

OM SAI RAM!

Welcome to Prasanthi Sandesh,

PODCAST 234, “THE NEXT DIMENSION OF EGO”

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*The following text contains excerpts from Prof. Anil Kumar’s book
“Sai-Chology,” pg. 201-205.*

NEXT DIMENSION OF EGO: SELF ESTEEM (SELF-IMPORTANCE)

How does ego express itself in another dimension? That dimension of ego is self-importance. If Swami has gifted a ring to someone, that person wants others to know about it. This is the expression of the ego. By unnecessarily displaying what Swami has given; such behaviour brings a bad name to the gift and also to the Giver. We should avoid such exhibitions. These are not for show. The gift is for our inner growth and our inner Self. It is for our inner transformation. It is the spirit of encouragement for us to proceed along the spiritual path.

Self-importance is a characteristic of the ego. If we find a person being granted an interview on his very first visit, we start feeling inferior. When he starts narrating his experience, we interject and instead start narrating our earlier experiences. Such self-esteem and self-importance are one of the ugly expressions of the inner ego.

HE HAS NO POSSESSIVENESS AT ALL

If we look at Bhagawan Baba, we do not find any trace of possessiveness. If anyone gives anything, He returns it. Once He gifted a costly car to a man in a top position and also told him that the car was registered in his name and that he had to have it. It was not given to the person because there was need for it in his profession.

On another occasion, a person had come from Anantapur. Swami called him and said, “You are doing a lot of work. Take this car!” A man of possessiveness cannot dream of doing such things. It is impossible to get anything like that from such persons. When we want to give, we calculate. We start thinking about the pros and cons and the benefits to be received.

Once an important man was visiting Prasanthi Nilayam and informed Baba that he was to perform his *griha pravasha* (housewarming ceremony) in the new house that day. Instantly, Swami gifted him a costly wall clock, inlaid with gold and ivory and other carvings. Bhagawan told him to keep it in his house.

From this we should learn how to give and not to take. Swami gives yet does not take. He feels so happy in giving. That is non-possessiveness!

GIVING THE CREDIT TO THE OTHER PERSON IS EGOLESSNESS

Somebody said, "Swami, I wrote this book because of Your blessings, because of Your grace. Thank You for the fine words of encouragement."

Baba says, "I am only here to encourage you. I am here to encourage you people to do good things like writing, charity, and good work." He does it and gives you the credit.

The feeling of self-esteem and self-importance is ego. The denial of one's self (ego) and giving the other person the credit is egolessness. Grabbing the credit of others is the Himalayan heights of ego.

HE GIVES YOU A PATIENT HEARING

If we look at this factor and the life of Bhagawan, what a sharp contrast do we find! At any time, a devotee cries out to Swami and immediately he or she is given a patient hearing.

Once a boy came to Baba with a problem and gave Him a letter. Swami gave a sympathetic hearing. But, when the boy left, He called him back. The boy had forgotten to tell Him some other points. Then He materialised *Vibhuti*. Even though He knows everything, we cannot but be overwhelmed at Baba's eagerness to give us a chance to open up.

In sharp contrast, we don't allow others to speak. The tragedy is that we are not prepared to accept that we do not know everything. Our ego will not allow this.

An engineer was once talking to Swami about certain construction work and mentioned the manner and the period of time it would take, as well as the budget estimate. Swami allowed him to talk for ten minutes. The engineer showed Him all the maps. Finally, He appreciated the work of the engineer and asked him to join Him for lunch.

At the dining table Baba suggested to the engineer certain modified alternative designs and asked him how it would look? The engineer was stunned and said, "Swami, Your idea is much better than mine. Also, Your design is much cheaper than mine, which I brought here. Let us make it final, Swami."

Baba: "I am just suggesting these to you *bangaru* (an endearing word used by Bhagawan to address devotees). Do as you wish."

Then Bhagawan turned to me and told me that He knew everything of what the engineer spoke about. After some time, I asked Bhagawan as to why then did He allow the engineer to speak at length?

Baba's reply revealed the depth of His compassion. He said that the engineer was a devotee and had spent much time and effort; hence it was necessary to allow him the satisfaction of giving his own version and a presentation on the design. This trait is the

essence of egolessness. Egolessness comprises so many virtues, like patience, sympathetic hearing, non-possessiveness and giving credit to others.

THE SPIRITUAL EGO IS MORE DANGEROUS THAN THE MUNDANE EGO

It is a travesty of modern times that in the spiritual field also we want to be egoistic. In the world we exhibit plenty of ego, in spite of various trials and tribulations that we face in life. The *Bhagavad Gita* clearly condemns spiritual ego, which is more dangerous than mundane ego.

The spiritual ego leads to complete downfall. It is fatal and incurable and hence one has to be very, very cautious. At least with worldly ego, we can avoid people or adopt some other means. A worldly ego can be reduced just by being with a person who is greater than we are, who is superior to us. But when we are bloated with spiritual ego, no one will say that we are nobody.

Professor Anil Kumar discusses how the Spiritual Ego expresses itself in the next episode.

Thank you for your time,

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