

Dada Bhagwan Parivar's

January 2019

Price per copy : ₹ 20/-

AKRAM Express



Backbiting

Editorial

Dear friends,

It has become habitual for us to gossip, backbite, or even to pry into other peoples lives. In fact it has become a beastly pleasure, a way of whiling away time, or a way of taking out our own frustrations on someone else in order to make ourselves feel better.

But the 'Gnani' (the enlightened one) is always mindful of the terrible consequences that such actions carry. That is why they never engage in these types of actions.

So come, let us discover from this month's edition, the terrible consequences of backbiting and gossiping, and how to rid ourselves of this vice.

-Dimple Mehta



Akram Express

Vol.: 10, Issue : 6
Conti. Issue No.: 114
January 2019

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Editor : Dimple Mehta

Printer & Published by

Dimple Mehta on behalf of
Mahavideh Foundation
Simandhar City, Adalaj - 382421,
Ta & Dist - Gandhinagar.

Owned by
Mahavideh Foundation
Simandhar City, Adalaj - 382421,
Ta & Dist - Gandhinagar.

Printed at
Amba Offset
B-99, GIDC, Sector-25,
Gandhinagar - 382025.

Published at
Mahavideh Foundation
Simandhar City, Adalaj - 382421,
Ta & Dist-Gandhinagar.

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Backbiting

Subscription (English)

Yearly Subscription

India: 200 Rupees

U.S.A.: 15 Dollars

U.K.: 12 Pounds

5 years Subscription

India: 800 Rupees

U.S.A.: 60 Dollars

U.K.: 50 Pounds

Send D.D./M.o. in the
name of 'Mahavideh
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Dadaji

Says...



Questioner: What does it mean to 'back bite'?

Dadashri: To 'backbite' is when you say something that would offend or cause harm to a person.

Questioner: What is the difference between backbiting and criticism? (*ninda and tika*)

Dadashri: Criticism is when you expose a person's visible faults as evident to you at that time. Whereas backbiting is when one rattles on about someone's faults even when it is not evident or justified. You continually talk about them in only a negative light.

To talk negatively about people on a personal level is back-biting

Dadashri: To talk about people's personal matters is known as backbiting. It is only necessary to talk about things in general terms. Let individuals do whatever is convenient for them. You must not backbite anyone. Even to think that 'it is wrong' is not acceptable. To backbite someone is akin to physically hurting them. For this reason, you should avoid doing it. It is a sin.

To Backbite Means...

Questioner: How can we define 'backbiting'?

Dadashri: To backbite is to speak that which is contrary to facts about a person, *viradhna*. That is why we say 'do not backbite! But people tend to do so anyway. Hey, Do not backbite! The air is full of *parmanu* (subatomic particles) through which everything reaches the other person. Do not say even one irresponsible word about anyone. If you want to say something, then say something positive. Do not defame anyone.

Questioner: How can we describe 'intense backbiting'?

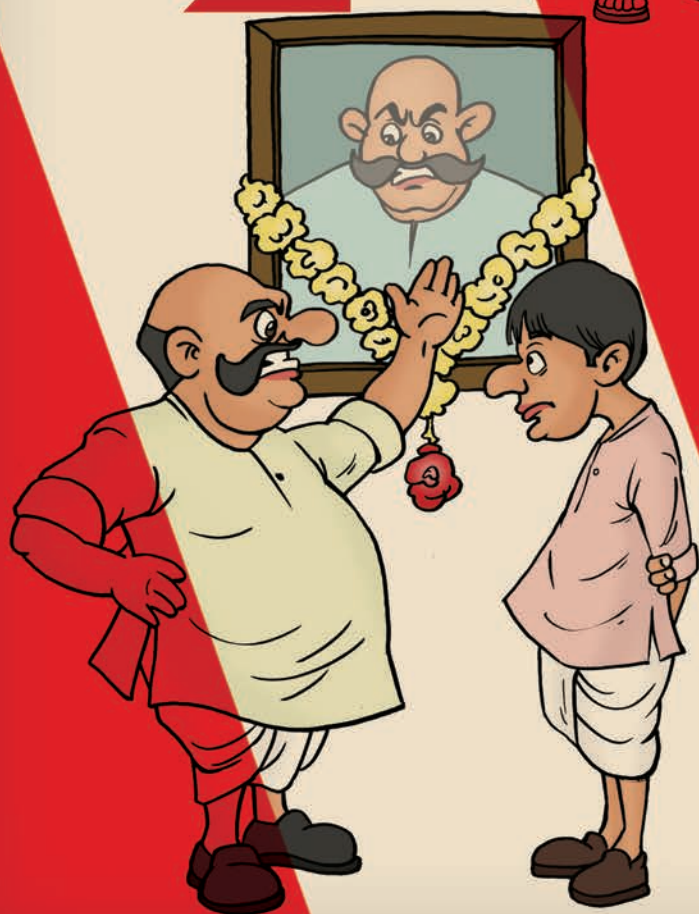
Dadashri: Ordinary backbiting is when one says 'he is not a good person', that is known as ordinary backbiting. But when you impose that opinion on someone else, that is known as intense backbiting. Isn't there at least a little good in everyone?

Questioner: Of course there is!

Dadashri: There may well be a little bad too. But it should not be that we only speak negative things about that person. It can be like this: 'In this matter the person is like this, but in this other matter he is very good'.

By doing *pratikraman* (the three-step process of asking for forgiveness) this will clear.

Do not
speak ill of
the dead.
Its sin will
stick to
you.



To backbite
a human
being is
akin to
backbiting
God.

Absolutely

New & Different !

A happy person would never backbite anyone. It is only unhappy people who do this.



Taking pleasure out of looking at people's faults can result in a trip to hell.



Backbiting Someone is Akin to Hitting Them



Nestled in the foothills of the Himalaya mountains, there was a delightful village, famous throughout the country, for its tradition of music. The melodious tunes of Pandit Bhairavnath's music school used to attract aspiring musicians from across the entire country. The pleasant tunes combined with the coolness of the Himalayas had made the village's atmosphere alluring.

However, lately the old music tradition had fallen into turmoil. The village's atmosphere had become contaminated by backbiting and gossip.

What happened was that Shambhunath had started a new music school of his own at the entrance of the village. Naturally all the new students went to Shambhunath's school due to its convenient location. Gradually rumours began to spread in the village that Shambhunath was badmouthing Bhairavnath because he wanted to keep the students to himself. All the corners of the village, from the greengrocer's to the temple courtyard, came under the influence of this gossip.

"Aunty, I have heard that Shambhunath has seized another new student," said Vinodini to Radha aunty.

"Oh Shiv, Shiv, Shiv, Shiv!" exclaimed Radha aunty, placing her hands on her ears as she recited the name of her god as an exclamation of despair. "But what is surprising in that? I have never seen a more greedy person than Shambhunath. Instead of honoring the music tradition, this greedy man is only interested in establishing his own camp. And the students are also foolish enough to fall for this greedy man's sweet talking."

"No, aunty. Not all the students are foolish. I have heard that just last week one of

the students left Shambhunath's camp and went to Bhairavnath," said Vinodini, showing off her inside knowledge of the situation.

When such backbiting and gossip was going on everywhere, it was inevitable that word would eventually reach Pandit Bhairavnath's music school. The Pandit's favorite student, Alaap, grew uneasy when he heard all this gossip.

One evening Bhairavnath was relaxing after his meal.

'This is the right time to speak to Panditji,' thought Alaap, and so he went to see Panditji to tell him what was on his mind.

"Panditji, for quite some days now, one thing has been bothering me a lot," Alaap said timidly.

"What is it, son? Don't be afraid. Tell me what is on your mind," said Panditji.

Panditji's words gave Alaap courage. "Panditji, I am very lucky that I have not been to Shambhunath, even unwittingly. It is not the fault of the students who end up there. What right does Shambhunath have to badmouth you in order to keep all the students in his clutches?"

A slight smile appeared on Panditji's face, "Oh it is not as if he is keeping every single one of the students. He does send some our way."

"Panditji, you may try to take this matter lightly, but I do not like Shambhunath's attitude at all. This new master, what does he think of himself? Alas, I have also heard that just to keep the students loyal to him, he has resorted to slandering (backbiting) you. Such behaviour should not be tolerated. We have to teach him a lesson." Alaap was boiling over with anger.

"Calm down Alaap." Panditji's face turned serious now.

For a few minutes the Panditji remained silent. Alaap's heart was racing. He thought, 'I hope I have not upset Panditji!'



Just then the Panditji said, "There is a solution. You become Shambhunath's student for a while. Do not mention that you have any connection to me. Simply get to know all the facts by staying there."

Alaap liked Panditji's suggestion. The next day, having taken Panditji's blessings, he went to Shambhunath. He expressed to Shambhunath his aspiration to study music and was lovingly accepted as a student.

Days passed. With the intention of getting to know all the facts from Shambhunath, Alaap tried to win his heart. But it so happened that Shambhunath won Alaap's heart. Alaap was touched by his love for music. He was impressed with his unique style of teaching music. His love for his students was also heartwarming.

'For a person who has such good qualities, why would he get involved with backbiting such a well-renowned musician such as Pandit Bhairavnath?' Alaap had all these thoughts running through his head. 'I have never directly heard him say a bad word about Panditji.' If one thought arose in favour of Shambhunath, then straight away another thought would counter it. 'But the other day Shambhunath had actually stopped a student from going to Pandit Bhairavnath. What was the reason behind that?'

One day, seeking out his opportunity, Alaap went to Shambhunath and declared his confusion, "Master, I respect you very much, but there is one thing which I do not understand. Why are you preventing students from going to Panditji? Do you realize that because of your actions, you have become the talk of the entire village? Everyone in the village thinks that you are greedy."

For a couple of seconds Shambhunath observed Alaap and then said, "I have been anticipating this question for so many days."

"Huh!!" Alaap was astonished.

Shambhunath explained, "Pandit Bhairavnath is my master and I am only following his commands. Panditji has commanded me that out of all the students that come to me, I should only send to him the ones with shortcomings. And I should teach all the others over here. All this backbiting and gossip cannot affect me when I have the 'armor' of Panditji's commands to bolster me."

Alaap was stunned. His cheeks turned red with shame.

"And yes, Alaap, Panditji had sent me a message that he was sending his most dearest student here," said Shambhunath with a smile.

"Please forgive me master," said Alaap as he bent down in front of Shambhunath. "Without knowing all the facts and instead listening to all the idle gossip, I too had negative thoughts for you."

Shambhunath affectionately patted Alaap on the back, "No problem at all, my son. Now the time has come for you to return to Panditji."

Shambhunath had a big heart and hence he did not make Alaap aware of his mistake. Alaap, however, was feeling extreme remorse.

The entire way back to the music school, Alaap continued to regret his mistake, 'I had such negative thoughts for the one who was just following Panditji's commands.'

Upon reaching the school he fell at Pandit Bhairavnath's feet, "Please forgive me, master. I have made a big mistake."

"Will you promise me one thing?" Panditji held out his hand, "If you want to talk about someone in their absence then say something good. But do not utter any irresponsible words that could discredit them. To backbite is akin to physically hitting a person. So do not backbite."

"I promise," said Alaap as he placed his hand in Panditji's hand.

Vibrations



It was Wednesday afternoon. Shivali was in the waiting room of Dr. Batra's dental surgery, waiting for her turn.

Just then she heard a familiar voice.

Shivali, you're here?

Oh Priyanka, is that you? ... So nice to see you!



What a pleasant surprise! Have you moved here?

No, friend, I had come to attend a wedding at my aunt's house and then this toothache spoilt all the fun.



But now that I've bumped into you, we will have so much fun. Tell me what's new?



We missed you at last month's school reunion.

I really wanted to come. How did it go? I heard that Tina had worn some really weird clothes to the party. Is she going crazy these days or what?



Priyanka tried to change the subject, but even then Shivali continued with the backbiting.



My aunt told me that last week there was a big fight at Sejal's house. What was it about?

I don't know anything about it.



Shivali found Priyanka's behaviour strange. She was not willing to say anything negative about anyone.

Priyanka, are you hiding something from me? I'm dying to have a good gossip with you, but you are not telling me anything.



Shivali, I've made a decision to not talk bad about anyone behind their backs. When you start talking about someone's personal matters, intentionally or unintentionally, it tends to slip into backbiting. So ...



Just then Shivali's phone rang.



Sorry Arya. I am at the dentist and happened to see Priyanka here.

Shivali are you lost? I have been waiting for you for an hour. I am leaving now.



OK, Listen. I am getting inside the lift so the phone may disconnect. So...

Hello, Hello... Can you hear me?



Arya is so rude. So what if I kept her waiting this one time, what's the big deal? Angry bird. She has such a strange personality.

Priyanka gestured to Shivali to remain quiet.

In her annoyance, Shivali had not heard Priyanka's phone ring.



Hi Arya. How are you?

Fine. Listen, I cannot get through to Shivali's phone. Please give her a message that I will meet her tomorrow at her aunt's house.



OK, sure. Bye.

Why did Arya call you? Was it too much effort for her to call me...

Shivali glanced at her phone and her eyes widened.



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"Oh no. My phone was still on. I hope Arya did not hear what I said? Priyanka, what was her tone like? Was she upset with me?"



Shivali was so scared that she broke out in a sweat.

No, it did not seem like that. But can I tell you something? Maybe she did not hear what you said through the phone, but your negative vibrations would have definitely reached her.



How's that?

The air is full of parmanu (subatomic particles). If we say even a single negative word about anyone, it reaches them. So I have made a rule.



What rule?

If you want to talk about anyone in their absence, then first pretend as if they are present, and then talk about them.



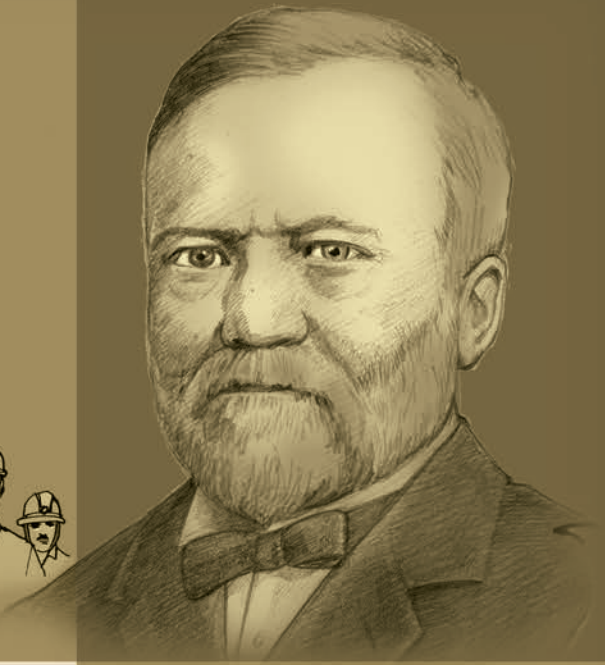
Shivali was touched by what Priyanka said. Placing her hand on the sore side of her face ...

From today I will be mindful of not only what goes in my mouth, but also what comes out of it!



Real Life

Story



Andrew Carnegie was a famous American industrialist. He came to America at a very young age. Raised in poverty, Andrew Carnegie became the biggest producer of iron in America.

Thousands of men worked for him. There was a time when he had 43 millionaires working for him. At that time a reporter had asked Carnegie a beautiful question. “Sir, how do you manage to get all these people to perform and be productive?”

He answered, “To get productivity from people under you is like getting an ounce of gold from a mine. To get an ounce of gold you have to dig through innumerable tons of dirt and soil. But your aim is to get the gold isn’t it? The more you start digging deeper, the more you will start to see gold instead of dirt.

Similarly, get to know what is wrong with people and what is wrong with their circumstances. You will get to see and know a lot of things that you have no desire to know or see. But keep focused on the fact that you have no interest in the surface layers of rubbish, dirt and soil. There is always something good in every circumstance and in every person. Each person has some positive attributes, but we have a habit of only looking at the bad. To get just an ounce of gold you have to move innumerable tons of rubbish. That’s it. That is the point. Recognize the positive attributes of a person that are helpful in achieving the objective.”

See friends, successful individuals have such beautiful characteristics. They have no interest in seeing or talking about anyone’s bad points. Andrew Carnegie focused on identifying the positive attributes of people and harnessed these attributes to attain tremendous prosperity.

So come, let us decide that we do not want to waste our time and energy looking at people’s bad points and getting involved with backbiting. Let us move forward keeping in mind the positive attributes of everyone.

TEST

After gaining the new understanding based on this new edition what should one do in the following

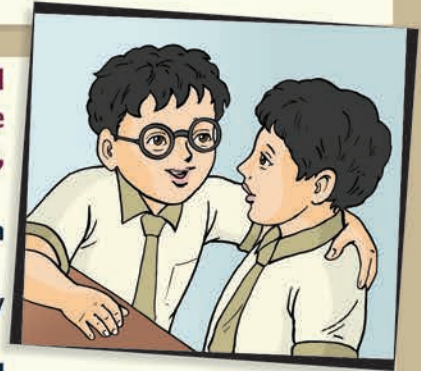


Simran is talking to her friend Soni and Ria. Suddenly Ria started saying negative things about their third friend Parthi. Now ...

- a) Soni and Ria should also join her and share her stock of negatives for Parthi. ☐
- b) Soni and Ria should become quiet so Ria gets a hint that she should not do this. ☐
- c) Soni and Ria should make a note of Parthi's negatives, even if they don't say anything negative about her. ☐

Soham was engrossed in conversation with his brother Neel and started criticising their neighbour, Natukaka. He suddenly remembered the dangers of criticising someone, 'to criticise a human being is like criticising God'. Now ...

- a) Ignore the warning signs and continue with the criticism because of the feeling of enjoyment gained from it. ☐
- b) While discussing Natukaka, start badmouthing his family members too. ☐
- c) Remember Natukaka's good points noted from the past and tell Neel. ☐



Five friends- Janki, Suzi, Keya, Mona & Pankit have gone to an adventure park for a picnic. As expected by them, there were few rides only in the adventure park and so they started getting bored..Now-

- a) They should sit together and speak negative about the park and take out their frustration. ☐
- b) Complain to the management and tell them that why there are few rides. ☐
- c) They should enjoy whatever is available and invent their own new games to enjoy. ☐

YOURSELF !

circumstances? Please tick the appropriate box.

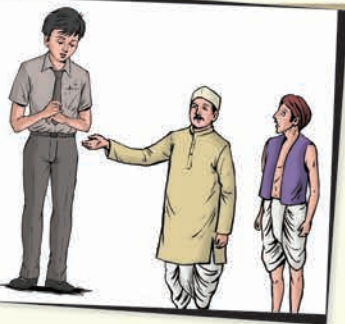
Rina madam is sitting in the staff room when her favourite student, Jimmy comes and says, "Madam, Sonali was saying your teaching is very boring!" Now should Rina Madam ...

- a) punish Sonali in the next class? ☐
- b) think that Jimmy's story might not be true and ignore it? ☐
- c) scold Jimmy for not telling Sonali off? ☐



Nikhil's uncle passed away a week ago and their neighbour says, "He was freaky! It is a good thing he is gone!" Now...

- a) Nikhil, while remembering his uncle's positives says, "After all he was a good man". ☐
- b) Nikhil was also fed up with the uncle and feels relieved. ☐
- c) "... not just that, he was ..." saying this he encourages him with the negative talk. ☐



Ravi's teacher has given him a lot of homework. He comes home and says nasty things about the teacher to his father. Now should his father.....

- a) agree with Ravi and go to the school next day and complain? ☐
- b) sympathize with Ravi and say, "teachers are always like that." ☐
- c) calm him down and explain that teachers have the best intent for their pupils. ☐



Magadh was a prosperous kingdom around 300BC in the current day Bihar State (in Central India). Emperor Shrenik ruled the Magadh Empire during the era of Lord Mahavir. After the death of Emperor Shrenik's grandson Udaye, the empire of Magadh was ruled by the Nand dynasty and King Dhananand was crowned as ruler of Magadh.

King Dhananand was very passionate about music and dance, so much so that he started neglecting his kingdom. The day to day operations of the Magadh Empire was handled by King Dhananand's able Prime Minister, Shaktaal. Shaktaal was a very wise, noble and experienced Prime Minister loved by one and all. Even other ministers reached out to him for advice and his expertise.

Prime Minister Shaktaal had 7 daughters and 2 sons named Sthulibhadra and Shriyak. Sthulibhadra was very handsome and also intelligent; He was very much interested in religion and was also a very skilled Veena (a stringed musical instrument) player. In spite of his immense mental prowess he had no aspirations of fame or money; he used to spend his entire day worshipping the Lord.

Devi Sunanda was the royal dancer in the courts of the Magadh Empire. Despite being

Mythological Story

just a dancer, she was a very cultured lady. Her elder daughter, Roopkosha was very beautiful. Devi Sunanda desired Roopkosha to take her place as the royal dancer in the courts of the Magadh Empire. Devi Sunanda expressed her wish to King Dhananand to retire early and to also accept Roopkosha to be her successor. King Dhananand organized an event for Roopkosha to perform after which she would be appointed as the royal dancer.

The entire kingdom gathered for the event to watch Roopkosha perform on stage. Sthulibhadra was not at all interested in this event but his friends dragged him along.

Sthulibhadra was mesmerized by Roopkosha's beauty and her extraordinary dance performance. He then started meeting Roopkosha regularly. They fell in love with each other and decided to get married.

Sthulibhadra belonged to a Brahmin family. In those days, society was divided into upper caste and lower caste. Inter-caste relationships were frowned upon and consequently Sthulibhadra's parents were completely against his relationship with Roopkosha who was considered to be from a



lower caste.

Sthulibhadra's father, Prime Minister Shaktaal tried to dissuade him against this relationship with Roopkosha, but it was in vain. Sthulibhadra's love for Roopkosha was so strong and immense that he could not forget her; hence he gave up his family, home and fortune to live with her.

Sthulibhadra and Roopkosha were so engrossed with each other that they became completely disconnected with the world. Days turned into months and months into 18 years.

In all those years Prime Minister Shaktaal did not let the distance from his son affect his duties towards the king and the general public. His fame and respect kept growing day by day. However, not everyone in the kingdom was happy with Prime Minister Shaktaal's fame. Varruchi, the royal poet was particularly miffed at Shaktaal's fame. He tried poisoning the king's mind against Shaktaal and eventually was successful in sowing the seed of distrust in the king's mind against Shaktaal.

Shaktaal was deeply hurt and decided to surrender his post to prove his honesty and sincerity towards the king.

Shaktaal told his younger son, Shriyak, "Kill me in the presence of the king. This will prove yours and my honesty to his royal highness".

Shriyak was shocked and said, "I can never do that. I cannot take on the sin of killing my own father".

Shaktaal said, "I will take poison just before you kill me. I would be dead even before you strike me. This way you will kill an already dead corpse. However, this will prove my innocence and honesty to the king".

Shriyak had to ultimately bow down to his father's wish and acted as per his instructions. However, the burden was too much for him to handle. He eventually opened up his heart to the king and told him everything in detail. King Dhananand realized his mistake and was very remorseful sorry for his mistake.

Even Sthulibhadra was shaken out of his blind love for Roopkosha. His father's death opened his eyes. His mind was filled with many emotions. 'I spent 18 long years just admiring the physical beauty of Roopkosha, but I am still not satisfied. When will this end? I was very much satisfied and content with my life in worshipping the Lord. Oh Lord, I have wasted 18 years of my life...

His father's death made him realize that every life has to end. One who is born will always die. There is no way to escape death. He asked himself, 'Then what is the use of my life? Who am I? What is the purpose of my life?'

So many thoughts and emotions were whirling around in his head. He started feeling dis-interested in worldly matters. He was now least interested in the world and the temporary material happiness that it provided. After doing penance for his mistakes, he decided to go in search of eternal happiness. He bid farewell to Roopkosha and went to the abode of Acharaya Sambhutivijay.

Sthulibhadra confessed his sins to the Acharya and pleaded with him to give him the right knowledge so that he could live a meaningful life. The Acharya looked at Sthulibhadra and thought, 'here is a 30 year old youth who belongs to a very noble and well-to-do family. His aura itself speaks of a strong and also a soft heart. He is the one who will spread the word of religion throughout the world. And so he and accepted him as his disciple.

To Be Continued...

“His father's death made him realize that every life has to end.”

Sweet

Memories



This is an incident that happened in Dada's time in 1984. It was the first day of the Hindu festival of 'Navratri' (9 festival days of worship and dance). One lady 'mahatma' (self-realized person in Akram Vignan) was very fond of 'garba' (a Gujarati folk dance). The entire family, including her, used to go for garba for all 9 days.

On the first day of Navratri she felt that she should go and get Dada's blessings before she goes for garba. And she came with her entire family to see Dada. She had come all dressed up, ready for garba.

After getting Dada's blessings, Dada looked at the mahatma from head to toe and asked, "Where are you going?"

The mahatma replied, "Dada, today is the first day of Navratri and I celebrate all 9 days, so we are going for garba."

After a while Dada said, "Is that so...!" Saying that, Dada did vidhi for everyone and said, "First you do some garba here and then you can go."

The mahatma said, "Yes, Dada."

Hence, everyone played garba in the presence of Dada and all else was forgotten. The garba went on till midnight. There was a feeling of exhilaration and an overflow of joy. That mahatma forgot that she had to go to another place!

From that day, every year they played garba in Dada's presence. There was no need to go elsewhere!

This is a Gnani...!

He brings about change in our lives without us realizing!

Happy
Birthday
to you



ॐ

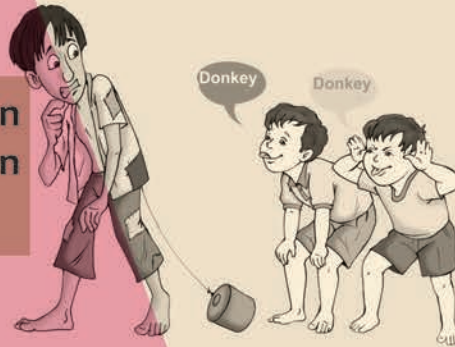


CHECK YOURSELF OUT! Answer : 1)-b, 2)-c, 3)-c, 4)-b, 5)-a, 6)-c

January 19
2019

And Lastly... Backbiting causes harm to :

1) The person who has been defamed because his reputation gets ruined.



2) The person who backbites because s/he will fall spiritually.



3) The person who listens because s/he will form negative opinions about the person who has been defamed.

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Publisher, Printer & Editor - Dimple Mehta on behalf of Mahavideh Foundation
Printed at Amba offset :- B-99 GIDC, Sector - 25, Gandhinagar - 382025