

OUTREACH



VOLUME 8 EDITION 3



The Habit of Digging for Gold

A young boy emigrated from Scotland to the United States in 1848. His family was very poor and life was a daily struggle. At the age of 13, he started working 12-hour shifts, six days a week, at a cotton mill. This earned him a total of \$1.20 per week.

As he grew older, he used his small savings to invest in railroads and steel corporations. One smart investment led to another. Eventually, this young boy grew up to become one of the richest and most powerful men in the history of the United States.

His name was Andrew Carnegie, and in 1901, he sold his company for a whopping \$480 million (equivalent to \$372 billion today). Amazingly, he became a leading philanthropist, as he donated over 90% of this money to various charities, foundations, and universities. Many libraries, parks, universities, and other public buildings bear his name to commemorate his contributions to society.

All successful people have some traits that sets them apart from the crowd. They have a mindset, a vision, or an attitude that is unique and it helps foster their accomplishments. So what did Carnegie do differently?

One day, a reporter asked Carnegie, “Being such a wealthy and successful businessman, you have to interact with so many people. These people are usually other greedy businessmen eyeing your money. So how do you deal with them?”

Carnegie replied, “Dealing with people is like digging for gold. When you go digging for gold, you have to remove tons of dirt just to get one ounce of gold. But when you go digging, you don’t go looking for dirt, you go looking for gold.”

The reporter was confused, so Carnegie continued, “There is something positive in every person and every situation. Many times, we have to dig deeper to find the positive because it may not be apparent. I try digging for gold in other people and in tough situations. Sometimes it’s difficult to find, but I always try.”



Looking only for the positive attributes all the time, especially when dealing with others, is a powerful technique that can help develop a strong mindset. It not only helps us to be happy, but allows us to be more creative, energetic, and focused—which is

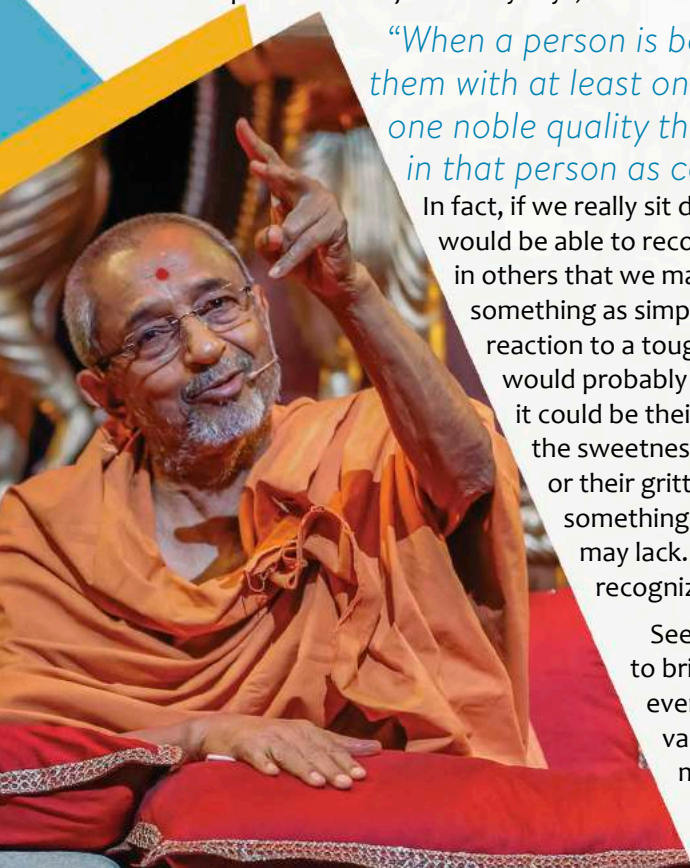
definitely a unique recipe for success. We are constantly surrounded by other people. And so, developing a habit of digging for the good in others is perhaps the single easiest way to keep our happiness intact.

Guruhari Hariprasad Swamiji routinely says,

“When a person is born, Bhagwan gifts them with at least one virtue—at least one noble quality that is more prevalent in that person as compared to others.”

In fact, if we really sit down and think it over, we would be able to recognize at least one virtue in others that we may be lacking. It could be something as simple as their positive or calm reaction to a tough situation, in which we would probably become easily agitated. Or it could be their kind-hearted personality, the sweetness in their speaking-style, or their gritty nature. There is always something good in others that we may lack. We just need to simply recognize that virtue.

Seeking virtues in others helps to bring families, friends, and even enemies together. If we value the virtues of others, it makes living together much

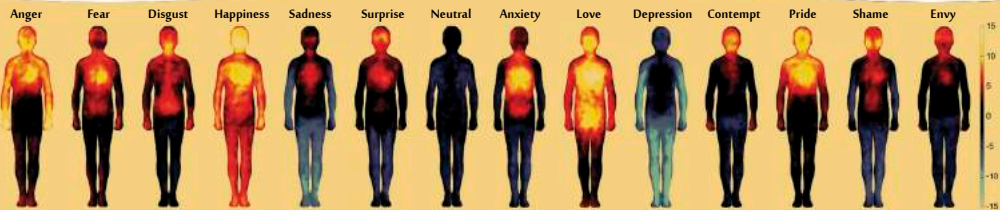


more enjoyable. Not to mention, we would certainly spend less time in a depressed mindset and our arguments with others would decline.

But perhaps the greatest benefit of a positive mindset is best explained by Gunatitanand Swami. He states, "A person can reach the ultimate spiritual state of bliss (*brahmroop*) by simply thinking and speaking of others' virtues. And for this, there is no physical efforts required." [Swami Ni Vaato 4-140]

It may be difficult to see virtues in others for various reasons, but we can start at this moment with the people around us. Trying to see just one virtue per day in others is the first step. And when we cannot see any virtue, praying and doing bhajan for a few minutes will certainly bless us with a positive mindset to see the virtues of others.

Cool Fact



Our mood, our mindset, and our emotions can all influence our body. Researchers at Finland's Aalto University revealed how emotions are literally experienced through the body. Studying the emotional responses of the body of over 700 participants, they charted how different emotions trigger different levels of sensation throughout the body. High levels of sensation are represented with warmer hues, and low levels with bluer hues. A positive mindset that leads to happiness can actually stimulate and energize the entire body!

A self-proclaimed genius challenges a person who seemed to be an idiot. The genius says, "Every question I ask you that you do not know the answer to, you have to give me \$5. And if you ask me a question that I cannot answer then I will give you \$500." The idiot agrees.

The genius then asks, "How many continents are there in the world?" The idiot does not know and hands over \$5.

The idiot says, "Now let me ask. What animal stands with two legs but sleeps with three?" The genius searches very hard for the answer but gives up and hands over \$500.

The genius, now frustrated, says, "I cannot believe I lost. By the way, what was the answer to your question?" The idiot hands over \$5 and walks away.



laugh **OUT** loud



A Divine Vision by the Divine

People around the world strive to cultivate positive traits in their lives. These traits can help deal with social problems, achieve success and even remain happy. Thousands of motivational books are sold and millions of speeches are delivered to outline techniques on how to imbibe such attributes.

Bhagwan Swaminarayan and Guruhari Hariprasad Swamiji have prescribed just one technique: in any situation, seek only the positive. This one supreme technique encompasses all endeavors. But what does it mean to really use this technique in our lives? Let us take inspiration from an extraordinary incident from the life of Yogiji Maharaj.

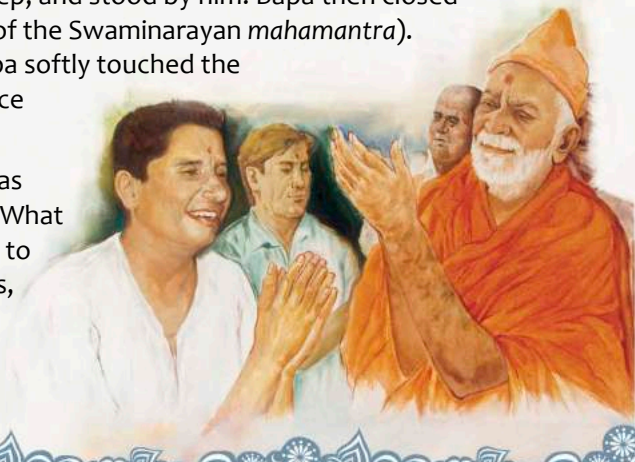
Once, Yogiji Maharaj (also known as Bapa) arrived at the temple in the town of Bochasan after completing a long journey. Bapa insisted on having Thakorji's darshan. Prabhudasbhai held Bapa's hand and assisted Him to the temple.

While walking up the stairs, they met the temple's *kothari*. A *kothari* is a central person who handles the financial matters and social dealings of the temple. Entrusted with such major responsibilities, the *kothari* is generally hard at work and busy with his duties, especially since he is held accountable for all affairs. Yet, the *kothari* of the Bochasan temple appeared to be everything but busy. In fact, he was freely lying down on the bench, fast asleep!

How would we respond seeing such a sight? As a third-party passerby, maybe this would not affect us. But let's consider the situation from Bapa's perspective. Bapa was the *mahant*, or leader, of the entire Bochasan temple. On the one hand, He had the full authority to make the final decision on all matters and to instruct every person at the temple on what to do. Moreover, if a person was not completing his assigned duty, Bapa had the authority to advise him or even scold him as required.

Yet, what did Bapa do in this situation? Bapa slowly and quietly approached the *kothari*, who was still sound asleep, and stood by him. Bapa then closed his eyes and did *dhun* (chanting of the Swaminarayan *mahamantra*). After a few minutes of *dhun*, Bapa softly touched the *kothari's* feet with great reverence while bowing down.

Seeing this, Prabhudasbhai was puzzled. Why did Bapa do *dhun*? What is He trying to teach me? Curious to better understand Bapa's actions, he asked, "Bapa, why did you just do *dhun*?"



Bapa smiled and replied, “Guru! Sometimes I have a hard time falling asleep at night and this *kothari* is sleeping in such peace. I prayed to Shastriji Maharaj that I, too, can get such sound sleep!”

An elder devotee named Haka Khachar, who witnessed this entire situation, could not tolerate the thought of this *kothari* publically sleeping in such a manner! Moreover, he felt that Bapa should not have to bow down to such an incompetent fellow, who is not even performing his duties. Brewing with anger, Haka Khachar marched towards the *kothari*.

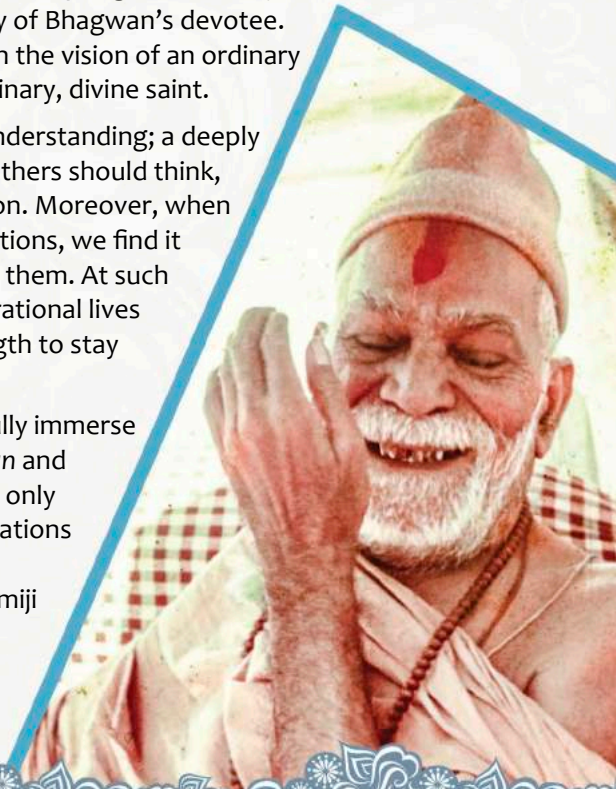
Right when he was about to yell at the *kothari* and wake him up, Bapa gently stopped him and took him aside. With full glory and humbleness, Bapa whispered, “Haka Khachar! I know how much *seva* this *kothari* has done for this temple. Even if I were to rinse his feet with water and drink it for the rest of my life, it still would not equate to the amount of *seva* this *kothari* has performed...” Haka Khachar was moved by Bapa’s words and had nothing more to say.

What a divine vision! First and foremost, Bapa did not wake up the *kothari*, nor did He scold him. Instead, He instantly took only the positive attributes from the situation and the individual, while bypassing the rest.

Moreover, Bapa not only remained positive, but he kept those around him positive as well. The situation was such that it had seemingly no positive aspect or merit. But Bapa extinguished the erupting fire in the eyes of the elder devotee, simply by sharing the utmost glory of Bhagwan’s devotee. This is the vast difference between the vision of an ordinary man and the vision of an extraordinary, divine saint.

Each of us live with a certain understanding; a deeply ingrained understanding of how others should think, talk, and behave in a given situation. Moreover, when they do not live up to our expectations, we find it difficult to see a positive quality in them. At such times, we can dwell into the inspirational lives of such Gunatit Purusho for strength to stay positive.

Let us pray that we, too, can fully immerse ourselves in the virtues of *Bhagwan* and His devotees. Let us strive to seek only the positive in the people and situations around us. In return, the graceful *Bhagwan Swaminarayan* and *Swamiji* will surely bless us with His divine vision and bliss.



Dwelling into Swamiji's Life

Developing the habit of seeing only positive qualities in others will keep us fresh, spirited, and allow us to enjoy each moment. It may seem difficult to keep an ever positive mindset, especially since we have to deal with so many people throughout the day. However, it is definitely possible with guidance from Guruhari Hariprasad Swamiji.

Swamiji is the personification of positivity. His every word and every action is filled with such divinity, nobility, and positivity that it truly inspires each person in His contact to live a positive life. Through His grace, Swamiji once described how we can develop an ever-positive mindset into our lives.

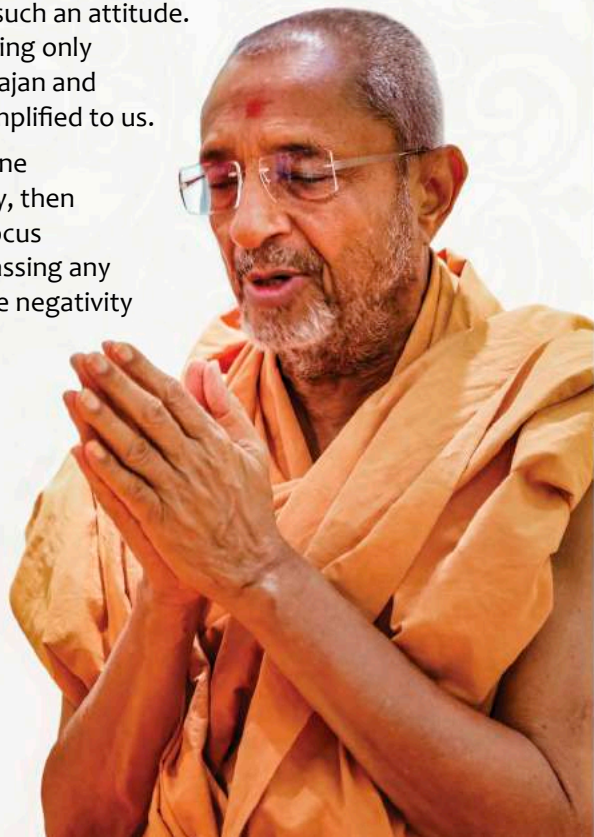
Swamiji once said, "Since I have been in Yogiji Maharaj's association [starting in 1954 as a youth], I have maintained one great nature. It is that even if a person who is filled with 99 negative traits out of a 100, then I do not see those 99 negative traits. I see only the one positive trait in that person. I practiced to focus on seeing only positive traits in others, even if that person only had one virtue. To develop such a positive-seeking nature, I spent six months staying up until 3:00 AM every night [doing bhajan and thinking of others' virtues]. As a result of this effort, I received blessings [for an ever-positive mindset]."

Swamiji always had a positive attitude, but He took it upon Himself to exemplify the path required for us to develop such an attitude.

A firm resolution and practice of seeing only positivity, combined with sincere bhajan and prayer, is the path that Swamiji exemplified to us.

Every single person has at least one positive trait. If we want to be happy, then it is our responsibility to think and focus only the virtues of others while bypassing any negativity we perceive. And if we see negativity in anyone at any time, we must do bhajan and prayer at night, ask for forgiveness from Bhagwan, and remind ourselves about the positive attributes of that person.

Our sincere effort in doing this will ensure we receive blessings from Swamiji. And as a result, the day will come when we, too, will be able to see the one positive trait in a person that may have 99 other flaws!



Four Simple Ways to Reprogram Your Mind for Positivity

Ask a Friend

Two heads are better than one. Your friend may see something positive in a person that you may have missed.

Be a Detective

Look for clues. Their virtues may not be clearly evident at all times, but be vigilant. When you do see a virtuous action in others, make a mental note of it.

Walk in Their Shoes

We may not know what they are going through. And so, it is easier to see the best in people if we take the time to understand their background and experience.

Bhajan and Prayer

Introspect at night to analyze all the times throughout the day when a negative thought arose about someone. Then do bhajan, think about the positive attitude of inspirational saints [i.e. Gunatit Purusho], and make a prayer.

Lasting Thought

When a saint or a leader speaks virtues of others and if we truly enjoy it, then that virtue will become ours. And if you cannot see the virtue, but believe 100% that the person will eventually have the virtue, then the virtue will also become ours.



A Divine Glimpse

In March of 2016, Guruhari Hariprasad Swamiji was on *vichran* in New Zealand. Throughout His *vichran*, Swamiji visited many devotees' homes and inspired hundreds of youths. On March 12-13th, 2016, there was a grand *Parivar Shibir* held in Queenstown, New Zealand. Below are a few highlights from Swamiji's divine speech:

- Ambrish Raja [King Ambrish] was a great devotee of *Bhagwan*. When Ambrish Raja's life was threatened by Durvasa, *Bhagwan* released His *sudarshan-chakra* and saved Ambrish Raja. *Bhagwan* always cares for His devotees.
- Because of ego, we fail through our *vaani* when interacting with others. Whenever we fail through our *vaani* [when we speak rudely, hastily, or inappropriately], we must do 20 minutes of extra *bhajan* at night.
- We have to be alert and strive to eradicate our stubbornness, ego, and jealousy. Once they are eradicated, Yogiji Maharaj will run towards us, hug us, and bless us with *bhramni-sthiti*. All of our stubbornness, ego, and jealousy will be eradicated within one year.

