

Sat Chit Anand

From: "Sat Chit Anand" <satchitanand@global.co.za>
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Nothing is good or bad in itself

Extract from my notes, Satsang by Swami Suddhananda, Tamil Nadu, South India

Photo: statue on Ashram

To be happy, you don't need anything outside of your Self (= independence). To sustain yourself, you need everything and everybody (= interdependence). Independence is the goal. But interdependence is the name of the game. We need collective humanity. We need everything, we need the whole. So be happy with yourself, and learn to love others.



Everything can be good or bad. With water, you can drink or drown. With fire, you can cook or you can burn yourself. Fire is hot – you can stand near it and get warm, or you can touch it and get burnt. You decide. With food, you can sustain yourself, or you can make yourself sick if you eat too much. So good or bad doesn't come from the object – it comes from how you use it; it depends on how you use the object. Withdraw your condemnation of the world. Everything is beautiful. Nothing is good or bad, but innocent. [In Buddhist terminology, we would say that things are "empty" of the qualities that we project and impose on them.]

Riches don't give happiness. Poverty / renunciation doesn't give happiness. If there is a cause for your happiness, then it is not genuine happiness, and you are not a genuinely happy person. If there is a cause for your success, love etc, then it is not real. If there is a reason, it is not real. Conditions change, and in the absence of the cause / reason, your peace, success, love goes. As long as there is a reason for your happiness, you are not free – it is not real

happiness. Only if there is no cause / reason – I am the source of happiness – nothing can affect it, then it is real.

If you think the presence of an object brings happiness, you will chase the object. If you

think the absence of an object brings happiness, then you will try to chase the object away. Both are stupid.

Do you lose your happiness in an object outside, or in your mind? You lose it in your mind. Logically it seems right – if you have a problem with something, remove the thing. If you have a problem with thoughts – remove the thoughts. But this is not the solution. If you have a headache, you cannot remove your head. When you know that happiness is your Self, then nothing can take it away, because it is you.

Objects cannot be the source of happiness, else they should be the same at all times and in all conditions, then that would be their nature. Fire is always hot – it is its nature. Have you ever seen a cold fire, or salty sugar? But the nature of chocolate is not happiness. Try eating 10kg of it, and you will vomit. Name one object that gives happiness to all people at all times. You cannot.

Whatever is your dream – that it will bring you happiness – is someone else's reality. If they are not happy, why will you be? Because happiness doesn't come from the object. Nor is there one object that gives unhappiness to all people at all times. No object by itself gives happiness or unhappiness. It is not the *dharma* or nature of objects. So don't blame the world. It is a beautiful creation.

When you understand this, the entire universe of time, place and objectivity ceases to be the source of happiness. This doesn't mean that life is suffering / misery. Life is not good or bad – it depends on how you use it. Don't be an extremist: either chasing life looking for happiness, or the opposite extreme of renouncing life thinking the world is bad. Both cause problems: running towards and running away from.

When you know your Self, then you are happily comfortable and happily uncomfortable. It doesn't matter. When you know that happiness is your nature, then comfort and discomfort do not remove your happiness. But you confuse comfort and discomfort with happiness and unhappiness. You equate happiness with sensation. If good sensation, you are happy. If not nice sensation, you are unhappy. So most people's lives consist of a struggle to get good sensations and avoid uncomfortable sensations. This is a cause for fear. When you see that happiness is your Self, then there are no problems.

Our *dharma* / nature is happiness. That is why everyone wants happiness. Because they are looking for themselves. We want happiness because this is our true nature. Unhappiness is unnatural, we don't want it. We long for our natural state. Happiness is your Self. Love is your Self.

Mindful Hatha Yoga

Tuesdays and Thursdays: 18h00 - 19h30

Cost: R50 per class

All classes include some teachings on yoga philosophy, a sequence of basic asanas (yoga poses), guided relaxation, pranayama (breathing exercises), and meditation

Self-knowledge and Meditation

Wednesday evenings: 19h00 - 21h00

New series starting 21 April

Cost: by donation

"I, the Ultimate Pilgrimage"

A series of 5 DVD teachings by Swami Suddhananda

Followed by Q&A, discussion and meditation

Movie Night: Jesus in India

Thursday 29 April ... Details in next email ...

Self-retreats and healing holidays

Available anytime: see www.satchitanand.co.za/healing_holiday/htm

We are all connected in profound and beautiful ways. Your personal growth, your healing, is needed by us all. It is your greatest gift to us all. When you heal your own heart, your own mind, it ripples out and affects the whole collective ocean of humanity. We all benefit from what you heal in yourself ... Various holistic treatments and healing therapies are available in our Healing Centre. Simply taking time out to be with yourself and to connect with your life on a deeper level is healing. Spend time in our garden Sanctuary - Interfaith Meditation Chapel - and experience the healing benefits of being in silence. Local Plett residents who wish to spend some time in this beautiful and peaceful space may phone 044 533 0453.

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