

The Five Dacoits

The Five Perversions of Mind

From *The Path of the Masters* by Julian Johnson
Sant Kirpal Singh Ji, Hazur Baba Sawan Singh Ji, and others

We are constantly beset by five foes - passion, anger, greed, worldly attachments, and vanity. All these must be mastered, brought under control. You can never do that entirely until you have the aid of the Guru and are in harmonic relations with the Sound Current. But you can begin now, and every effort will be a step on the way. (Baba Sawan Singh, *Spiritual Gems*, 339)



Swami Ji has said that we should not hesitate to go all out to still the mind.

We do not fully grasp that the mind takes everyone to his doom.

It is like a thousand-faced snake, which is constantly with each being;

it has a thousand different ways of destroying the person.

The rich with riches, the poor with poverty, the orator with his fine speeches –
it takes the weakness in each and plays upon it to destroy him.

(Sant Kirpal Singh Ji)

ruhanisatsangusa.org/serpent.htm



Contents

Page:

1. The Five Perversions of Mind, from *The Path of the Masters*, by Julian Johnson
2. Biography of Julian Johnson, from Wikipedia
3. **Lust**– Julian Johnson
5. The Case for Chastity, Parts 1 & 2 from Sat Sandesh
6. Sant Kirpal Singh Ji on Chastity
7. Hazur Baba Sawan Singh
8. **Anger**– Julian Johnson
10. Anger Quotes
11. Sant Kirpal Singh on Anger
12. Baba Sawan Singh, Jack Kornfield
13. **Greed**– Julian Johnson
14. Greed Quotes
15. The Stoics
16. Sant Kirpal Singh on Greed
17. Three Forms of Greed
18. **Attachment**– Julian Johnson
20. The One Thing Which You Must Never Forget – Rumi
21. Detachment and Renunciation – Sant Kirpal Singh
22. Attachment and Worldly Relationships – Sant Kirpal Singh
23. The Procrastinating Householder – Kabir
24. **Vanity** – Julian Johnson
26. Vanity Quotes
27. Sant Kirpal Singh on Pride
28. The Haughty Foe
29. Antidotes to the Deadly Five – Julian Johnson
30. End

Who fights with bows and arrows is not the true valiant one;
who banishes from his mind all cravings, lures and greed
is a warrior indeed.
(Kabir)

Conquer the mind,
and you conquer the world.
(Guru Nanak)

Without suffering the pain of self-restraint,
no recompense can follow.
(Rumi)

If at every moment you are consciously watching your behavior,
a calm consideration will replace a blind instinctive reaction to certain situations in life
where the choice lies between committing a lapse in behavior or avoiding it.
(The Teachings of Kirpal Singh, v. 2, 19)

Become even a little receptive and the Master in you will restrain you
when you are in danger of going wrong.
(Sant Kirpal Singh, .ruhanisatsangusa.org/re_mind.htm)

The Five Perversions of Mind

From *The Path of the Masters*

by Julian Johnson

Any outline of the psychology of the Masters would not be complete without particular mention of the five modes of destructive mental action called the passions. We have said that these are perversions of the normal faculties. They are so. If a mind doing its duty only is kept strictly within its legitimate field of action, it will never become subjected to these five destructive processes. They are really mental diseases super-induced by the misuse of normal faculties. They are species of psychological morbidity. But they play such a tremendous part in the average human life that we must study them as we would study a cancer in the hope of finding a cure.

The Masters have found by ages of careful observation that there are five different modes of destructive mental activity. They are modes of obsession. They are deadly diseases, each giving rise to a distinct pathology in the character of the individual. They destroy by insidious infection and dissolution. Their end is darkness and despair. But we must insist that Nature, or the Negative Power, shall not be blamed for these mental carcinomas. These evil passions cannot take root in man unless they are invited. This fact must not be forgotten. Unless, through self-indulgence, man invites them to become his guests and friends, they can never enter the premises. Unless he willingly plays with them, they can get no hold upon him.

Self-indulgence, the worst of all sins, is a flaunting invitation to these five to come in and take up their abode. And where they enter, they at once begin to forge the chains of evil karma. When once a man has turned over his conduct to these passions, they place every sort of temptation before him, assuming all possible forms attractive to the senses. They make false pretenses and hold out alluring promises. To gain a firmer hold upon their victims, they give a modicum of pleasurable sensations. They try to make victims believe that these pleasures will go on forever. When disappointment comes, as it must always come, they promise that just around the corner after a few more struggles, all difficulties will vanish. An endless round of delights will then carry them to a serene old age.

But always the ultimate good is just ahead; yet you never overtake it. They hold up the mirage of wealth, love and pleasures, of power and position only to draw us on into the valley of death. The end of all of this is an endless circle of births and deaths, stretching on through the countless yugas, treading the eternal wheel. The end finds us just as securely bound as the beginning. If a man by heroic struggle gains a little higher ground, these five soon drag him down again, driving him under the fatal wheel, the wheel of eighty-four. And thus, the weary ages come and go.

These five deadly passions are: kam - sex passion, krodh - anger, lobh - greed, moh - undue attachment to material things, and ahankar - vanity or egotism. We must now examine them in some detail.



It is not reasonable to expect to attain to the higher planes without perfecting yourself to a great degree. (*The Teachings of Kirpal Singh*, v. 2, 6)

When you come in contact with Light and Sound Power within, you have not to adopt any virtues, but everything, all virtues, will come within you of themselves. (Sant Kirpal Singh)

Julian Johnson

From Wikipedia

Julian Philip Matthew Johnson (1873–1939, Beas, British India) was an American surgeon and author of several books on Eastern spirituality. He spent much of the 1930s in India, was associated with the Radha Soami Satsang Beas movement and Surat Shabd Yoga, and wrote five books (one unpublished) as a result of his experiences.

Johnson grew up in a staunch Christian family in the southern United States, became a Baptist minister at age 17, graduated Bachelor of Divinity in Bolivar, Missouri, and received an appointment as a missionary to India at age 22. Johnson claimed that experiences during his three-year stay in India, however, rendered him surprised by the deep understanding possessed by Indians he had sought to convert, and urged him towards further study.

Back in the United States, he earned two master's degrees (M.A. theology) at the University of Chicago, resigned his 17-year Baptist ministership, and earned an M.D. from the State University of Iowa. He served as an assistant surgeon in the United States Navy during World War I, and later went into private practice. He also owned and flew his own airplanes.

Over the years, he took to studies of various religious and philosophical teachings, including Christian Science, Freemasonry, New Thought, Rosicrucianism, Spiritualism, Blavatskyan Theosophy, and world religions. His spiritual explorations culminated when he visited an old friend (Julia McQuilkin in Oregon) who was a disciple of Baba Sawan Singh of Beas, Panjab, India. Convinced that he had found his path, Johnson requested initiation, which was arranged for by Dr. Harold Brock. After a year, Johnson left once more for India on 24 March 1932.

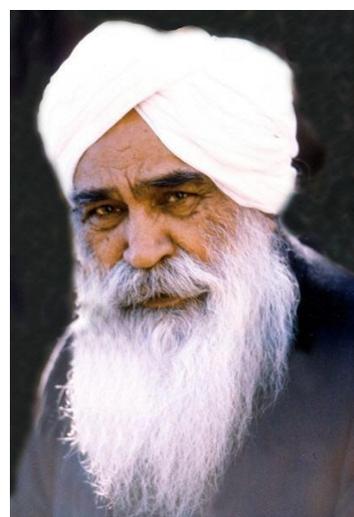
Dr. Johnson was the first American to live permanently at Dera Baba Jaimal Singh, in Beas, where he became busy with study, writing, some medical work, meditation, and traveling with Sāwan Singh. He wrote five books at the Dera, four of which were published: *With a Great Master in India* (1934, autobiographical), *Call of the East* (autobiography), *The Unquenchable Flame* (biography of his wife Elizabeth, written in first person), and his magnum opus *The Path of the Masters*.



Julian Johnson
1873-1939



Hazur Baba Sawan Singh Ji
1858-1948



Param Sant Kirpal Singh Ji
1894-1974

1. Lust

Lust is having a self-absorbed desire for an object, person, or experience. When we are in lust, we place the object of our desire above all things in our lives. It is often manifested in a self-destructive drive for some pleasure regardless of its value, merit, or legality. In common usage, the term stands for excessive passion for sexual pleasure.

1. Lust, or kam, is a normal function but allowed to run into an abnormal demand, it becomes destructive, degrading. In its broader meaning kam includes all abnormal desires. It may include drugs, alcoholic drinks, tobacco or even tasty foods which are eaten simply for the sake of enjoying their tastes – any sort of appetite which seeks indulgence for the sake of enjoying a pleasant sensation.

In some respects this is the strongest of the five and so the most deadly. It is dominant over the vast majority of mankind. It holds them as if by iron chains. It drags them along all through life. Day and night it haunts and taunts them. At every turn it displays its attractions. It appears in the most alluring garb, and it steps out in unadorned seductive abandon. It blinds the mind. It makes a man forget every moral obligation.

Diverse are its methods of intrigue. Various are its blandishments. Alluring and false are its promises. Last of all, when you have wasted your vitality in its indulgences, it tosses you upon the rubbish heap. It coarsens its victims to the level of the animal. It clouds his perceptions and dulls his wits. In return for all of this terrible loss, what has it to offer? A pleasant sensation, a mad moment of delirium, which is called “having a good time.” A passing frenzy, and an hour later its victim finds himself sitting alone in the gathering darkness, with new chains forged about his neck, wondering why he was ever such a fool.

The chief function of kam is to pull men and women down to the common animal level and keep them there. It obliges them to fix their attention upon that which is common to both man and brute. It is a principle of psychology verified by the experience of everyone that whatever the mind dwells upon, that thing becomes a part of the individual. We grow like that which we contemplate. The more vividly the thought dwells upon anything, the more that individual becomes like the thing he thinks about,

For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he.

(Proverbs 23:7)

But this law of mind can be utilized for good as well as bad. The Masters utilize the same law in their spiritual exercises. If our attention is absorbed in the good, we partake of that good. If we daily contemplate the Master, we become like Him. If we think long and earnestly upon the Supreme Father, our love for Him increases and we become more and more like Him. But if our thought dwells upon the bad, the same thing takes place—we partake of it, become saturated with it and grow more and more like it. Then we are attracted toward it and crave it.

This is a warning against the fatal creeping-up of habits which fix themselves in our inmost being. It is like the habit-forming of drugs. The hidden object of all this is to blind the mind and bind the soul, reducing them to the animal plane. The net result is that man is thereby reduced to the animal level.

If sex were used for its legitimate purpose, it need not become an instrument of degradation. But when we fall into the trap of self-indulgence, we begin to descend toward the animal plane. Nature has given us something which is necessary for the perpetuation of life upon this planet. It is within our control or should be. But if we reduce it to an instrument of self-indulgence, we simply waste our energy and cloud our minds, ending at last in blank stupidity, like any ordinary animal. When sex controls the individual instead of him controlling it, the degeneration of that individual is already an accomplished fact. He is then simply a biped. How can he call himself homo sapiens?

There are many minor phases of this passion. A few of them are: (a) the craving for alcoholic drinks; (b) the drug habit; (c) the tobacco habit; (d) gluttony; (e) sex books and obscene cinemas.

All of these are phases of kam, whose central core is self-indulgence, which is the principle of evil in all these things. That in any form is an evil. Every single act of self-indulgence lowers one's moral status and binds him to the world of the senses. This is the worst poison for the spirit. They pull one down towards the animal plane when one should be rising toward the spiritual plane. Sensuality is an unmitigated evil, no matter what form it may take. It is all kam, and kam is one of the five deadly enemies of the soul.



To have one eye glued on the enchanting pleasures of the flesh
and with the other expect to see a spark of Eternal Bliss
is not only impossible but the height of hypocrisy.
(Meher Baba)

Of all longings and desires none is stronger than sex.
Sex as a desire has no equal.
(Buddha)

Hell has three gates: lust, anger, and greed.
(Bhagavad Gita)

If you spent one-tenth of the time you devoted to distractions
like chasing women or making money to spiritual practice,
you would be enlightened in a few years.
(Ramakrishna to a disciple)

Living with lust is like living shackled to a lunatic.
(Simon Blackburn)

As a youth I had been woefully at fault, particularly in early adolescence. I had prayed to you for chastity and said, "Give me chastity and continence, but not yet." For I was afraid that you would answer my prayer at once and cure me too soon of the disease of lust, which I wanted satisfied, not quelled. (Saint Augustine)

My will was perverse and lust had grown from it, and when I gave in to lust habit was born, and when I did not resist the habit it became necessity. These were the links which together formed what I have called my chain, and it held me fast in the duress of servitude. (Saint Augustine)

From The Case for Chastity – Part 1

(Russell Perkins, *Sat Sandesh*, 2/72)

Perhaps the most difficult to keep of Master's commandments, especially for young men, is chastity. The society we live in is so permeated with sexuality, and most of us have been surrounded since birth by so many people and so much material inundated with unchaste preconceptions, that the concept of self-restraint comes hard.

And yet, experience shows that the Master's teachings on this subject are grounded firmly both in spiritual necessity and in human nature. It does not take us long to discover, if we are serious about the Path and our commitment to it, that sexuality and inner experience are incompatible; and once we get past the fears and prejudices that have been implanted in us by all segments of society, and actually live for a while free from the addiction to sex, we begin to discover for ourselves the peace and contentment that real chastity brings.

We have learned that the first step toward an honestly chaste life is intellectual acceptance of the value of chastity. Since most of us have been assuming the opposite for years, anything that goes to reinforce the concept in our minds is helpful. And if we realize that the Master's teaching is thoroughly and completely in harmony with all Masters who have come as well as an astonishing number of great men in all walks of life, we may perhaps feel more secure in our own practice.

From The Case for Chastity - Part 2

(Jon Engle, *Sat Sandesh*, 5/72)

We who have been brought up with materially inclined natures have generally had great misconceptions on the nature of chastity. As of late it is more often than not associated with repression, religious fanaticism, etc.; and the notion that it is a source of great calm and strength (of both mind and body) as well as a tremendous joy within itself is all too quickly discarded. This misconceived idea stems largely as a reaction to those who knew (or maybe only preached) "physical chastity" but never attempted control over their minds. All of the Masters and great men who emphasized chastity meant something far beyond behavior when they spoke of it.

In the *Gurmat Siddhant*, the Great Master defines chastity as being: "...the purity of mind, word, and deed. It does not simply mean control of sex organs. It comprises control over all sense organs... This continence cannot be practiced by control of the body. Continence should therefore be observed with mind, speech and actions. If one controls the body but thinks of sensual pleasures, it is harmful for the mind pushes the body in that direction... continence does not mean that one should merely control his lust and sensual passions. It means actually to withdraw oneself from all the sense desires."



They say that woman is an enticement. No, no, she is not so.

They say that money is an enticement. No, no, it is not so.

They say that landed property is an enticement. No, no, it is not so.

The real enticement is the insatiable appetite of the mind.

(Allama Prabhu, *Vacana* 91)

Sant Kirpal Singh Ji Maharaj

Opposite sex has much strong hold amongst one another when the charm and attraction involved is too much to be resisted. This results in gradual infatuation and bondage. A slight slip can cause much havoc when the dear ones are hurled down in the abysmal of sensual gratification. Divine love and sex are quite opposing poles. Sex is not only sinful, but a serious impediment on the Holy Path. It is by long cultivation when one can expect some degree of success in living a clean chaste life. (Letters to N.Y. initiates, part 4)

Unfortunately, very few people have the right understanding as to the importance of maintaining the chastity of life. It is because man is not chaste that he is under the domination of other vices such as anger, greed and attachment. If he were to control his sensual appetite, the other vices would gradually drop away. So chastity is the key not only to the spiritual life but also to success in every other field of endeavor. (Letters to N.Y. initiates, part 11)

The fake allurements of sensual gratification usually end in frustration. Carnal desires are seldom satiated by indulgence. Spiritual discipline and renunciation of stumbling impediments by careful consideration, preceded by repentance, is helpful for spiritual progress. Infatuation breeds indulgence, whereas abstinence and renunciation bring in serenity and sobriety. You should know it for certain that mind is a very useful servant but a very bad master. It is the good grace of the Master that child disciple is reminded by the gracious Master Power working overhead to follow the right course and those who abide by His instructions are blessed with success in evading the temptations, and this monkey mind cooperates with them for their spiritual progress. Contrarily, who fall a prey to the allurements and unheed the divine counsel are hurled down into the abysmal of degradation, and the same mind runs wild in that direction. So you understand the basic necessity of following the sacred impulse from the gracious Master Power in entertaining sublime thoughts. (Letters to N.Y. initiates, part 4)

With the chastity in food and drink will go another kind of chastity, the one that pertains to sex. One will not suppress all sexual desire, for repression can only breed neurosis and prepare the way for a downfall, but he will be ever seeking to sublimate it. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/col/col-5a.htm#The%20cornerstones)

One cannot possibly forsake the lusts of the flesh unless one comes to know by actual contrast, the real happiness in the life of the spirit which comes about by communion with the Holy Word. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/guru-means.htm)

Is it psychologically possible for the human mind to detach itself completely from its normal field of experience without first anchoring itself in another and higher one? It is a universal characteristic of man that he seeks kinship with something other than himself. This is the law of his life and source of all his great achievements. The child is bound to his toys, and the adult to family and society. As in the case of a child, you may not without harm deprive him of his playthings until he has outgrown them psychologically, likewise to expect the sadhak to give up his social and family attachments without first outgrowing them by discovering something greater and larger, is to cut at the root of life. It will not bring progress but regression, for the man who undertakes it as an enforced discipline only succeeds in repressing his natural desires. The result is not the enhancement of consciousness but its numbing and atrophy, not detachment but indifference. (*The Crown of Life*, Chapter 5)



Hazur Baba Sawan Singh Ji Maharaj

Naam and kam are two of the vernacular terms used in our literature. Naam means 'Word' or 'Sound Current', and kam ordinarily means lust or passion or indulgence in the sensual desires as opposed to self-control; but in its wide sense, it means all out-ward tendencies of the mind. Naam and kam are, therefore, opposed to one another. The tendency of Naam is towards the inlet pipe to a reservoir and kam leads to the outlet pipe. The reservoir may be filled if the inlet pipe is large and the outlet pipe is small. But it cannot remain filled if the outlet is wide open or even leaking. And the sooner the outlet is stopped, the faster the reservoir will be filled.

Now, take Pinda or the physical body as the reservoir. So long as the attention is at the eye focus, it is filling, but when the attention is running below the eye focus, it is leaking. And the lower the attention below the focus, the faster it is leaking. The sensual center is located very low; therefore, playing of the attention on this center causes an enormous leakage, and there is a considerable amount of dissipation of energy. Nobody feels happier after the act of dissipation. That act is a happy act if it leaves you happier. Kabir compares Naam and kam to day and night, respectively. Day and night do not go together. If there is day, then there is no night; and if there is night, then there is no day. If attention is given to Naam, there is no kam, and if it is given to kam, there is no Naam. The same idea of reservoir and inlet and outlet pipes may be extended to Anda and Brahmanda.

The world is the design of Kal and Maya, the negative forces. To keep the soul down, they based the structure of the world on couples, man and woman. If both man and woman were to catch the Sound of Naam and rise up, both would be free. Here, one holds down the other. And because we have not seen the other side of the whole picture, we take our present existence and our surroundings as the normal affair. Strictly speaking, we are living an abnormal life. Soul combined with mind and matter is an abnormality. Soul, the queen of royal blood, enjoying the company of servants and sweepers is an abnormality.

By holding the attention at the eye focus, we are to fill the Pinda reservoir. By holding it at Trikuti, we are to fill the Anda reservoir. And by holding it at Sach Khand, we are to fill the Brahmanda reservoir. If leakage, wide or narrow, is permitted then the filling is delayed or perhaps may never even be up to the Pinda level.

The law admits of no exceptions. The longing for Naam means turning your back on kam. Turning your face to one means turning your back to the other. Saints find human nature weak. They make it strong, step by step. They attach the individual to Naam and, slowly and slowly, as longing for Naam develops, the tendencies toward kam diminish.

To rise up is a slow process, but to fall from a height is sudden. Kam is a sudden fall of attention... Whenever Naam will become tasteful, kam will disappear. There is no other way of controlling kam. Raising the focus of attention automatically subdues kam. (*Spiritual Gems*, letter 24)

With the longing to go within and the hearing of the Sound Current becoming tasteful, the indulgence or play in sex decreases and ultimately becomes hateful, and is automatically given up, like other bad habits, such as anger, greed and so forth. (*Spiritual Gems*, 317)



2. Anger

Anger is a feeling of tension and hostility, usually caused by anxiety aroused by a perceived threat to one's self, possessions, rights, or values.

2. Anger, or krodh, is the second of the deadly five. Its action is to stir up strife, cause confusion and scatter the mind. Then it cannot concentrate. It is a fact of experience that no person can possibly concentrate his mind at the center of concentration as given by the Master so long as he indulges in fits of anger. It is an utter impossibility. The two cannot go together. Anger destroys peace, neutralizes love, engenders hatred and turns individuals and groups into enemies. And all for what purpose—to satisfy a fiendish impulse toward destruction.

Anger is the extreme opposite to love. As love is the sum of all good, so anger must be the sum of all evil. It is certainly the most destructive of the vile passions. It tears down, destroys, weakens, annihilates every finer quality of mind and soul. It burns up all that is noble. It is a consuming fire, born of the fires of destruction. At the end, it leaves the victim nothing but a wreck of his better self, burned out, blackened and dead, like forest trees over which a great fire has swept.

Such is anger, the destroying consuming passion. Of course, its ultimate object is to destroy the individual who indulges in it. Its destructive action is aimed at others, but its most destructive action falls upon the one who indulges in it. It creates for him bad karma and binds him more securely to the fatal wheel. If it leads to crime, as it often does, then the shackles of slavery are made that much stronger, burden that much heavier.

Krodh is a very useful servant of the Negative Power. So long as it dominates the mind, it is impossible for that individual to make any headway on the spiritual path. Its end is darkness and death and rebirth under the wheel.

Some of the minor phases of krodh are: slander, evil gossip, backbiting, profanity, fault-finding, peevishness, irritability, quarrelsomeness, surliness, grouchiness, jealousy, malice, impatience, resentment, combat, malicious mockery, destructive criticism, argument for the sake of defeating the other party, haughtiness with ill-will, etc. All of these and more are the bastard brood of their mother krodh, a filthy litter of snarling pups.

The law of the Masters, being the law of Nature, is absolute. It cannot be evaded. It must be obeyed or one must reap pain and anguish. That law is:

Never criticize, never find fault, never abuse, never even blame anyone, either to his face or behind his back. Never hurt the feelings of any one, man or animal. Never let a harsh or unkind word escape your lips. Speak always words of love, truth and kindness.

A rule laid down by the noble Buddha is a most excellent one for all men to follow. He said that if you propose to speak, always ask yourself—is it true, is it necessary, is it kind?

This is one of the most inflexible of all laws for such as seek spiritual advancement. Let no one imagine that he can ignore this law and still make headway on the Path. It cannot be done. The Path of love leads to enlightenment and liberty and the highest heavens; but the way of anger and an evil tongue leads to the darkest hell.

We believe that anger may aptly be compared to cancer. It is in fact, mental carcinoma. In its effects it is deadlier to the mind than cancer is to the body. It is an ailment which afflicts such a large percentage of mankind, and its agonies are often drawn out over the whole of a lifetime. Then when physical death comes, the mind has become so poisoned that there is no moral value left in it. Strangely enough, this terrible affliction has received but slight attention in the literature of mental therapeutics. It has had but little consideration even in ethics. Yet it is one of the deadliest of human ills, and leads to some of the most horrible disasters. We believe it brings more pain and grief into the world than any other disease or perhaps all other diseases.

It must not be forgotten that this mental disease is also a factor in producing many of the common physical ills. Its flood of suffering is worse than any imagination can picture. It is simply appalling. This mental cancer eats its way into and through the inmost mental fiber. The great pity is that it doesn't kill outright. It would be better for mankind if its deadly action were instantaneous, like the fumes of a lethal gas.

This disease of anger, leaving everywhere a trail of suffering, of nausea, and of terrible heartaches, generally drags on for years. This disease manifests itself by the following set of symptoms: (a) thinking ill of others, (b) taking offence easily, (c) criticizing the actions of others, (d) lecturing or discoursing on the mistakes of others either to the person himself or to others about him, (e) chronic fault-finding or pointing out the defects of character or conduct of others, (f) scolding, nagging or haranguing others, (g) habitually blaming others for all that goes wrong, (h) vile abuse and cursing others, (i) actual fighting, quarrelling or trying to inflict injury upon others.

And the student should always remember that mental injury or wound is often more painful than physical wound, and often slower to heal. These nine symptoms are some of the most common manifestations of this deadly disease. It is generally designated "the evil tongue." Of all bad habits, of all defects of character, there is nothing that smells of corruption and death so badly. Unlike most physical disorders, which make their victims suffer the brunt of the disease, this affliction reacts upon others even more painfully than upon the patient himself. It is like a poison gas, spreading deadly fumes in the whole neighborhood.

One unique feature of this foul disease is the fact that its victims are generally unwilling to concede that they suffer from the disease, but generally insist that it is others who have the disease and they themselves are the innocent victims of the malevolence of others. This is an almost universal manifestation of the disease. To even suggest that the patient is suffering from the disease is usually sufficient to throw him into a violent spasm. You never can tell when this foul abscess is going to explode in your face. It erupts at the smallest provocation, and its malodorous fumes fill the whole neighborhood. It is not infrequent that those who suffer from advanced stages of this disease become sick of life and commit suicide, even if they do not kill someone else. Many times, the victim commits suicide, rather than endure the tortures of living near such a person.

One of the most pathetic features of this terrible disease is that death does not end it. In that respect it is so much worse than any mere physical ailment. It is in the mind and the sufferer takes his mind with him at death, so that even in the next world the disease continues its ravages. It will continue to afflict him, until through suffering and self-control, he learns to remove the ailment himself. This is one disease that no doctor can cure. It must be cured by the patient himself. Suicide only aggravates the trouble.



Where there is humility and patience,
there is neither anger nor vexation.
(Saint Francis of Assisi)

You will not be punished for your anger,
you will be punished by your anger.
(Buddha)

There is no sin or wrong that gives a man such a foretaste of hell
in this life as anger.
(Saint Catherine of Siena)

Anger is momentary madness.
(Horace)

A thought of anger or hatred sends arrows from the mental factory
towards the person aimed at, hurts the individual,
sets up discord and disharmony in the thought-world,
and comes back again to the sender and harms the sender also.
(Sivananda)

Speak when you are angry
and you will make the best speech you will ever regret.
(Ambrose Bierce)

Expressing anger when you feel angry
nearly always makes you angrier.
(Carol Tavris)

Anger is a brief period of lunacy;
the most practical way of dealing with anger
is to avoid people when they are angry;
the worst possible reaction to anger is to respond with anger.
(Shantidasa)

The best response you can give to anger is silence.
(Shantidasa)

There is nothing more galling to angry people
than the coolness of those on whom they wish to vent their spleen.
(Alexandre Dumas)

Be not angry that you cannot make others as you wish them to be,
since you cannot make yourself as you wish to be.
(Thomas a' Kempis)

If you are patient in one moment of anger,
you will escape a hundred days of sorrow.
(Chinese proverb)

Sant Kirpal Singh on Anger

When you have no desire, there is no question of anger. What is anger? When you want to do something or have something and someone appears to be standing in the way - either directly or indirectly - that impediment to the achievement of your desire causes anger.

Anger is flared up through the ears. How can you control it? Leave the place. The more you hear, the more your anger is flared up; and you won't talk slowly. You will go on talking loudly; and what will be the result? There will be foam in your mouth, and you will not be able to speak.
(ruhanisatsangusa.org/lust.htm)

The place where fire burns becomes heated first and then transmits its heat to the atmosphere around. So is the case with the fire of anger.

An imagined or supposed wrong keeps rankling in the mind like a thorn. When one cannot bear its intensity, one bursts forth into flames of hatred and contempt (begins abusing right and left), loses his balance of mind, and like a canker keeps emitting a malign odor that virtually goes on polluting the atmosphere around.

Most of our injuries and wrongs are the outcome of our own process of thinking, and such thoughts breed countless others, multiplying in geometrical proportion. We can get out of this vicious cycle only by changing our attitude towards life.

Why sacrifice our natural equanimity for mere trifles, for passing bubbles and vapory nothings that are things of no consequence? Instead of brooding over these supposed and imagined wrongs, it would be better by far to contemplate on the higher aspects of life, the divinity within and the divinity without, for this world is verily of the Divine and Divinity resides therein. If we really wish for God and aspire to attain to the Godhead, we must learn to love His creation, for God is nothing but Love. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/7paths.htm)

Two very powerful forces are anger and lust. They rule over everything. If the attention dwells on lust, the soul falls very low; in anger, the ego expands. The soul cannot be linked with Naam until it withdraws inwardly and rises above the senses. Our attention has instead become like an image of the mind. We want to enjoy all the low, worldly things, yet we say we want the highest thing of all - the Nectar of Life! It is all wrong - how far do we think we will go? Do one thing at a time; but do not remain under this false impression. One Saint says, "Where there is Naam, there is no kam (lust) - where there is kam there is no Naam." Two cannot remain at once - light and darkness. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/listen.htm)

The work ahead of us is to earn the Naam. It should dwell in our hearts so much in evidence that it becomes apparent in us. We should be molded in it. It should be manifested inside and outside. The outcome of this will be when you become as the Shabd, humility will banish all lust, anger, and ego. Having the Nectar of Life, all taste for small things will fade away.
(ruhanisatsangusa.org/jewel.htm)



Hazur Baba Sawan Singh Ji Maharaj

To overcome kam and krodh (lust and anger) is real bravery. It is not a small achievement. So many rishis and munis of old lost the battle. What is the use if you go on scouring and cleaning a vessel, and put nothing in it? That is, the way to salvation or liberation lies in not only avoiding kam and krodh, but also in devoting yourself to Naam bhakti (spiritual practice). Man has within himself whole continents, universes, and God himself, but only when he practices Naam devotedly, can he realize this. (*Spiritual Gems*, 19)

Jack Kornfield on Anger

(*A Path with Heart*, 88-90)

While desire and the wanting mind are seductive, the opposite energy of anger and aversion is more clearly unpleasant. At certain times we might, for a short while, find some enjoyment in it, but even then it closes our heart. It has a burning, tight quality that we can't escape. As the opposite of wanting, it is a force that pushes away, condemns, judges, or hates some experience in our life. The demon of anger and aversion has many faces and guises, and can be found in forms such as fear, boredom, ill-will, judgment, and criticism.

Like desire, anger is an extremely powerful force. We can easily become caught up in it, or we can be so afraid of it that we act out its destruction in more unconscious ways. Unfortunately, too few of us have learned to work with it directly. Its force can grow from annoyance to deep fear, to hatred and rage. It can be experienced toward someone or something that is present with us now or that is far away in time or place. We sometimes experience great anger over past events that are long over and about which we can do nothing. We can even get furious about something that has not happened but that we only imagine might happen. When it is strong in the mind, anger colors our entire experience of life. Anger can be a source of tremendous suffering in our own minds, in our interactions with others, and in the world at large.

As we listen (to the arising of anger), we can sense the origins of anger. Almost always the roots of anger are in one of two different states, which arise just before the anger appears. We become angry either when we are hurt and in pain or when we are afraid. Pay attention to your own life and see if this is true. The next time anger and irritation spring up, see if just before they arose you felt fear or hurt. If you pay attention to the fear or pain first, does the anger even appear?

Anger shows us precisely where we are stuck, where our limits are, where we cling to beliefs and fears. Aversion is like a warning signal that lights up and says, "Attached, attached." The strength of our anger reveals the amount of our attachment. Yet we know our attachment is optional. We can relate more wisely. Our anger, conditioned by our viewpoint on that day, is impermanent; it's a feeling with associated sensations and thoughts that come and go. We do not have to be bound to it or driven by it. Usually our anger is based on our limited ideas of what should happen.



Strong negative emotions like anger, irritation, and indignation usually indicate that our weak spot has been touched consciously or unconsciously.
(Fritz Kunkel)

3. Greed

Greed, or avarice, is an excessive desire to acquire or possess more than what one needs or deserves, especially with respect to material wealth. Greed – like lust and gluttony – is a sin of excess.

3. Greed, or lobh, is the third member of this unholy group. It is one of the most poisonous of them all. The function of greed is to bind us to material things, and so cloud our minds to all higher values. It ties us to the baser things of earth. As kam (lust) binds us to the animal plane, so lobh (greed) binds us to the mineral plane, one step lower. Hence greed is even baser than lust. It makes for us a god of gold and silver and jewels. It identifies us with them by fixing our attention and affections upon them. The end is slavery to them. Wealth then becomes master instead of servant. Like all the other passions, it slowly forges its chains about us.

Man automatically drops down to the plane of the thing he loves. A miser soon becomes but little more than an incarnated heap of gold and silver, of bonds and securities, lands and houses. He who thinks of nothing else but money gradually becomes hard of heart, and even his face takes on an expression of relentless driving force. He is pitiless. Nothing counts with him but money. He drives other men, even women and children, in his factories, grinding wealth out of them. He goes on grinding more gold out of them. Pity, love and kindness have long ago departed from his mental processes. He can see nothing but profits. What does it matter if human flesh is fed to his mills? The blood of those men and women is to be turned into streams of revenue.

Happily, we believe this picture does not apply to a very large percentage of people engaged in commerce. But it does apply to some. As lust degrades, and anger consumes, so greed hardens. This passion is probably the most relentless slave-driver of them all. A mind under the sway of greed is but little less than petrified intelligence. Greed has many minor phases, such as:

(a) miserliness, (b) falsehood, (c) hypocrisy, (d) perjury, (e) misrepresentation, (f) robbery, (g) bribery, (h) trickery of all sorts.

These are all the usual ways and means of picking up easy money. The poorest man in the world is he who spends his time trying to get something for nothing. It can never be done. His time is wholly wasted. No man has ever gained permanent benefit without paying the price. John D. Rockefeller said just before his death: “The poorest man in the world is he who has nothing but money!”

If the time ever comes when men give thought only for what they actually need, this passion will die of attrition. Civilization will take a tremendous stride forward. If men will think more of giving, and less of receiving, the human race will stand close to mastership. The Master is the supreme giver.



Nothing is enough to the man for whom enough is too little.
(Epicurus)

It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle
than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God.
(Jesus Christ)

The love of money is the root of all evil.
(Saint Paul)

We are told that the love of money is the root of all evil;
but money itself is one of the most useful contrivances ever invented:
it is not its fault that some people are foolish
or miserly enough to be fonder of it than of their own souls.
(George Bernard Shaw)

Desire tells us, each time, “Now you must get this, and then you will be happy.”
The fact is, desire is a bottomless pit which can never fill up,
or like the all-consuming fire which burns the fiercer, the more we feed it.
(Lakshmana Sarma)

Greed is a bottomless pit which exhausts the person in an endless effort
to satisfy the need without ever reaching satisfaction.
(Erich Fromm)

The ignorant mind, with its infinite afflictions, passions, and evils,
is rooted in the three poisons: greed, anger, and delusion.
(Bodhidharma)

He who is greedy is always in want.
(Horace)

Money is the cause of good things to a good man,
and evil things to a bad man.
(Plato)

Those who want fewest things are nearest to the gods.
(Socrates)

There is nothing so characteristic of narrowness and littleness of soul
as the love of riches.
(Cicero)

Money can help you to get medicines, but not health.
Money can help you to get soft pillows, but not sound sleep.
Money can help you to get material comforts, but not eternal bliss.
Money can help you to get ornaments, but not beauty.
(Swami Sivananda)

The futility of greed:
You can never get enough of what you don't really want.



The Stoics

Seneca

What I will teach you is the ability to become rich as speedily as possible. How excited you are to hear the news! And rightly so; I will lead you by a shortcut to the greatest wealth... My dear Lucilius, not wanting something is just as good as having it. The important thing either way is the same – freedom from worry.

It is not one who has little, but one who craves more, who is poor. What does it matter how much you have laid up in your safe or in your warehouse, how large are your flocks or your investments, if you covet your neighbor's property, and if you count not what you have but what remains for you to have?

Count yourself happy only when all your jobs are born of reason, and when, having seen the things that everyone clutches at, or prays for, or watches over, you find – I do not say nothing you prefer – but nothing you require.

No one is worthy of the gods except he who has disdained riches. I do not forbid you to possess them, but I want to bring to you the point at which you possess them without fear. There is only one way to achieve this - by persuading yourself that you can live happily without them, and by regarding them as always about to depart.

He who has need of riches feels fear on their account. But no man enjoys a blessing that brings anxiety. He is always trying to add a little more. While he puzzles over increasing his wealth, he forget how to use it.

We might define the disease this way: to strive too hard for things that are only worth wanting a little or not at all, or to value things highly that ought to be valued only somewhat or not at all.

The greatest wealth is a poverty of desires.

Epictetus

You will learn the truth by experience: the things that people value highly and try hardest to get do them no good once they have them. Those who don't have them imagine that, once they do, everything good will be theirs; then they do get them, and the heat of their desires is the same, their agitation is the same, their disgust with what they possess is the same, and their wish for what they don't have is the same.

Freedom is not procured by a full enjoyment of what is desired, but by controlling the desire.

Marcus Aurelius

Don't imagine having things that you don't have. Rather, pick the best of the things that you do have and think of how much you would want them if you didn't have them.



Sant Kirpal Singh on Greed

If you are always reading about money and thinking that such and such a person has become a millionaire, or listen to talks about such things, you will develop greed within you... If you have the society of someone who is very wealthy and you are always in that society, then you will want that very thing for yourself. Greed will develop within you... If you think of a man who has more money than you do, greed will develop within you... If you will just listen quietly, you will find that most people are talking of women or gold. If you have got a good companion, all the better, otherwise remain all alone with your own self, with the Master or the God within you. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/mt/impediments.htm)

There are many vices lying hidden in the mind including those of falsehood and greed. These are the dormant latencies of the mind and require a strenuous effort for eradication... Greed is equally (as falsehood) a strong fetter. It should be overcome by renunciation. Greed breeds hatred and feeds fat the latent ego. It blinds the inner eye and thickens the dark veil. A spiritual aspirant should always feel grateful for the manifold blessings which are granted to him by the grace of the Master. If we awake to the sacred Truth and comprehend the grandeur of the Holy Naam granted by the Master, we will be dumbfounded with its divine ecstasy. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/dsos.htm)

Dadu Sahib has said that a true Sadhu is he who does not stretch out his hand to gold and women. One must rise above all enjoyments and not be ruled by greed and lust, for while one remains under their influence no real progress can be made. The quicker we withdraw, the quicker will be our progress; even daily promotion can be achieved. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/re_mind.htm)

Man is enveloped by flames of passionate desires, anger, greed, attachment, and vanity. One can escape himself from delusion only by contacting the Word within. The most important task before us, therefore, is to withdraw our attention from outside and get attuned with the Divine Melody within. Then comes eternal peace in the form of the Word. Whosoever has accomplished this essential task is really successful in life. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/purpose.htm)

Take any one virtue; others will follow. If you come in contact with the Sound Principle, the Light Principle, within you, all virtues will come to you. Swami Ji (Shiv Dayal Singh) tells us: "Those who are thieves - those who do not devote time to the practices - always fall into the passions of lust, greed, anger and egotism." These things naturally come up. And the more you come in contact with that inner Sound and Light, the more all virtues will come up. Guru Nanak says, "If you begin to hear the Sound Principle continuously, you will become the abode of all virtues." One is interlinked with the other. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/living-up2it.htm)

Desires are the root cause of all our troubles. What the mind wishes is a kind of desire. When we feel, rightly or wrongly, that there is some hurdle in getting our desire fulfilled, we often get angry. The more there is delay in getting the thing desired, the more we long and pine for it. This is called greed. When once, by fair or foul means, we get hold of the thing desired, we hug it and do not want to part with it. This is termed attachment or infatuation. When the thing desired is in our possession, we begin to gloat over it and ascribe the success to our own endeavors. This connotes egotism, for one claims the thing in his own right and refuses to be thankful to God - the giver of all gifts. I-ness and my-ness coupled with extreme selfishness are the essence of egoism and egotism, both being born from ego. This is styled as victory of the little self in us. In this way we are, all the time, engaged in getting and spending, unconsciously doing shameless deeds of rapine and snobbery. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/reality.htm)

Three Forms of Greed

1. The Greed of Power:

In this form, earthly goods are chiefly a means to an end. The money, real estate, cars are simply things used to achieve, wield and display personal power. These things can be used to intimidate or bribe others, reinforce one's own illusions about what is important or to build up a feeling of success.

The real problem here is more the desire for power than the actual greed. A common thread for sin in general is that it is often borne out of fear. A fear of helplessness or loss of control can turn into a lust for power as a way of preventing an undesirable situation.

2. The Greed of Fear:

Fear is a poor motivator for virtue, but an excellent one for greed. Sometimes, greed is simply a desire to have so much that we can't possibly run out. The stock market could crash, we could lose our jobs or health, we could be sued.

If we acquire enough stock, real estate, or T-bills, we think we will be safe from want. This is an illusion. There is no perfect preventative for want, but even if there was it would stand in opposition to the trust in God to which we are called. Trust in God frees us from a need to build a massive buffer against poverty.

3. The Greed of Acquisition and Enslavement:

This is slavery, plain and simple. We can reduce ourselves to a small and cold desire to accumulate more electronic gear, trading cards, antiques or other collectibles. It is far beneath the dignity of human beings to enslave themselves to objects of their own making. It is well said that our possessions in some ways may come to own us.

The obvious cure is to divest oneself of as much as possible, but another suggestion might be to consider the grave. When we die, we take nothing with us. If we are bound by "disordered attachments" to worldly goods, the separation forced upon us by death will be even more painful. If we are destined for eternal glory, the temporary enjoyment of trinkets in this life is simply absurd. Meditation on this begins to loosen the grip of objects on the heart.

(<http://whitestonejournal.com/index.php/greed>)



At all times our hearts should be full of love for the Master
and our own mind should be so fearless
that it should not be ruffled if it were given the kingdom of the world
nor if the kingdom of the world were taken from it.
(Baba Sawan Singh, *Spiritual Gems*, 38)

The disciple does not abstain from the things which he has been told to,
but instead he blames the Master for not getting any progress.
(Swami Ji)

4. Attachment

4. Attachment, or moh, which means delusive attachment, infatuation, is the fourth of the destructive passions. This is perhaps the most insidious, the most deceitful of them all. It creeps up slowly upon its victims, like the others, or it comes with flares of trumpets like the tamasha that goes before the approach of a nobleman. It generally comes with the appearance of well-dressed respectability. It has a noble bearing. It comes as a gentleman, with good credentials. It announces itself as your friend, and ally. Its ideas are plausible. So, it readily gains a place in the family as a close friend. It does seem so very reasonable and proper that one should have and enjoy wife, children, positions of honor, of public service, money and houses, lands and securities. Indeed, we may concede that such things are necessary and proper. The individual knows that, and then our gentle friend, moh, steps in with such benevolent airs and says: Yes, surely you must give diligent attention to these things; it is your duty.

Right there and then moh begins its deadly work under the guise of a most respectable friend. Its method is to blind you to the relative values of your surroundings and associations so that you may begin to set a false valuation upon them. After you have become quite absorbed in them, then you will have no time for anything else. That is exactly its purpose. There is the crucial point of the whole matter. No time for self-improvement. No time for spiritual devotions. No time for altruistic service. You are kept forever on the go most of the time between your home and office, busy with your family and affairs. You hardly have time for eating and sleeping, not to speak of self-culture or loving service.

Remember that the liberation of your own soul is the one thing for which you are in this world. Nothing else counts. But it is the sole purpose of this moh to keep you from doing that one thing—if it can keep you from even thinking about the matter, it is well pleased. If, however, you do think about it, it at once steps up and tells you that just now you have no time for that sort of thing. By and by when circumstances are more favorable, you may attend to it.

It is for the very purpose of keeping men blinded to their own higher interests that the Negative Power has employed all of these five passions to dog our paths all the days of our lives. For this reason, moh will tell you that you must not neglect your routine duties. They simply have to be attended to. At the same time to pacify you, it promises that the time will soon come when your burden of duties will grow less when circumstances will grow more favorable. Then you may attend to your spiritual interests.

Moh is the king of procrastination. You must wait for a more convenient season. But at the same time, it keeps you busy with trifles. Why worry about spiritual matters now? They will take care of themselves when the time comes. No need to worry about them until you are dead. Then they will automatically solve themselves! All the while this smart friend is slyly adding to your burdens and complicating your life. It sees to it that the promised leisure never comes.

Worries, anxieties, and business complications follow every man to his grave. He seldom ever gets away from them. Almost the whole of one's life is spent in trying to perpetuate his physical existence, his animal self. The real object for which he came into the world has been forgotten. Perhaps he never even knew why he came. Indeed, but very few people know why they are here. Most of them seem not at all interested to know anything about it.

A slave even to your cows, dogs, horses, and cars. Ninety-eight per cent of your precious time is spent in penal servitude to the animal body. And for what purpose? Just to keep it going. And why keep it going? In order that you may continue being a slave to it. When they come back from the cemetery where they have left you in a pretty velvet covered casket over which they have shoveled the dirt, they settle down to divide up what you have left, and forthwith forget you in that same mad scramble which monopolized all of your attention, until the final darkness overtook you.

And this is exactly what your smooth friend, moh, does for you. It skillfully holds your nose to the grindstone until the very moment when the doctor says it is all over and pulls up the sheet over your face. You have been so very busy all your life, and yet you have not had a moment's time to do the one thing that was really worth doing. You have, in fact, been very busy all your life doing nothing.

You have worked like the battle of Gettysburg, but what has it brought you? Only increasing worry, pain, and then the final darkness. You return to the wheel that grinds away through all the yugas. Naked and empty-handed you came here; empty handed and naked you depart. Results? Nothing, simply treading the wheel. You return to the eternal cycle perhaps even more securely bound than before. Moh has scored heavily for his master. The only thing worth doing in this life, but few people ever do that—is to find the Path of spiritual freedom and walk in it.



A man who, while living in this world and doing its work
keeps his mind free from it,
can be said to have renounced the world;
and one who, living in solitude, has his mind full of worldly desires,
should be called a man of the world.

(Baba Sawan Singh)

Spiritual Gems, 141

Are you always keeping sweet remembrance of God?
Just as if a man has been stabbed and feels pain,
so should you feel pain for God.
If that is not developed we are nowhere.
We are wasting our human life.

(Sant Kirpal Singh)

ruhanisatsangusa.org/mt/love4god.htm

Without a connection with the All Sustainer, our life is wasted;
nothing remains but preparation for the return to the field of action.

(Sant Kirpal Singh)

The Night is a Jungle, 356

So the foremost work, truly speaking, our private work,
is to leave the body...All other works are secondary.

(Sant Kirpal Singh)

ruhanisatsangusa.org/lok/riseabov.htm



The One Thing Which You Must Never Forget

Rumi

There is one thing in the world which you must never forget. If you were to forget everything else and remember this, then you would have nothing at all to worry about; but if you were to remember everything else and then forget this, you would have done nothing with your life.

It is as if a king sent you to a country to carry out a particular mission. You go to that country, you do a hundred different things; but if you do not perform the mission assigned to you, it is as if you have done nothing. All human beings come into the world for a particular mission, and that mission is our singular purpose. If we do not enact it, we have done nothing.

Now if you were to say, “Look, even if I have not performed this mission I have, after all, performed a hundred others,” that would mean nothing. You were not created for those other missions.

It is as if you were to buy a sword of priceless Indian steel such as one usually finds only in the treasuries of emperors, and were to turn it into a butcher’s knife for cutting up rotten meat, saying, “Look, I’m not letting this sword stay unused, I am putting it to a thousand highly useful purposes.”

Or it is as though you were to take a golden bowl and cook turnips in it, while for just one grain of that gold you could purchase hundreds of pots.

Or it is as though you were to take a dagger of the most finely-wrought and tempered steel and use it as a nail to hang a broken pitcher on, saying, “I’m making excellent use of my dagger. I’m hanging a broken pitcher on it, after all.” When you can hang a picture on a nail that costs only a few cents, what sense does it make to use a dagger worth a fortune?

Remember the deep root of your being, the presence of your Lord. Give your life to the one who already owns your breath and your moments. If you don’t, you will be exactly like the man who takes his precious dagger and hammers it into his kitchen wall for a peg to hold his broken pitcher.

You are more valuable than both heaven and earth. What else can I say? You don’t know your own worth. Do not sell yourself at a ridiculous price - you who are so valuable in God’s eyes.”



If, during lifetime, entry has been made into the eye center
and the Sound Current has been grasped, life has been usefully spent.

If this has not been done,
even though all else has been done - and most successfully –
then life has been wasted.

(Baba Sawan Singh)

Spiritual Gems, 143

Detachment and Renunciation

Sant Kirpal Singh Ji

Detachment and renunciation are entirely distinct and independent of each other. One who is on the path of spirituality need not practice renunciation, but spirituality is not possible without detachment. Renunciation is connected with one's own fate karmas. Raja Janak, Guru Gobind Singh Sahib and many other highly evolved souls are examples of perfect detachment without renunciation. It is written in the Mahabharata that one who has renounced everything and retired into jungles is liable to the effects of his environment.

When one meets a perfect Master, then alone will he be able to understand fully the implications and the meaning of true detachment. Then he need not try to run away from the world and leave his household in order to lead a life of detachment.

In the company of a Master, the soul of a disciple imbibes the qualities of God and all other tastes in the world become insipid. The devotee is engaged in worldly pursuits, but within himself he is above their ties because of detachment. He lives in the world but he is not a man of the world. He realizes that God is the highest goal, and he forgets his world in remembrance of Him. So even while living in the world, he cannot forget Him.

The truly detached person knows that one day his own body, his house, his palace and all his worldly property – all attachments – have to be left behind, and nobody knows when this will happen. Therefore, he lives in this world in name only and gives more attention to the purification of his soul, for he does not wish to barter his soul for the sake of this world.

A Master fully imparts the true method of spiritual practice and also teaches the disciple how to live in this world without attachment. Thus the devotee earns his own living and carries on his household life within proper discipline and under set principles. The devotee also listens to the Sound Current and becomes worthy of attaining salvation.

What would happen if one were to leave his hearth and home? The mind would create new ties even in a jungle, not only with the surroundings but also with abstract desires. If one cannot be detached there, where else can it be possible? Actually, detachment is not the renunciation of the objects of the world, but is the renouncing of the strong desires by which one is attached to this world.

Even if a man should leave his house, his wife, his children, etc., the evil desires already fixed in his mind would not leave him. The mind will create conditions to ensnare him in worldly ties. As a householder, he had the ties of his house, his wife and children; and, in the jungle, the different sects, disciples, masters and other social institutional connections will take hold of him. In his home he was busy as a householder, but in the jungle he has the additional headache of living on alms. The whole trouble is with the mind. When it is pure and controlled, then only one really becomes detached. (*Philosophy of the Masters*, Book 2)



Yet another point, you must give up all your feelings of possession; karma may take from you the things which you like best - even the people whom you love most. Even then, you must be cheerful - ready to part with anything and everything. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/gemsq.htm)

Attachment and Worldly Relationships

Sant Kirpal Singh Ji

Swami Ji Maharaj pulls us out of a sense of deep stupor and awakens us to the naked reality of the great illusion. He tells us that if an honest person happens to be among pickpockets, there is every possibility of his being robbed. As we are all sleeping soundly in the company of cutthroats, how can we be safe?

Now who are these dangerous miscreants? They are no other than one's children and kith and kin, the loving relations to whom we are so devotedly attached all the time. You may be a little surprised to hear this. Just think calmly for a moment. If a dacoit comes and takes away all our goods, yet we are saved. Another comes and plunders everything and also breaks our legs, and we are still saved. The third one comes and takes away our life as well. Who is the most dangerous of all these? Surely the third one.

Our children and other dear ones always command our attention, which is the outward expression of our soul. They keep us always engaged in one form or another and leave us no time for the spiritual way, so they are the most dangerous dacoits in this form.

Does this mean that we have to leave our hearths and homes and lead the lives of a recluse in the jungle? No, it is not so. Please realize that it is your inner craving and fondness that keeps you bound hand and foot, as it were, to your dear ones, and this attachment or infatuation makes you worried and miserable all the time. You see, the very ties of affection which should be a source of happiness become fetters of bondage, as you are always in the grip of fears which, to say the least, are imaginary and baseless.

The heart, as you know, is the seat of the Lord God. It is an asset entrusted to us for a higher purpose of life, viz., self-knowledge and God-knowledge. Where the heart goes, everything follows on its own. So herein the Master warns us against our attention being directed always toward our worldly relationships, which always cause distraction and disturbance.

You know very well that the impediments which stand in the way of the child disciple and recklessly intrude upon him in the precious moments of holy meditation are the family ties that drag us down, again and again, from the seat of the soul, the eye focus.

We have of course to live in the world, yet in a completely detached manner, just as a lotus flower which grows out of mud holds its head aloft and above the muddy pond, retaining its pristine purity. Similarly, we are to attend to the mundane duties entrusted to our care without being concerned with the worries and cares of our relations who, apart from us, are sufficiently protected by the gracious Master Power.

You can very well understand it by a simple example. A man traveling in a train has a box beside him on the berth. Now both the man and his box are being carried by the train. If the man were to put the box on his head, he would surely be a fool, for he would break his neck for nothing. This is exactly the state of affairs with the worldly wise. We generally lack faith in the gracious Master Power and unnecessarily create problems for our bondage as, otherwise, everything would progress smoothly in the well-established divine plan.

You might well have noticed that disturbed waters do not reflect. Always try to resign your precious little self in favor of the gracious Master Power, while sitting in your holy meditations, and thereby prepare a receptive ground for the inner divine grace to descend within you and fill you in abundance. (*Why Don't You Follow the Guru? Sat Sandesh*, 12/73, ruhanisatsangusa.org/pdf/ss73/ss197)



The Procrastinating Householder

It is said that whenever the great spiritual Master Kabir walked by a certain place in Banaras, he would always find a certain man sitting in his garden. One day Kabir stopped and suggested to him: “Sir, instead of sitting idly in your garden, you could better spend the time in spiritual meditation and thus improve yourself.” “I have very young children and will be able to afford the time for spiritual practices only after they have grown up,” the man replied.

After the children had grown up, Kabir met the man again and asked him: “Do you now find time for spiritual meditation?” “Ah, Sir, now I must wait for the children to be married so they can look after themselves independently. Then I will have the time to devote myself to meditation.”

Later, when Kabir again met the man, he asked him: “And now, fortunate man, all your children are married so you are no doubt devoting yourself to spiritual practice.” “Ah, now,” the man replied, “I am eager to see my grandchildren grow up and get married.”

After this had taken place, Kabir again asked the man: “What is your position now, my friend?” “O, Sir,” the man replied, “I find that my grandchildren are very careless. As a result of this, it is quite necessary that I look after the house, even during the night. For if I were also careless, thieves would come and steal what little we have.”

Some years later Kabir again visited the man’s house and inquired where the old man was. The sons and grandsons said that he had died.

“Ah, that is indeed a great pity,” Kabir said. “Poor man, his life was wasted following the orders and desires of his worldly mind which led him into such deep attachment to his family and his beasts. And even a few moments only of love for the Lord would have started to end his imprisonment here.”



If you have not chosen the Kingdom of God first,
it will, in the end, make no difference what you have chosen instead.
(William Law, 18th century English mystic)

Perfection does not consist in not seeing the world,
but in not having a taste or relish for it.
(Saint Francis de Sales)

Free from desire, you realize the Mystery.
Caught in desire, you see only the manifestation.
(Sufi Saying)

5. Vanity

Pride or vanity is considered the original and most serious of the deadly sins, and the source of the others. It is identified as a desire to be more important or attractive than others, failing to acknowledge the good work of others, and excessive love of self.

5. Vanity, or ahankar, is the last of the deadly five. The word ahankar has two meanings. First, it is the faculty of the mind which gives us the power of awareness of the self, self-differentiation, the I-ness. It is that faculty which executes the mandates of the Buddhi in the interests of self. But the abnormal exaggeration of this faculty becomes ahankar, which is vanity or egotism. It is the enlargement of the ego which becomes a cancer by cell proliferation.

You know a cancer is a condition in which normal body epithelial cells become much enlarged. So, it is here. The normal ego is all right, but when it begins to swell up out of all proportion, then it takes on the nature of a disease. So, vanity is an overgrown ego. Ahankar is a malignant enlargement of the "I". That faculty, which is quite necessary for the preservation of the individual in this life and for the proper placement of that person in relation to all others, becomes so overgrown that the normal-self becomes for him the center of the universe. This is malignant selfishness. This passion is the worst of all in some respects, although it is difficult to say just which one is the worst. Once the Master [Baba Sawan Singh] was asked which of the five was the worst, and he laughingly replied, "Each of them is worst."

Ahankar has a thousand claws by which to dig into the minds of its victims. Its deadly poison infiltrates the entire being. Beginning generally in infancy, it seldom ceases to operate until death. It feeds upon its own refuse, and it waxes strong upon materials furnished by the other four. In fact, it often feeds upon the decaying carcasses of the others. How often vanity is nourished by the death of the others! How vain men become over a partial subjugation of the other passions. Not infrequently do men become vain over their own humility! One of the commonest manifestations of vanity is a pretended humility. This may be conscious or quite unconscious.

Ahankar is the most sturdy and masterful of the lot and it has the greatest longevity. How often we hear old men and women talking garrulously, recounting their former exploits. Nothing can check them. Vanity holds the field and continues to operate long after all the rest are dead. As a matter of fact, it often kills all the rest in order to have something to boast about. How many times men are swelled up over some trifling victory, or virtue, and women grow vain over their own virtues! Ascetics, posing as the humblest of men, grow vain over their apparent saintliness. Self-righteousness is one of the most prevalent and most malignant of these mental diseases.

It is well known to those who are on the Path that egotism is the last of the hateful five to surrender. Its method is to distort the view-point to present everything out of proportion, making itself the center of the world. It destroys all sense of humor. You never see a vain person with any sense of real humor. If he had, he couldn't be vain. Vanity will set a crown upon its own head and wonder why all men do not rush to acknowledge it king. It will bray like an ass and imagine itself singing in a grand opera. It cannot see itself, because it sees nothing but self. It will strut like a peacock with only cabbage leaves for tail-feathers. But it can never see its own imperfections. It sees all of its own shortcomings reflected in others, while it imagines itself perfect.

The chief function of ahankar is to block the path of Truth. It is the bosom friend of error. It completely deceives its own victims, making them self-satisfied, when they ought to be seeking their own improvement. It will prevent people from seeking new things. It is the main friend and supporter of ancient superstitions. It establishes creeds, appoints a priesthood and builds up organizations to propagate its own dogmas. It then assumes that out of its own superior wisdom it has selected the only perfect system of truth. It will not then acknowledge that it could be mistaken and goes on hugging its assumptions. It defies the whole world demanding unqualified support for its declared dictums. And worst of all, it often seeks the instant destruction of all who oppose it. Its one big assumption is: I am right; he who opposes me is wrong; to sustain the right, I must destroy my opponent.

This assumption has soaked the pages of history with innocent blood. Today it is busy fermenting strife among nations. Blind egotism and its bastard son, selfishness, are today sowing the seeds of international dissatisfaction and germinating wars. God knows what the harvest shall be.

Ahankar bitterly resents all effort to enlighten it. How can it admit that it is wrong or that it needs enlightenment? It will go to war at the drop of the hat to defend its own self-asserted rights. It never thinks of the other man's rights. It takes offence easily, like anger. It is extremely touchy, sensitive, they call it. It sees no weaknesses in itself, but it never ceases to point out the faults of others. It is the boon companion to anger. Thus, blowing its own horn, it struts across the stage of life; it blows so loudly that it cannot hear anyone else. The minor phases of ahankar are:

(a) Bigotry, (b) Self-assertion, (c) It makes obtrusive show of wealth or power, it is gaudy in dress, exhibits a domineering attitude, is bossy, scolding and fault-finding. In this it joins hands with anger. Its fundamental assumption is its own infallibility. Man under the influence of vanity imagines he is advertising his own virtues by pointing out the faults of others; while as a matter of universal experience, he is only advertising his own shortcomings. So it is with all fault-finding. He assumes superior airs, demands his own wishes which he calls rights, and tries to punish others if he is opposed. He tries to attract the attention of others by noise or other show of self, loud and constant talking, or tries to impose his own opinions upon others. He loves office and power over others. (d) He frequently interrupts others when they are talking. (e) He likes to make public speeches, is eager to see his own name in print, makes a show of his own piety, loves to make long prayers in public, and he makes it a point to let the world know about it if he gives a penny to charity. (f) He dearly loves titles, honors, college degrees, and enjoys seeing the mob bow down to him. (g) In many other ways he exhibits the constantly recurring "I", ad nauseam.



Pride makes us artificial;
humility makes us real.
(Thomas Merton)

The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God;
God is in none of his thoughts.
(Psalms)

One will rarely err if extreme actions be ascribed to vanity,
ordinary actions to habit, and mean actions to fear.
(Friedrich Nietzsche)

Pride is a negative virtue;
it exists to glorify humility.
(Swami Sivananda)

When the proud man thinks he is humble his case is hopeless.
(Thomas Merton)

God cannot be realized if there is the slightest trace of pride.
(Ramakrishna)

Whoever has in his heart so much as a rice-grain of pride
cannot enter into Paradise.
(Mohammed)

Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased;
and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.
(Jesus Christ)

Pride goes before destruction,
and a haughty spirit before a fall.
(Proverbs)

If you are discouraged, it is a sign of pride,
because it shows you trust in your own powers.
(Mother Teresa)

Too much learning makes one proud.
One must bend one's head realizing the limitations of reason.
It can only take you to the gate and it has to be left behind
when you enter the realm of the spirit.
You have to unlearn what you have learnt
and become as simple and guileless as a child.
(Papa Ramdas)

A proud man is seldom a grateful man,
for he never thinks he gets as much as he deserves.
(Henry W. Beecher)

If you see anything in yourself which may make you proud,
look a little further, and you will find enough to make you humble.
(Wellins Calcott)

Pride attaches undue importance to the superiority of one's status in the eyes of others;
and shame is fear of humiliation at one's inferior status in the estimation of others.
When one sets his heart on being highly esteemed, and achieves such rating,
then he is automatically involved in fear of losing his status.
(Lao Tzu)



Sant Kirpal Singh Ji

Pride and ego do not let us progress; when we make mistakes we will not admit them. In our hearts we have the thought, “There is none greater than me.” Self-respect and praise are both food for the mind. Caught up in this failing, we at times push the Guru aside, saying, “What does the Guru know?” (ruhanisatsangusa.org/change.htm)

We may have been given human birth many times, but pride and ego killed us again and again, ruining all our good work and causing us to return to the same scene, time and again. In the past it was our ruination, and it is winning the present also. Do not obey your mind - obey the words of the Guru, which will bring you great joy; whereas obedience to the mind will give you unending distress - the mind ever gave birth to trouble. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/change.htm)

Forget all pride and vain-glory. One person may have pride of knowledge; another may have done a little meditation and wishes the world to acknowledge him as a great devotee. The consequences are that whatever little a person has gained will be lost, and one will be left lamenting. Always remember that all spiritual progress is solely due to the Guru's grace – be grateful, not prideful. If a million rupees or dollars are placed in a treasury, why should the treasurer feel proud? Whatever comes, whatever goes, it is all due to the will and pleasure of the Guru; and the receiver should feel neither a sense of pride nor a sense of loss. Humility is a very beautiful adornment. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/ineffable.htm)

Attachment and pride keep us chained to the outer environments. Pride and the love of praise – “I am learned, I am great, I am powerful, there is no one like me!” - and attachment stops you from going ahead. Real progress starts when you break all attachment and ego. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/strait.htm)

Who can comprehend Reality? Kabir says that one who has rid himself of all the above three vices (egotism, avarice, cunningness) would then see everything in its true color. First, egotism. Some are swayed by the intoxication of power. Some are proud of their learning and knowledge. Some take pride in their wealth and think that they can do anything. So the Great Teacher says that such people cannot get to Reality at any cost. Further, they never seek the nearness of a man of intuition or realization because of their vanity. As such, elimination of egotism is a must. Only then would you develop right understanding and correct vision. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/grand-delusion.htm)

False pride of worldly possession or self, assumed superiority because of spiritual knowledge or intellectual attainments, vanity of earthly things and status may turn astray the mind of the spiritual aspirant, yet in course of time all these vanish into thin air. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/7paths.htm)

Unkind thoughts, temptations for revenge, a pride of learning and knowledge, lurking doubts and skepticism, distrust of God and lack of faith in Him are some of the formidable barriers that stand in the way and prevent His grace and blessing from flowing in. (*Spiritual Elixir*, 130)

Hold back your mind from pride, for pride only comes from ignorance. The man who does not know thinks that he is great, that he has done this or that great thing; the wise man knows that only God is great, that all good work is done by God alone. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/gemseq.htm)

The more you come in contact with the Light and Sound Principle within you, you'll slowly see your doership and ego lessen. Doership will slowly die out. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/personal.htm)

The Haughty Foe

(Excerpts – Cynthia Franklin)

In a thousand little ways pride insinuates itself into our daily actions, and robs our lives of their joy and meaning. When we are too proud to look stupid, we do not ask questions and do not learn. When we are too proud to look incompetent, we do not tell our supervisor that we cannot handle our work load, and many important things go undone. When we are too proud to admit our failings, we try to hide our faults even from our own Guru and thus close ourselves off from the blessings of grace.

Pride is not a simple, straightforward, and easily recognizable foe. This enemy is flexible and tricky, a master of many disguises. If it fails to prevent us from experiencing our own divinity, it does not give up. Our pride will try to seduce us into appropriating even our most profound spiritual experiences into the service of our egos. It is ironic and sad that pride is one vice that seems capable of actually feeding off of and gaining strength from our merits. Its action, as it leaches energy from our spiritual work, may be so subtle that we are at first unaware of what is happening. But there are signs. When we begin on the spiritual path, it is pride that makes us feel more distant from other people. If we feel proud that we are doing practices “to dissolve our egos,” rather than feeling a new openness and love, we feel judgmental, separate, lonely. We get the unpleasant experience of the truth expressed by Benjamin Franklin: “To be proud of virtue is to poison yourself with the antidote.”

Nor is pride likely to be left behind us on the spiritual path! It will shed old disguises and take on ever new and seemingly engaging ones, and time and again insinuate itself as our dear companion. There will be times when we receive some gift of knowledge or experience through the Guru’s grace, and rather than becoming inspired to learn more, we become proud. This very pride then becomes a barrier, a prison that we dwell in and that bars us from further learning.

It is sobering to remember the story of the angel Lucifer. He was a close servant of the Lord, a luminous being, highly evolved and resplendent with blessings. But the very greatness of his attainments gave monstrous strength to his pride, and on the very last stages on the path to perfection, this highest of all angels fell to the lowest rung. It is this very boldness of pride to challenge the Divine that makes it such a difficult enemy to overcome. Boethius said, “All the other vices flee God; pride alone rises up against Him.”

In any moment that we feel our pride damning us to the icy hell-realm of our own elemental separation, in that very moment we can reach out to the warming rays of grace. Bit by bit, if we monitor our state and engage in self-inquiry, the habit of pride can be recognized and countered, at least to some extent. As we ponder our lives more deeply we inevitably become aware of our dependence of grace: our dependence for every good thing on that pure love which is the form of God’s presence, dwelling in all hearts, including our own.

Without cutting through our petty pride, we will never experience the real greatness and beauty that are inside. As Thoreau said, “Humility like darkness reveals the Heavenly Lights.”



Antidotes to the Deadly Five

To sum up the discussion of the five mental diseases, let us place them and their antidotes side by side. The Masters classify all mankind into two main divisions— Manmukhs and Gurumukhs. This means those who follow the dictates of their own minds, and those who follow the Guru. The Manmukh is the one who follows the mind, obeys its every whim, and does just what it likes. He is a slave to the mind and its passions. But the man whose face is always towards the Guru is the free man, and the one who is developing his own powers to the greatest extent possible. He is not under the ever-grinding wheel of birth and death, the grinding wheel of desire and karma.

But this sublime achievement is accomplished only by the help of the Master, the Guru, and the Shabd, the regenerating Dhun, the Audible Life Stream. No one can ever do it alone. There is positively no other cure for the passions— none but the Voice of God ringing through the soul. When that Holy Symphony is heard, these miserable five lose their power and drop away. Positively, the only sure cure for these five deadly diseases is the Life Stream, opened up to the disciple by his Master. Some help may be had from contemplating the opposite virtues. But one must never depend on such contemplation for the final reconstruction of character. The soul must become absorbed in that Luminous Reality, and he must forget all else. That Reality gives strength and will continue to do so until the man becomes something more than man. He becomes a living power, reborn and exalted. Then these five evils slink away like beaten dogs. This is real liberty.

Just as the five passions may be regarded as the five black agents of desolation, so the five virtues may be looked upon as five angels. They hover over us always, ready to extend their aid, if we look to them for help or comfort. They will greatly assist in the upward struggle. Weave them into the fiber of your character. They will help much. As those five evil passions include in themselves all other evils, so these five virtues include in themselves all other virtues. They should be contemplated long and deeply. Here they are set opposite to one another, the virtues and the vices:

Passions and Their Remedies:

| <u>Vices</u> | <u>Virtues</u> |
|------------------|------------------------|
| Lust (kam) | chastity, continence |
| Anger (krodh) | forgiveness, tolerance |
| Greed (lobh) | contentment |
| Attachment (moh) | detachment |
| Vanity (ahankar) | humility |



I was held back by mere trifles, the most paltry inanities, all my old attachments. They plucked at my garments of flesh and whispered: “Are you going to dismiss us? From this moment we shall never be with you again, for ever and ever. From this moment you will never again be allowed to do this thing, or that, for evermore.” (Saint Augustine)

Your lower, hellish nature tries to lead you into temptation, but you have struggled hard and now your soul is full of purity. You have quenched the fires of lust for God’s sake, and they have been transformed into the light of guidance. The fire of anger has turned to forbearance, the darkness of ignorance to knowledge, the fire of greed to unselfishness, and the thorns of envy to the roses of love. You have extinguished these fires for the love of God, and converted your fiery nature into a verdant orchard. The nightingales of the remembrance and glorification of God sing sweetly in the garden of your heart. Answering the call of God, you have brought the water of the spirit into the blazing hell of your soul. (Rumi)



May your soul be happy;
journey joyfully.
(Rumi)

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