Warn him that, if he misbehaves in any way, you will send him packing, along with his spouse too. As long as we are alive it all belongs to us. After we die it will be yours. You should draw up such a will, which entitles him only to the inheritance that you received yourself. Until the very end, let him think that you only have fifty thousand although in fact, you have a hundred thousand. He can go on thinking that maybe his dad will leave him the fifty grand when he dies. Let him continue with his greedy expectations until the very end. Live well. Let his wife take care of you. You are only going to give him what you had inherited from your parents. (262)

No one is allowed to take anything along with him. They burn us on the funeral pyre when we go. If we leave an excessive amount behind for them, they will think that there is no need for them to work any longer and lose themselves to alcohol and other vices. They will even find company to support their activity. We should just provide them with the essentials. When we leave excess amounts of money, they end up abusing it. Make it so that they will have to work for their living. When he is idle, he will indulge in vices. (263)

If he likes a particular business, help him establish it. Ask him the type of business he prefers, and if appropriate, help him. Help him borrow about fifty percent from the bank and you may provide the rest. Let him make regular repayments to the bank. This will make him financially responsible. (266)

Help him just enough to start up and use the rest of your wealth to give happiness to others. How can we give happiness to others? By appeasing their hearts. This wealth will follow you. It does not come in cash, but in the form of an overdraft (promise to pay). By satisfying the needy people and by placating their sorrows, you will ensure a draft for use in your next life. So use money wisely. No need to worry at all. Enhance other people's lives and collect all the overdrafts. (271)

I told a young man that his father had worked very hard and accumulated all this wealth for him. He replied, "You don't know my dad. If it was at all possible for him to take all this wealth with him for his next life, he would borrow from people, create a debt, and take millions with him." When he shared this with me I understood what I needed to learn. (272)

A couple handed over everything to their only son. All their wealth was given to him because they were taking a spiritual path. You will create havoc if you tell him the money was his in advance. What happens when you hand over all your wealth to your only son in advance? Initially, the son will take care of you. But a day will come when your son will call you a fool and ask you to keep to yourself. You then will regret giving away everything to him. Instead of bitter regret it is better not to let go of the reins. (274)

A father tells his son, he is going to leave all his wealth for him. The son replies, "I do not place any expectations on your wealth. You can use it wherever you want." After that whatever happens is left to fate. At least the son has made his intentions known, and therefore he becomes a certified son. (288)

(12) SUFFERING LIFE AFTER LIFE BECAUSE OF ATTACHMENT

Questioner: Who knows whether or not our kids will remain ours after they grow up?

Dadashri: Of course not. Does anything remain ours forever? Even this body does not stay ours. It is taken away from us. How long can something, which does not belong to us, remain with us? (292)

Upon hearing the words "daddy, daddy" frequently, attachment takes hold within the father. The words, "mommy, mommy", has the same effect on the mother. Even when the child pulls his dad's mustaches, he is allowed to do so. These little ones are crafty. They act as go-betweens when their mom and dad have a quarrel. Minor disagreements are commonplace between husband and wife. So how does the child manage to solve the problem? If the dad sulks after a row with mom, the mom tells her son, "Go tell dad 'my mommy is calling you for tea.'" Upon hearing these words, "daddy-daddy", the father forgets everything and comes immediately, as though the child had uttered a magic mantra. Only a while ago he was stubbornly refusing to have tea. (292)

No one has really become anyone's son in this world. Find me a son in the entire world, who, after his father has scolded him constantly for three hours, will still manage to say, "My dear father, no matter how much you scold me, we are still one." Can you find such a son? Nowadays, he will retaliate within half an hour of such confrontation. (293)

If your child keeps saying, "Daddy, Daddy" in a cute way, it should not melt you. If it delights you and melts your heart then it can be considered as borrowed happiness that will have to be paid back through pain (suffering). When your son grows up and disgraces or insults you, you will question why it happens. It is time then, to repay what you borrowed. So be cautious from the beginning. I have stopped this borrowing for happiness. Why pursue this path of seeking temporary pleasures, which have to be repaid when you are the abode of infinite happiness? (295)

A seventy-year-old lady began to gripe about how much she hated this worldly life, and wished she were dead. A young man came up to her and asked, "Why are you so depressed now, when before you would always say how wonderful and sweet life was?" The old woman exclaimed, "My son is always quarrelling with me and now he wants to kick me out of the house in my old age." (297)

In this age, those who render us favors are born in our own home. These favors are in the form of conflicts with them. The conflicts we have with them, is our penance

on the path to moksh. In times gone by we would have to go out in search of situations for penance. So accept what you get from your children and consider yourself fortunate.

Even Lord Mahavir had to go sixty miles and look for situations for penance amongst savages, while we find it in the comfort of our homes. Your son will say, "Don't complain about us if we come home late. If you want to sleep go right ahead without making a fuss." Just comply with his wishes. The father had no idea what would happen to his life when he decided to get married and have children. He never thought it would ever come to this. It is too late to regret now.

Questioner: Does this mean that when unfavorable situations arise, our upayog (focused awareness) should be towards the Self?

Dadashri: All unfavorable circumstances in life are beneficial towards your progress to the Self. They are vitamins for the Self. This is true only for those who have acquired the knowledge of the Self. (298)

Questioner: Who will take care of us in our old age?

Dadashri: Why must you expect to be taken care of? It will be good if they do not abuse you. Don't expect to be cared for. Only five percent of the children may be good, the other ninety-five percent are the ones who will mistreat you. (299)

A son demanded his inheritance from his father. He was tired of listening to his father complain every day. His father replied, "You keep provoking me, so I'm not going to give you a single dime which I have earned through hard work!" The son threatens to fight back in court for the money he claims, belongs to his grandfather. "I will see you in court! I'm not letting you off that easily." This is proof that these children are really not yours. (302)

Suppose a father yells all kinds of abuse at his son during a dispute. How would the son respond? He would say, "Who do you think you are?" He might even drag his father to court to claim his inheritance. Would the father still worry about this son? The day your attachment is gone, your anxiety will be gone. These anxieties occur to those who have attachment. (305)

If his wife's brother-in-law were ill in the hospital, he would visit him at least a dozen times, whereas if his own father was ill he would probably only see him a couple of times. Who is influencing this sort of behavior? His wife pressures him into seeing her brother-in-law. She turns the key and he becomes oblivious to everything else. His entire world is under the control of his wife. (307)

The son is generally quite good, but only if he does not meet a guru (wife in this context). It is inevitable; he will meet her, whether she is a foreigner or an Indian. What I am trying to say is that it is not under our control, so we must hold the reins properly balanced. (307)

Questioner: In the past life, if we had hatred towards some one, do we have to meet the same individual in this life to repay the debt?

Dadashri: Not necessarily so. When you build animosity and hatred towards some one, you create raag and dwesh. If you had animosity for your son in your past life, you would wonder about when you would be repaying it. When will the two of you again reunite this way? The same son can come as a cat in this life and bite you when you offer it milk. This is how you pay back and clear your account. This is a world of cause and effects. Some effects of causes may even unfold in the form of hostile intentions, so that our son of a previous life ruins our current life through his revenge. (314)

Questioner: I have three daughters and I worry about their future. What shall I do?

Dadashri: Instead of worrying about the future, it would be better for you to secure a safe side (attend to the present and do your best). Your thoughts about the future are not helpful to you in any way, and are hurting you. The greatest solution for this is to secure your safe side daily. (324)

Become a trustee for your children. Do not be anxious about their marriage. (326)

Your daughter comes with her own karma. You need not worry about her. Just take good care of her. She already comes with a suitor for herself. Do you need to go around telling people to give birth to a son for your daughter? She comes prepared. When the daughter turns twenty-five you become restless and worry all the time. Little do you know that a twenty-seven year old boy is already waiting in the wing for her some where in this world. So stop worrying and sleep soundly. (326)

Worrying causes antaraya karma (obstructing karma) and you prolong your goal. In the matter of arranged marriages, if someone tells you about an eligible suitor, you should make arrangements to introduce the two parties. You are not to worry. Your anxiety will create yet one more obstacle. Are you running this world? Do you control it? Just think. Do you have control over your bowels? Can you go to the toilet at your will? Is there a force that controls these things? Should you not question this? (329)

Even at the time of death, he worries about his youngest unmarried daughter. He passes away in a state of anguish, so he ends up taking birth in the animal kingdom where his life will be a torture. What else can he expect for not living his human life as it should be lived? (331)

(13) CONSIDER YOURSELF BLESSED FOR NOT HAVING CHILDREN

Do you ever worry?

Questioner: Not much. I very much wish I had a child.

Dadashri: Kind of like not having someone to feed when there is so much food? Alas! This is a problem too! (336)

The couple with high punya is blessed with no children. To have or not to have children is the result of your karma. Who says that a childless couple is unfortunate? The man told me that his wife nagged him about their inability to have a child. So after meeting me, his wife understood the blessing of being childless. The couple became very happy after understanding this view. (337)

If a couple gets a child after trying for many years, the husband becomes very delighted. But a day may come when the child leaves abruptly. This will break his heart. Understand that the one who has come might also leave. What would happen then? It would be better not to get too happy and excited, that way, there will not be any disappointment later. (339)

Children are our account of raag and dwesh. This account does not pertain to money. Raag and dwesh is a consequence of relations from past lives. To settle their accounts of raag and dwesh, the children will harass the father to no end. The great King Shrenik in the time of Lord Mahavir was tortured in prison by his son.

People gripe about not having a child. What is the big deal about having children when they make their parents' lives miserable? What use are they? Was there ever a life in which you did not have children? You have finally, with so much difficulty, managed to attain this human life and that too being without a child, so use it to your advantage. Search for that which will lead you to liberation. (341)

Questioner: Last year I lost my only son and suffered greatly. Now I want to know, from you, what I did in my previous life to deserve this?

Dadashri: This is simply a matter of account. His time with you is dependant on this account. Once the account is over, he leaves. This is the law.

Questioner: When a child dies immediately after birth, does it mean that it had that much of an account with us?

Dadashri: The account of raag and dwesh of the child with his parents is exact. He leaves his parents suffering with misery. This account may even include outrageous medical expenses. (348)

Wailing after a child who dies, causes pain to the departed child. People do this out of ignorance. You should know this fact and this will give you solace. What good does it do to grieve? Everyone will lose his child at some point in time. All this is account. I too, had a boy and a girl who died in infancy. The guest arrived and the guest

departed. They are not our property, are they? Will we not also leave one day? We should provide happiness for those who are living and dependent on us. That is our duty. Those who are gone are gone forever. Stop crying for them. You think about those you have lost and create misery for the living. Why is it so? You fail to fulfill the duty to the living. Don't you think so? If you lose a hundred thousand dollars and you cannot recover them, what will you do? Do you tear your hair out?

Questioner: No I would forget about it.

Dadashri: All this stems from ignorance. We are not really father and son from any angle. If you lose a son, there is no point in worrying. If ever you should worry, it should be for your parents if they die. Our parents have done us the greatest favor. Our mother guarded us for nine months within her womb and our father sustained and supported us throughout our life. (351)

Whenever you remember your dead child, just say, "O, Dada Bhagwan, I place my child in your hands". And he will be cared for. Remember your child and ask for the salvation of his soul in your mind but don't shed tears. Being a Jain, you ought to know that this should be your prayer for the departed Soul. If you break down emotionally it will do no good. We should not allow our loved ones to suffer. You are wise and intelligent thinkers. So whenever you remember your son, pray for the salvation of his soul. If you pray to Krupadu Dev (another Gnani Purush) or Dada Bhagwan, it will be the same because they both are the same as the Self. They are physically different in appearance, but in essence they are the same. If you invoke Lord Mahavir, or Lord Krishna, it is one and the same. You should repeatedly pray for the salvation of the loved ones with whom you shared all the joys and sorrows during their lifetime. We have so much in the way of good intentions towards others. So why would we not express the same and even more for our beloved ones? (P.353)

Questioner: Dada, how many children did you have?

Dadashri: We had a boy and a girl. In 1928, when the boy was born I celebrated by distributing sweets to all my friends. In 1931 he died. I distributed sweets again. So everyone thought that I had another son. I waited until they finished the sweets. After that I said, "The guest who had arrived has departed." When they arrived we showered respect, so when they leave we should also show respect. All of them were upset and started scolding me. Such scolding is inappropriate. Show respect when they leave.

Then a girl was born. She died in infancy. She also received the same respect both the times. Now there is no one left except Hiraba (Dada's wife) and my self. (360)

After this, Hiraba would worry about what will happen to us in our old age, since we had no children to look after us. At that time, I had told her, "Today's children will give you problems. If for instance your son drinks, would you like it?" She said no.

Later, when she saw how much misery other parents received from their children she realized that what I said was true.

Can anything that does not belong to you, become yours at any time? We are always dissatisfied without reason. Even our own bodies do not belong to us. So how can our children belong to us? (362)

Questioner: My only son is estranged from me.

Dadashri: Even if you had three sons, they may have done the same thing. And if not, you yourself will leave them one day. If they all lived together under one roof even then you will leave at some time. So why bother about it? What about the children you left behind in your past life? Do you know where they are?

Questioner: God knows.

Dadashri: You have no idea of what is going on with the children of your past life. And in this life this happens to you. When will you wake up? Start thinking about your liberation or else you will end up being reborn in a lower life form. If in this human life you are bored and restless, where will you go from here? Does the prospect of a lower life form appeal to you? (363)

In all your previous lives you have suffered terribly. You forget the suffering from your previous lives and begin to suffer again in this one. You abandoned your children in your previous life and in this life you bring forth new ones. (364)

(14) RELATIONS: ARE THEY RELATIVE OR REAL?

All these relationships are temporary. You must conduct your interactions with them with care. Your relative life is entirely dependant upon how you keep it. This is called vyavahar.

You think, "He is my son, so where is he going to go?" You fool! Even though he is your son, there is no certainty when he may go against you. Atma is never a father or a son. All this is an account of give and take. Now, don't go home and tell your father, "You are not my dad". He is your dad in vyavahar (370)

All these relatives are temporary adjustments. As long as we stay adjusted, it is fine. When someone spoils things for you, you should keep putting things back together. Try to keep things stable for as long as possible and if you feel that your efforts are in vain, let it go. As long as possible try to keep things together. (371)

In worldly dealings, you should only act in a dramatic way. Treat everyone superflously. The ignorant person displays possessive behavior that suffocates, even a small child. The Gnani Purush remains superfluous in vyavahar and people are attracted to him. Attachment bothers people. So we should remain superfluous.

The Gnani knows that when a girl becomes a bride it is vyavahar, and when she becomes a widow, it is vyavahar. This is not permanent. Both instances are vyavahar. They are relative and nobody can change them. When a son-in-law dies, they agonize over his death and they go so crazy that a doctor needs to be summoned. This is all subject to raag and dwesh, because people have not understood vyavahar as temporary.

You can scold your child or your wife but do it dramatically. Use dramatic language. Turn on the cold switch and then display your anger. (378)

(15) RELATIONS ARE MERELY GIVE AND TAKE

If your wife and child are truly yours, then they would take on some of the pain you are suffering. If you become paralyzed would your son take a share of the paralysis? No one can take away your pain. All this is your account. (384)

A mother would beat her little boy even when he was not doing anything wrong. On the other hand she would give much attention and affection with another one of her five children, who was unmanageable. All five children are hers yet she behaves differently with each of them. Why?

Questioner: Each has different karma.

Dadashri: All the accounts are being repaid. The mother wants to treat all her children equally but she is not able to do so. How is it possible for her, when they each have different accounts with her? The children on the other hand will complain about their mother taking sides. That is the cause of dispute in today's world.

Questioner: Why does the mother feel that way towards her child, whom she beats repeatedly for no cause?

Dadashri: She has some dwesh (abhorrence) towards that child from her past life whereas for the other one she has an account of raag (attachment). The world expects her to treat all the five children equally. (389)

Many children look after their parents so well, that they forget themselves in the process. This is the punya of the parents. Everything is according to accounts. Suffering in old age is also an account. It happens to us because of our own faults. Why have we come here during Kaliyug and not in Satyug? In Satyug, everyone lived in harmony. In Kaliyug misfits predominate. If a son is good, his wife or in laws may be the problem. And thus the fire of discontent keeps burning in all homes. (397)

Questioner: If a mango tree bears fruit, all the mangoes will taste the same whereas children of the same parents all have different qualities of thought, speech and behavior. Why is that so?

Dadashri: Even mangoes from the same tree differ from one another. There is not enough subtlety in you to recognize how distinctly different each piece of fruit is. Each mango differs in taste and appearance. They all look the same but there are differences. The law of Nature is that when space changes, there will be some changes. Changes occur because of change in space. Do you understand? (400)

Questioner: There is a common saying that all these families are simply a succession of a series of sons, grandsons, great-grandsons, etc.

Dadashri: Yes. Our entire circle will stay together. All the people we know. We have similar characteristics and because of raag and dwesh we meet each other. We all unite to repay our account. What you see with your naked eyes is an illusion. (403)

Questioner: Do people take birth because of their karma?

Dadashri: Yes, the fact that he is fair, tall, short, white or black is all because of his karma. People conclude that just because a child's nose looks like his father's, the child will gain his entire attributes. That would be the same as saying if the father was Lord Krishna, so must his children be. This shows how people tailor things according to their perceptions, without understanding reality. (404)

If the traits of the father were to be transmitted to the children, all of them should receive the same qualities in the same amount. Some of the traits seen are matching those whom the father was associated with, in his past life. Consider your circle of acquaintances. You will notice that there is a lot in common amongst you. Some of those acquaintances have come as your children in this life. It appears that you have matching characteristics, but in fact they are one's own characteristics. Scientists attribute this to genes, but in fact they are one's own characteristics of a previous life. So depending on his circumstance, he turns out to be a drunkard or a pious person. Nothing is really inherited. It only appears so. (404)

Questioner: That means that we are all here for repayments of previous accounts with those beings with whom, we have had attachments and abhorrence in previous life?

Dadashri: Yes, it all gets paid off. Exactly. I am disclosing this exact science for the first time with such clarity. To clarify that in a family, if the father is hot tempered and you take after him, why is your brother so calm? If you inherited the same qualities as your father, why did your brother not inherit the same? People do not understand this, which is why they come to all sorts of wrong conclusions and believe heredity is the truth. This is indeed worth the understanding, because it is a profound matter. It goes much deeper than what I have said so far. Everything is simply based on the give and take in accounts. (409)

Atma is not any one's son, father, wife or husband. It is all an account of karma of past lives. Furthermore, it is all relative and temporary. If people understood this, there would be no friction.

Everything is temporary and hence an illusion. The Self is permanent.

Do not have expectations of any kind in this kaliyug. Concentrate on attaining salvation in kaliyug. Terrible times are coming ahead. (410)

PART II

CHILDREN'S CONDUCT TOWARDS PARENTS

(16) DADASHRI'S SATSANG WITH TEENAGERS

Questioner: What qualities an ideal student should possess in his life?

Dadashri: The student should keep every one happy, both at home and at school. He should concentrate on his studies. (419)

Have you ever killed insects?

Questioner: Yes.

Dadashri: Where?

Questioner: In the garden, behind our home.

Dadashri: What sort of insects?

Questioner: All kinds.

Dadashri: Would you ever kill a human infant?

Questioner: No.

Dadashri: No, you cannot kill anyone's child.

Questioner: No.

Dadashri: Why not? You kill insects. Can you make an insect for me? If anyone can create an insect I will give him a reward of one hundred thousand dollars. So will you make one insect for me? Will it be possible?

Questioner: No.

Dadashri: So then how can you kill them? Can any scientist in the entire world create an insect?

Questioner: No.

Dadashri: Then we must not kill anything that we cannot create ourselves. We can destroy things like chairs and other man-made objects. Do you understand?

Questioner: Yes.

Dadashri: Now what are you going to do?

Questioner: I will not kill them anymore.

Dadashri: When you try to kill insects, do they become afraid and try to run away from you?

Questioner: Yes.

Dadashri: Then how can you kill them? All these wheat and barley crops do not become frightened when you reap them or come after them with a sickle. Do they run away from you?

Questioner: No.

Dadashri: Then you can cook and eat them. Are you afraid of dying?

Questioner: Yes.

Dadashri: Yes. Likewise the insects also fear for their life. (423)

Dadashri: Are you married?

Questioner: No.

Dadashri: Do you have sexual thoughts about anyone?

Questioner: Sometimes...

Dadashri: Beware. The consequences of sexual thoughts and actions with some one with whom you are not married are very grave. You can never climb back up again. So walk very carefully, be very cautious. You are still young and therefore I am cautioning you. If you were an old man, I would not say anything.

Questioner: Yes Dada, I understand. I will not entertain sexual thoughts with somebody else's wife.

Dadashri: Don't even think along those lines. If you are sexually attracted to any woman, you should instantly ask for forgiveness saying, "Hey Dada Bhagwan, please forgive me." (425)

Questioner: When my mom or dad becomes angry with me, what am I to do?

Dadashri: Just say 'Sat Chit Anand'. And keep saying, "Sat Chit Anand, Sat Chit Anand, Jai Sat Chit Anand". They will eventually cool down. (433)

If dad is quarrelling with mom, and the children start saying, "Jai Sat Chit Anand." the parents will become embarrassed. Just press the panic button that will start the alarm, Jai Sat Chit Anand, and the quarrel will come to an abrupt end. (433)

Conduct yourself in such a way that everyone at home is happy with you. If they hurt you, do sambhave nikaal (settle the dispute with equanimity; without raag or dwesh) and try to make them all happy. Then watch the love that develops between you. If you keep behaving negatively, you are throwing rocks on the foundation of their love and eventually it will shatter. (437)

Questioner: Why do our elders get angry so readily with us?

Dadashri: Old junky cars overheat quickly. If it were a brand new automobile, it would not happen. This is the case with the elders.

The car overheats sometimes. We let it cool down. Likewise, when we encounter stressful situation with some one, we may over heat. This reflects on our facial expression and is readily apparent to the others in the home. Here, the best approach is to let him cool down. It is hazardous to interfere and say any thing until he cools down. (444)

To look after our elders, is the highest religion. What is the duty of today's youth? It should be to take care of their elders. Helping tow these old cars will ensure that in our old age we will find some one to tow us when we break down. You will receive what you give. If we are abusive all the time towards our elderly parents, we will encounter similar abuse when we become old. You are free to do what you want. (445)

(17) SELECTION OF A WIFE

You cannot change what destiny has in store for you. If you are destined to marry, you cannot avoid it. Even if you decide not to marry in this life, you cannot avoid marriage.

Questioner: Whatever bhaav (deep inner intent) we make in this life, will they come to fruition in our next life?

Dadashri: Yes, whatever bhaav you have made in this life will come into effect in the next life. But you have no choice in this life. No one does. Even the Lord himself cannot change this for himself. In your previous life, you did not decide to remain single, so in this life it will not be possible for you to remain single. Whatever plan you made in the past life, that plan will come into effect in this life. (449)

Just as people cannot live without defecating, they cannot live without getting married. When you are mentally a bachelor there is no problem. But if your mind is married, you cannot avoid marriage. People cannot live in solitude. They need others around them. Who can exist in solitude? Only the Gnani Purush, because he is niralamb (without depending on anything). He has no need for any avlamban (support).

Human beings cannot survive without human warmth and security. If we tell someone to sleep alone in a huge very expensive house, would he like it? He needs human warmth and security. Man needs human contact. So he gets married. To marry is not wrong. It is the law of nature.

Just be spontaneous and natural about marriage. Maintain in your mind the intention of wanting to marry into a good family. And when that circumstance arrives, you may marry. What happens if you become restless before your circumstance arrives? Do you want to run around unnecessarily before it happens?

Questioner: No, only when the time is right.

Dadashri: Yes. You are in the need of a wife and the wife needs you. (450)

Questioner: It seems that some of your young followers do not wish to get married. What kind of advice do you give them in private?

Dadashri: In private, I advise them to get married. I tell them, "Son, please get married so that the number of unmarried girls decreases. I have no problem with marriage. Even if you got married and came to me, this Akram path to moksh is open and available.

The young adults have figured out for themselves, the problems involved in marriage. They say that they have experienced their parent's happiness and they tell me that this happiness does not appeal to them. This is the testimony they present about their parents. (451)

Do not pressure your son into marriage or else he will blame you for ruining his life. The truth of the matter is that the son does not know how to get along with his wife, so he blames you. (453)

Just have a talk with him and say to him that you have seen and liked a potential girl for him and if he likes her too, he should give his final approval, otherwise, the matter will be closed. If he says that he does not like her then we should drop the matter and leave things alone. You have to get his consent or else he will keep blaming you. (453)

Questioner: Is it a sin to marry a person you are in love with?

Dadashri: No. Temporary love marriage is a sin. Temporary love marriage is for one or two years. Permanent life long love marriage is accepted. A relationship with more than one person in your lifetime is considered a sin. And that will surely take you to hell. (455)

A young man has a girl friend. When his father questions him about his relationship with the girl, he became defensive and starts saying all kinds of things to him. So the father leaves him alone, thinking to himself, "I've tried my best to make him see reason, now it is up to him to experience it for himself."

Later, the son sees his girlfriend with another boy. He begins to resent her and realizes the truth in his father's words. (457)

Questioner: What is the difference between attachment (infatuation) and love?

Dadashri: Have you seen a moth being attracted to light and how this attraction eventually killed it? This is moha (infatuation). Love is permanent. Even in love, there is some degree of attachment. (458)

For example, in infatuation, if one of the partners develops a hideous boil on the face, the other partner would find it repulsive to look at and the infatuation would diminish. With love, even if one partner develops innumerable boils on his or her body, it would not affect the other at all. Find yourself such love or don't get married at all. Otherwise you will have to deal with the consequences of infatuation and attachment.

If your spouse sulks, you will come to despise his or her looks. If they say something pleasant to you, you like them, but when they say something bitter and spiteful, you begin to dislike them. (459)

Questioner: I am dating now. How can I stop it?

Dadashri: You should stop it. Decide now to stop this. It is your duty to avoid doing something wrong as soon as you realize it. You must cease dating because from our Gnan you now know that you will sow causes for future suffering.

If you are pure you will find a spouse who is pure. That is vyavasthit, and it is exact.
(459)

Questioner: I do not believe in culture. If she is a good person, what difference does it make whether she is an American or an Indian?

Dadashri: No. Do not even think about getting involved with an American. You have seen your father and mother. Do they ever have disputes?

Questioner: Yes, they have disputes.

Dadashri: Yes, but then does your mom ever leave your dad?

Questioner: No, she does not.

Dadashri: On the other hand a foreign wife will put all the blame on you. Threaten you and leave you. An Indian wife will always stay with you, through thick or thin. I am trying to make you understand by warning you about the consequences. Do not get involved with a non-Indian or else you will regret it.

No matter how much you fight with one another, things will be restored as they were, if you have an Indian wife.

Questioner: Yes, that is right.

Dadashri: So therefore decide that you must marry an Indian. And then it does not matter whether she is Brahmin, Jain or Vaishnav.(461)

Questioner: What are the benefits of marrying in our own caste?

Dadashri: If we marry someone of our own caste, we will have similar natures and a mutual understanding of each other. For example, if you want to add more ghee into your khichdi (special rice dish) and if you marry someone from another caste who generally do not use ghee on khichdi, she will not put more ghee on it even if she wanted to. So problems will occur frequently because such small differences. However, if she is of your own caste, the chances of such minor frictions are less. Do you understand? Even the language she might speak will differ to your own and she will complain that you do not speak well.

Questioner: You say that when you marry in your own caste there will not be any conflicts, but we see conflicts in same cast marriages. What is the reason for this?

Dadashri: Yes, there are fights and they get settled. Days pass with her, despite the fights. With the spouse from another caste, dislike sets in and tends to grow over

time. This leads to increasing sense of frustration and tension for which he has no solution, and is not able to express to anyone either. I have seen many couples suffering in these situations. (463)

Nowadays it does not present a problem to marry outside one's caste. In the past it was a problem. (467)

Questioner: Is it in our hands whether to marry a foreigner or not?

Dadashri: Even if it were not in your hands does that mean you have to let it go completely? You must tell them, “Quit fooling around with this American girl, this is not good for us.” Such repeated dramatic coaxing does have positive result. Otherwise if you let it go, he will think that you approve and he will have multiple dates. What is wrong with telling him? When you are walking around in a bad neighborhood, do you not take extra care with your wallets? Like wise when there is a potential for danger, you must warn your children. (468)

Questioner: Before entering into a marriage, what should we consider in the selection of a spouse? What should we do? What do we see? What qualities should we look for? Please discuss.

Dadashri: When you go to see a young man or woman, if an initial attraction does not result, stop. You do not need to inquire into any other matters. Initial attraction is the key.

Questioner: What sort of attraction?

Dadashri: From the first glance. When you see the person, there is an inner attraction. You are drawn to that person, just like when you see an object in a shop. You will not be able to purchase that object unless you are attracted to it. The attraction is based on a previous account. In the absence of such an account, no one can marry. One has to be attracted. (479)

A woman is asked to parade herself for display in front of the prospective suitor. What a huge insult to the woman. This is gross indignity towards women.

Nowadays when it is time for boys to select a wife they tease too much. They say, “She is too tall, she is too short, she is too fat, she is too thin, she is rather dark”. You fool! Your mother was a bride once. What kind of a man are you? Such gross insult to women!!

I would tell these young men, “ Is this a buffalo that you are scrutinizing? Only a buffalo needs such scrutiny.”(480)

Do you know how these females pay you back for such insults? How will it affect the boys?

There is a surplus in the number of females, and therefore, their value has declined. It is nature's doing. When does the reaction occur and the payments come? It comes when the female population dwindles and there is a surplus of males. Then it will be their turn to decide for themselves the quality of husband. They ask for a swayamvar (a custom prevalent in India hundreds of years ago, whereby an invitation was sent to all the eligible young men by a father whose daughter was of marriageable age.) The young men had to accomplish a specific feat in order to win the girl's hand in marriage. The girl in turn would survey all the young men and garland the one of her choice. Amidst a crowd of eagerly anticipating young princes, a single young girl awaits marriage. She walks gaily along the ranks of young, handsome, well-groomed males, some of whom are twitching their moustaches and incline their heads forward in readiness to receive the garland, but she does not give them even a second look. She comes across the one who attracts her and her heart is drawn to him. She cares little about his looks. He is the one for her. She puts the garland on him. The others walk away with their heads downcast, looking hopeless and gloomy. So they have been repaid for their foolishness. (482)

Today it is all a contract of dowries. There is nothing like love left. In one hand you must place your wealth and on the other we will place our son. Only then we will allow a marriage to proceed. (486)

(18) SELECTION OF A HUSBAND

Dependency, nothing but dependency! No body is independent. The father will not keep his daughter at home forever. He will say she is better off at her in-law's house. At her husband's home everyone criticizes her all the time. She will think, "Mother-in-law what am I to do with you? All I wanted was just a husband?" But no, it will not do to have just a husband because with him will come an entire battalion. (490)

There is nothing wrong with marriage. Marry but do so with the understanding that there will be problems. There is no way out of marriage. There may be a rare girl who has had intentions to remain single and celibate in a previous life. Her case is different. If from the very beginning you accept that in marrying you will have to deal with many difficult situations, then you will not face any nasty surprises. But if you marry with the belief that everything will turn out rosy, you will end up miserable. Marriage is an ocean of misery. Do you think it is an easy task to enter your mother-in-law's house? In rare cases, you might find a husband whose parents are not living. (490)

Civilized people do not fight. They always manage to sleep peacefully without bickering. It is the uncivilized ones who argue and fight relentlessly with each other. (492)

Questioner: We don't go to any parties hosted by those friends who serve alcohol and meat. We do however go to parties given by our friends whose parents all know one another and who do not serve alcohol or meat.

Dadashri: But what do you get out of it?

Questioner: Enjoyment. It's a lot of fun.

Dadashri: Enjoyment? There is enjoyment in eating. But what you should do while eating is to tell yourself that you need to exercise some control. Then gradually you will really enjoy the food. You do not enjoy your food because you have no restrictions. So you keep looking for enjoyment in other things. Exercise control over your food intake by saying, "You will only get this much, no more."

Questioner: Should we allow our kids to go to these parties? And how many times a year should we let them go?

Dadashri: Experienced people have come to the conclusion that it is always better for the girls to listen to their parents and act according to their wishes. And after marriage they should comply with the wishes of their husband.

Questioner: Should the boys do likewise? Do boys have to do what their parents tell them to do?

Dadashri: Even boys must go along with their parents' wishes. With them, you can be a little more liberal and more lenient. Your son can stay out late at night even if he goes alone. Can a girl walk around alone late in the night?

Questioner: No, a girl would be afraid.

Dadashri: It is fine to be liberal with the boys. Girls shouldn't have so much freedom because in general they are afraid to stay out late. Your parents refuse you for the sake of your own future happiness. If you fall into problems, now, you will ruin your future. Happiness will elude you in your future; it will not remain in your hands. They are telling you all these things because they do not want your future to be spoiled, so they keep saying, "Beware... Beware..." (P.498)

Questioner: In Indian families, the boy seems to get all the favors and attention from the parents. They generally believe that the girl is going to end up in a different family anyway after she is married, whereas a boy will bring home the money and support the entire family. This attitude results in the girl feeling that her parents do not love her. Is that proper?

Dadashri: When a girl claims that her parents do not love her, she is totally wrong. It is a misunderstanding on her part. All parents love their children. What can be

done when she does not understand this? This misunderstanding hurts her parents. They would think of all they have suffered in raising her.

Questioner: So why do I feel the way I do, that my parents don't love me? Where did this notion come from?

Dadashri: So many girls ask this question. When they are young they are easy to suppress. When they grow up, their intellect arises and they create such misunderstanding and suffering for themselves, and others. (502)

Questioner: Girls are also not ready to get married at an early age nowadays.

Dadashri: Yes, they are not ready, but even then it is better for them to get married at an early age. As soon as they finish their studies they should get married. Even if they got married first and later, perhaps in another year or so, completed their education, there would be no problem. Once she becomes bound by marriage her life will run smoothly. Otherwise, in her later life she will suffer hardship. (504)

Dadashri: When you talk about being attracted to friends, are you referring to male friends or female friends?

Questioner: Both.

Dadashri: Boy friend too?

Questioner: Yes, both.

Dadashri: It is fine. You have to stay in sambhaav (equanimity; without raag or dwesh) with them and you should always be on your guard and not lose control of yourself. Those who want to be celibate and attain moksha, must have as little contact with the opposite sex as possible. Do you agree?

Questioner: Yes.

Dadashri: Do you desire moksha now?

Questioner: Yes, I do.

Dadashri: So why are you messing with boys? It is fine to hang around with girls and go out and have fun. (505)

Questioner: Why do parents become suspicious even when we have a platonic relationship with our male friends?

Dadashri: No. You can never have a platonic (friends only-no sex) relationship with a boy. It is wrong.

Questioner: What is wrong with that?

Dadashri: Gasoline and matchstick. Can you keep gasoline and a burning match near each other? It is similar to that. They are both opportunistic and are waiting to enjoy each other. Each one is like a hunter in search of prey.

Questioner: You have said that boys and girls should not become friendly.

Dadashri: Yes.

Questioner: People will not accept this, Dada.

Dadashri: That may be so. I have seen cases where this has led to major social problems because the girl becomes pregnant. (506)

When you reach a marriageable age, just let your parents know that you are ready for them to find you a suitable, decent boy who will commit himself to you throughout life. Tell them, Dada has told you and do not be bashful. Your parents will realize that you are ready for marriage. Marriage will happen in one or two years. Once you tie the knot, no one will be tempted to look at you again.

To have boy friends is not good. They are not faithful or true to their promises. They will deceive you. They really do not care about you. None of them will be true to you so do not trust them. Only be friends with girls.

Marriage is the best thing for you. You get nowhere if you keep wandering around. Your parents are settled. They no longer have any problems. You should also do the same. Does that not appeal to you? Would you rather roam around? Do you not understand my point? (509)

When I ask the girls why they do not get married, they exclaim, "Why are you asking us to get married?" I tell them, their world will not run unless they marry. There's no way around it. Either they get married or they remain celibate. If they decide on the latter, they should practice it firmly and with resolve. Whatever they choose, they must be decisive. I ask them why they object to getting married and they reply, "Just look at these boys, they are such losers. What's the point of marrying a loser?" They surprised me with their boldness. They have so much power in them now. God knows how they will let the poor guys live. Some of the boys will even say they would rather not get married. I tell the girls to get rid of the opinion they have about boys, because they have no alternative but to get married. If you marry with the notion that the boys are losers, you will always see your husband as a loser and always have problems at home. (510)

The whole world is naturally evolving in the direction of moksha but clashes between couples create obstacles along the way. It is the nature of the summer season to

pull the monsoon behind it from wherever it is. As the summer heat intensifies it brings the rain.

The nature of worldly life is such that it steers you towards moksh. It pulls moksh towards you like a magnet. The more harsh and ruthless the world is, the quicker the moksh will come to you, provided that you do not succumb to its ruthlessness. Stick to your position on the stage. When you come across adverse circumstances, understand that they are vitamin for your soul. When you experience happiness, know that it is vitamin for the body. From childhood I have been enjoying vitamins of both types. You are looking for vitamin for the body only.

Have you not seen people fast and do all kinds of rigid penance for the sake of their soul? To them, their penance is their soul's vitamin. But you are fortunate that you receive your vitamins in the comforts of your own home. (522)

Do not set your heart on a love marriage. There are no guarantees about the temper of your partner. When your parents find you a boy, you can look at him critically. Make sure he has reasonable intelligence and no major defects. You should be attracted to him.

Questioner: Can parents make a mistake in their choice of a boy for us?

Dadashri: Their intention is to work for your benefit. Despite this, if something goes wrong, it is your prarabdha (what you have brought for you from past life). So what can anyone do then? If you find someone on your own, there are greater risks involved. So many have failed in this independent approach. (525)

One of our mahatma's only son expressed to me his wish to get married. I asked him, "What kind of girl will you say yes to?" He replied, "I will do whatever you say, Dada!" He then added, "My mom's very shrewd when it comes to choosing a wife for me." The young man had already accepted the idea of his mother choosing his marriage partner for him. This is exactly how it should be. (527)

Questioner: My daughter always argues about the difficulty of choosing a husband in this arranged manner. "It would ruin my whole life." She says. "I need to see the person and go out with him for some time before I decide whether or not to marry him." What am I to do with her?

Dadashri: All marry after seeing each other and then they fight. Those who married without seeing are doing well because they accepted what nature provided. And the others became over wise and suffer. (528)

A mahatma's daughter rejected a boy who was well educated and who pleased her parents. This really upset the girl's father who thought, "Finally I find the perfect boy and my daughter refuses him!" Her parents came and asked for my help. I asked them to bring their daughter to me. I asked her, "What do you find wrong with him? Is he too tall,

is he too fat, is he too thin?" She replied, "He is kind of blackish (dark complexion) "I told her, "I will make him fair. Is there anything else about him that bothers you?" "No, nothing else", she answered. So I told her she should agree to marry him.

After she married the boy, I asked her, " My dear, should I get some soap to make him fair?" She replied, " No Dadaji, he is fair."

Uttering blackish ! Blackish ! What nonsense! If you smeared black on him he would look black and if you had smeared something yellow he would look yellow. I thought the boy was fine. How can we let go of him? (531)

Questioner: Is dating a sin? When girls and boys go out together is it a sin? Is there anything wrong in it?

Dadashri: Yes. If you feel like going out with boys, then you should get married. You should decide on just one boy and stick to him. Until you get married you should not involve yourself with any boy.

Questioner: In America and England, when boys and girls turn fourteen years of age they begin to date and if things work out, they continue to become steady. But if the relationship turns sour, they break up and find someone else to go out with. Sometimes it so happens that one person will be dating more than one at a time.

Dadashri: That is wildness, wild- life.

Questioner: Then what should they do?

Dadashri: The girl should be sincere to the boy and the boy should be sincere to the girl. Life should be like this. An insincere life is a wrong life.

Questioner: How can a person remain sincere if the other person turns and becomes insincere?

Dadashri: Then stop dating altogether. Get married. After all, we are humans, not wild life.

After marriage we should live sincerely with each other. If you want to live sincerely, then from the beginning you should not get involved with another man. Stay firm on this issue. If you want to date someone, do so with the idea in your mind that you will marry him. Tell your parents that you have decided to marry him and no one else. Insincere life is wild life. (532)

If a person is of ill repute and has all sorts of addictions, would you tolerate it?

Questioner: Absolutely not.

Dadashri: And what if he is of good character, but has an addiction?

Questioner: I would tolerate him smoking cigarettes only.

Dadashri: You are right. Smoking is tolerable. Alcohol is not to be tolerated. You have said well. Good character is very important. Do you believe that?

Questioner: Of course! How can one live without it?

Dadashri: Yes. If Indian women and girls would understand just this much, a lot is accomplished. To understand the importance of character is enough.

Questioner: These noble thoughts of ours are a result of reading good literature.

Dadashri: Very good. I am pleased. (536)

Deception and insincerity is rampant everywhere. You all do not see this. I see it all. Wherever there is mistrust, there cannot be happiness. You should remain sincere. Whatever mistakes made prior to marriage, should be admitted and thereafter agree to be sincere to each other. Whether or not you like it, be sincere. Are we not always sincere to our mother, even when we dislike her at times? (540)

Questioner: I accept that everything happens according to my karma. How do I deal with equanimity with an insincere husband?

Dadashri: If your husband is insincere, how can you win him over? Whatever your fate has in store for you, will not leave you alone. This world does not work according to our wishes. Come to me sometime, and I will give you knowledge to deal with him.

In Aurangabad, a young Muslim girl named Masroor came to me. I asked her why she had come? She looked into my eyes and must have felt some peace within her. She thought "He looks just like 'Khuda's (God's) assistant," She decided to stay.

I asked her what she did for a living and she told me that she was a lecturer.

"Are you married or not?" I asked.

"No I am not, but I am engaged to marry a lawyer in Pakistan" She answered.

"When are you planning to be married?" I inquired.

"In six months time" She replied.

"Right now you are not unhappy but after your wedding what will you do if your husband makes you suffer? Do you have some project to fall back on after your marriage? Before you marry him, you must have some sort of project in your head about how you will act towards him. Have you thought about whether or not you will suit each after you are married?" I asked.

"I have made all the necessary preparations. If he utters a word like this, I will respond like that and if he says that, then I will tell him this! I have a response for everything he says!"

Just as Russia and the U.S. had prepared for a cold war, she was also prepared for one. She had made preparations to tackle all dispute. Before he could even begin, she was ready to fire! If he fires a torpedo she would come back with an appropriate weapon. I informed her that she had begun a cold war, for which there was no end.

Girls have a tendency to act this way. They have everything planned from the start. Boys on the other hand do not preplan anything. So these naive boys lose the battle.

I asked Masroor, "Who taught you all this? If you carry on this way, he is bound to give you a talaak (divorce- Muslim style) within six months. Do you want a divorce? Your approach is wrong."

"If I do not act this way towards him then he will become my oppressor!" She cried.

"Will you listen to what I have to say? Do you want your marriage to be a happy one? All the women who have prepared to fight back with their husbands have failed miserably." I explained to her that she should go without anticipating any antagonism from him and not make any preparations for conflict. If you go on fighting with your spouse day in and day out, will he not think about getting himself another woman? Win him over with love.

Questioner: Love?

Dadashri: Yes, love. Even in attachment there is some element of love. You do not hate him, do you? Is this a war between India and Pakistan? Every one in a marriage seems to be at war. This brings misery into their lives.

I explained to her how she should deal with her husband. "You should tackle him in such a way that if he tries to create a dispute you should be ready to resolve it. You should be cool and calm when he gets fired up. Even if he tries to create differences between the two of you, you should act as though you are both one. All these relationships are relative relationships. If you both end up tearing things apart, you will end up divorced." She asked me what she should do?

"Act according to the demands of his mood. If he is in a bad mood, you should have a chat with the God within him and after he feels good, you can turn your conversation to him. If he is not feeling lively and you are pestering him, he will explode." You should see him innocent. Even if he says something rotten to you, keep quiet. Love should be true. Feeble love only lasts for six months to a year perhaps. Love is tolerance and adjustment.

Masroor accepted everything I told her. "If he shoots at you from any direction, just stay calm and keep praying to Dada. Just don't shoot back." I asked her who else was included in the family and she mentioned her mother-in-law.

"How will you adjust with her?" I asked.

"I can get around her too." She replied. So I explained to her how she should deal with her mother-in-law as well.

I explained to her charitrabud (the force of good character) "Whenever your husband yells, you maintain your silence and calmly watch what happens. Your charitrabud will

grow and it will have an impact on him. Even though he is a lawyer, he will be baffled by your ability to stay calm and collected. He will have lost the battle.”

She followed my advice and acted on it. When you prepare to win the battle you lose your charitrabud. I never prepare for any battle. You might feel that in demonstrating your strength you are winning, but in fact, you are really losing your charitrabud. If you lose this, your husband will not value you at all. She understood this well and promised that she would never fight him.

If someone is preparing to fight with you, and if you get ready to retaliate, your charitrabud will break. No matter how much someone tries to provoke you into a fight, if you do not respond to them, they themselves will become be entangled in their own scheme. If you prepare to retaliate, you will be sucked into their trap. So many people have tried to thwart me but they have lost at their own game, because I never think about retaliation. Your sheelvanpanu will be destroyed, even at the thought of retaliation.

What is a sheelvan? When a person comes to you with intentions to hurt you in any manner, he will not be able to do anything, the moment he sees you. You may expect him to say something but he stands speechless. This is the impact of sheel (inner moral strength). If you get ready to oppose him, your sheel breaks, so do not take up arms. Let him do whatever he wishes. I exist in all. (542)

When faced with war, we are generally forced to prepare for our defense. When we do this, we slip. We do not have a weapon. He has the weapon so let him use it. After all it is vyavasthit, is it not? But, the vyavasthit is such that he will be hurt himself with his own weapon.

Mashoor later brought her father, a doctor to have my darshan. All a person with problems needs to do is to come here. If she does, her work is done. (549)

All the problems can be solved. Each word of mine will produce a solution and liberate you. Adjust everywhere. (550)

(19) HAPPINESS IN LIFE THROUGH SERVICE

Those who see fault in their parents will never be happy. They may be wealthy materially but never spiritually. You must never see fault in your parents. How can you forget what they have done for you? You do not forget someone's kindness when they offer you a cold drink on a hot day. So how can you forget your parent's goodness?

You should take care of them in the best possible manner. If they say something you do not like, ignore it. They are your elders. Do you still think you ought to be disrespectful to them?

Questioner: No. I should not, but what if I do it happens by mistake?

Dadashri: Why don't you slip? You manage to be careful there. Besides, if you slip accidentally, your father will understand. If you make a mistake on purpose, he will question you. Try your best not to make a mistake. If it happens outside your control they will understand and know that you are not capable of doing it. Keep them happy. Do they not try to keep you happy? All parents desire their child's happiness. (563)

Questioner: Yes, but I feel that they have got into a habit of nagging.

Dadashri: Yes. It is your own fault. You have to do pratikraman for hurting them. They should not be hurt. You should tell yourself that you are here to keep them happy. Ask yourself, "What did I do to make them so unhappy?" (564)

Does your father seem bad to you? What will happen when you think badly of him? There is nothing bad in this world. Whatever comes your way is just. A mother is mother and one should never see any fault in her. Destiny has given her to you. Can you replace your mother?

Questioner: No.

Dadashri: Can you find a mother in the shops? If you did, she would not be of any use to you. Of what use would a fair and pretty mom be to you? Whoever you have is good. You should not compare her with someone else's mother. You should praise her for what she is.

Questioner: What should we feel about our father?

Dadashri: Keep him happy. Don't you know how? (564)

Parents are parents. Your first duty in this world, is the duty to your parents. Will you serve them?

Questioner: Yes, I help them in the house. (565)

Dadashri: What about peace? Do you want it or not?

Questioner: Yes. I want it.

Dadashri: I will help you with that, but have you ever served your parents? If you serve them, you will always have peace. Today people neither help nor take care of their parents sincerely. At thirty he finds a guru (wife) who demands to be taken to a new home. Have you seen such a guru? After the age of twenty or thirty years he changes because of his guru. She complains about his mother. At first, he refuses to listen but eventually she gets to him and he begins to resent his own mother.

People, who wholeheartedly care for their parents, find peace. That is the law of nature. People ask me what fault is it of the parents that their children do not care for

them. I tell them that it is because the parents themselves never cared for their own parents. This entire generation has gone astray. If a new one began all over, it would be a better one. (566)

By caring for our elders this science flourishes. Can you care for a stone statue? Would the statue's legs ache? Care should be for the elderly, for parents and the guru (spiritual masters). (567)

The care of parents is religion. Regardless of the karmic account, this service is our religion. This brings happiness. If we give happiness to our parents, we will be happy.

A man had been living in an ashram for ten years. When I informed him that his parents were dying from poverty in their last days, he replied, "What could I possibly do? If I go and take care of them, it will prevent me from my religious practices." How can you call this a religion? Religion is where one cares for others. Worldly interaction should be ideal. How can any interaction that causes one to neglect one's own parents be considered a religion? (569)

I took care of my mother when I was twenty years old and in the prime of my youth. I could take care of her then. All I managed to do for my father was to carry his body over my shoulder at his funeral. I realized later that it was an account. I must have had countless fathers like him in previous lives. So now what could I do? I found the answer, "Take care of the ones who are present. Those who have departed are gone forever. If they are alive today take care of them, if not, don't worry about it. It is better late than never." To care for parents who are living is a great blessing. The result is immediate. You can't see God, but you can see them. They are next to God. (570)

The most miserable people on earth are those in their old age. To whom can they complain? Children do not pay any attention to them. The generation gap is too great between the old and the new. The old people cannot change and adjust to the new pace of life, even if they suffer.

Questioner: Every old person is in the same boat.

Dadashri: Yes it is the same everywhere. What needs to be done to address this problem? It will be great if there are living arrangements made somewhere for such elderly people. I had decided that they should be given Gnan. Then make arrangements for their daily needs, by community efforts. Gnan gives them peace and bliss. Otherwise there is no means of peace. What do you think? (570)

What kind of ethical and moral values do your children get at home? When you bow down to your parents, even at your age, will it not encourage your children to do the same? Then would he not bow down to you? (573)

Questioner: Kids today do not bow down to their parents. They seem reluctant or ashamed to do so.

Dadashri: They don't because they have witnessed all the negative things happening between their parents and begin to feel that it is not worth showing any respect. If they found something in their parents, worthy of praise like good conduct, thought and behavior then they would always bow to them. But today's parents fight in front of their children. Do they not?

Questioner: Yes.

Dadashri: Then what form of respect can the children have for their parents?
(574)

In this world you must have the highest reverence towards these three: the father, the mother and the guru. These three have guided you on the right path in life. Their grace should never be forgotten. (575)

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The Awareness of The Eternal is Bliss

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