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# AKRAM Express



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Contact at:  
Balvignan Department  
Trimandir Sankul,  
Simandhar city,  
Ahmedabad-Kalol Highway, Adalaj,  
Dist. Gandhinagar-382421, Gujarat.  
Phone: 9328661166/77  
Email: akramexpress@dadabhagwan.org  
Website: kids.dadabhagwan.org

Editor: Dimple Mehta

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## Why Can't I Always Get What I Want?



### Editorial

'Even though I study so hard, why don't I get good grades?' 'I wanted to go out, but I developed a fever.' 'I want to eat ice cream, but the doctor advised me against it.'

Do you ever find yourself not getting what you want? Why does that happen? Because of *antaray* (obstructions, also known as obstacles).

What is an obstruction? What causes an obstruction? What removes them? What is the connection between obstructions and negativity? Let's understand the science behind obstructions - by virtue of Dadashri's speech, his examples and stories, and through Oli's challenge - so we can remain alert so as not to cause any more obstructions.

- Dimple Mehta



**Let's Play...**

Let's tidy up this messy room. Circle each out-of-place item and draw a line back to their correct place. 🍷

Let's tidy up this messy room. Circle each out-of-place item and draw a line back to their correct place.



# Gnanis Say...

**Questioner:** What is *antray* (obstructions)?

**Dadashri:** When we do not get the things that we need, or when things do not turn out as we want, these are all obstructions. An obstruction means to not achieve success according to one's expectation. It prevents us from obtaining the things or circumstances that we want. If we search for something, but cannot find it, then that is due to an obstruction created by ourselves.

**Questioner:** How are obstructions created?

**Dadashri:**

1. To obstruct something is called an obstruction. If you obstruct (stop) someone from getting what they were about to receive and think, 'What is the need to give him this?' then that causes an obstruction for you.

For example:

- If someone is about to give money to a poor person and you stop them from doing so, then it causes financial obstructions for you.
- If someone is willing to come for *satsang* and you stop them, then it causes an obstruction for you [to come to *satsang*].

I won't be able to do it.  
I won't sing.

I can't sing at all.



2. To speak negatively causes many obstructions.

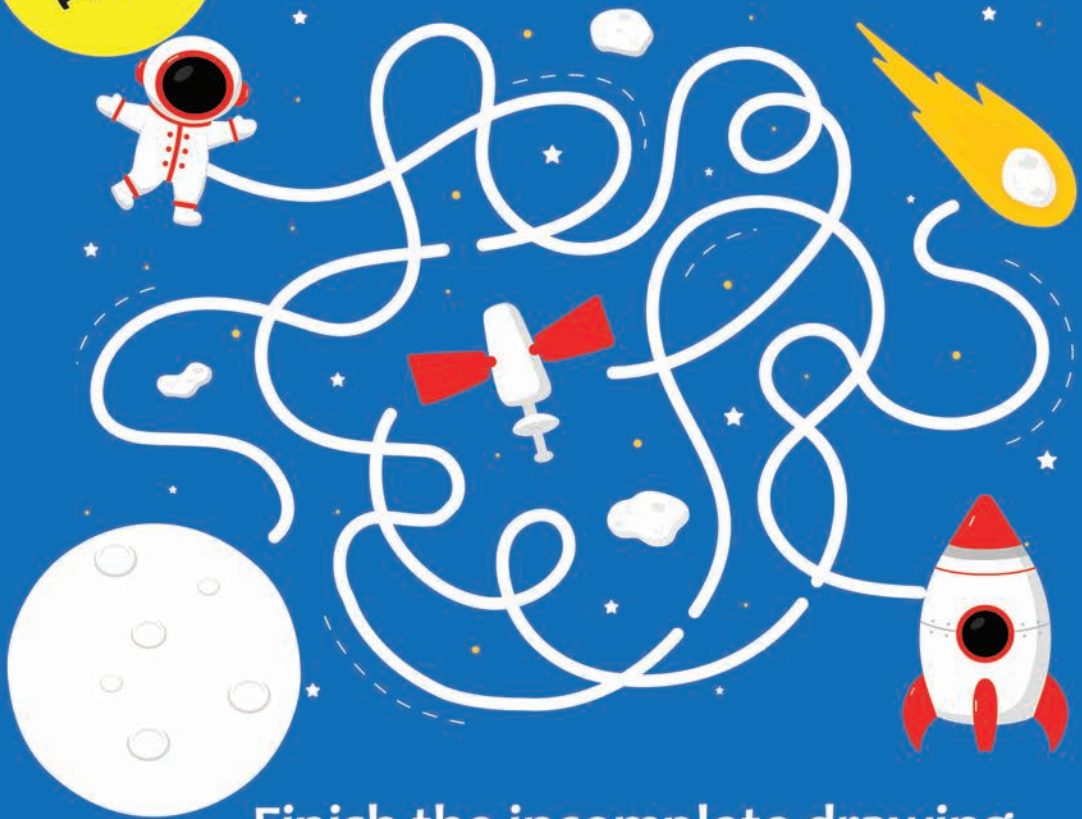
For example:

- When it comes to eating mangoes, if you say, "I don't like mangoes. I won't eat them," then that causes an obstruction for eating mangoes. If you have a desire to eat mangoes in the future, then you won't be able to eat any mangoes at all.
- If someone walks by wearing nice clothes and you say, "They're wasting money [on clothes]," then it causes an obstruction for you to be able to wear nice clothes.
- If one day you get fed up with going to the park and you say, "There's no point in coming here," then when an opportunity arises to go there, your self-created obstruction manifests and prevents you from going to the park.

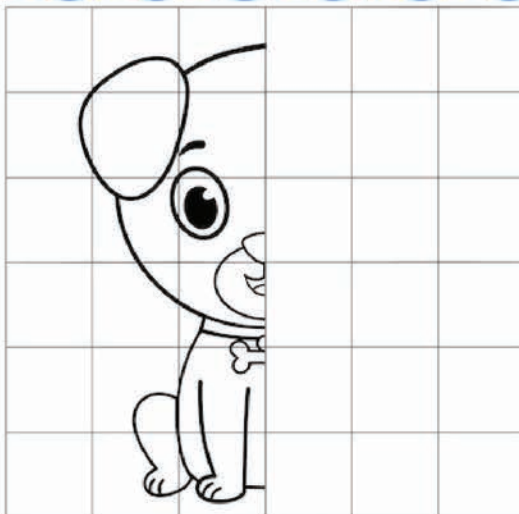


Let's  
play ...

Get the scientist to reach the rocket and get the satellite  
to reach the moon.



Finish the incomplete drawing.



Negativity causes obstructions, whereas positivity doesn't cause any obstructions.

For example: When someone gets good grades, if instead of seeing the positives, we view it in a negative way and think, 'He gets good grades only because he sucks up to the teacher,' then it causes obstructions for us being able to get good grades.



# Absolutely



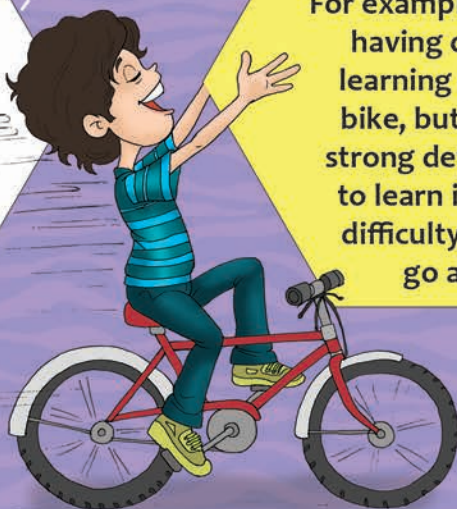
We create obstructions by saying, "I don't know how to do this."

Obstructions are destroyed when we say positive things like, "I'll definitely be able to do this."





Having a firm determination breaks obstacles. For example: If you're having difficulty in learning how to ride a bike, but you make a strong determination to learn it, then the difficulty will soon go away.



# New and Different!

If you call someone worthless, then it causes an obstruction on your own worth! If you immediately ask for forgiveness, then the obstruction is washed away before it gets created.

For example: If we tell someone, "You don't know how to give a speech," then we'll have trouble being able to speak. But if we immediately ask for forgiveness, then the obstruction gets erased.



# The Windmill Project

The students of Saraswati School were eagerly waiting for their science class that day. Mr. Raghav was to announce the names of the science fair team. As soon as he entered the classroom, everyone's heart rates increased.

"Okay students, the members for this year's team are: Ashu, Mrinal, Rugved, and Nikhil. This year, Nikhil Shashtri will lead the project."

Instead of applause for the new team, the class became silent. How would a new student lead such a big project? Nikhil himself was surprised that he had been selected to lead the team.

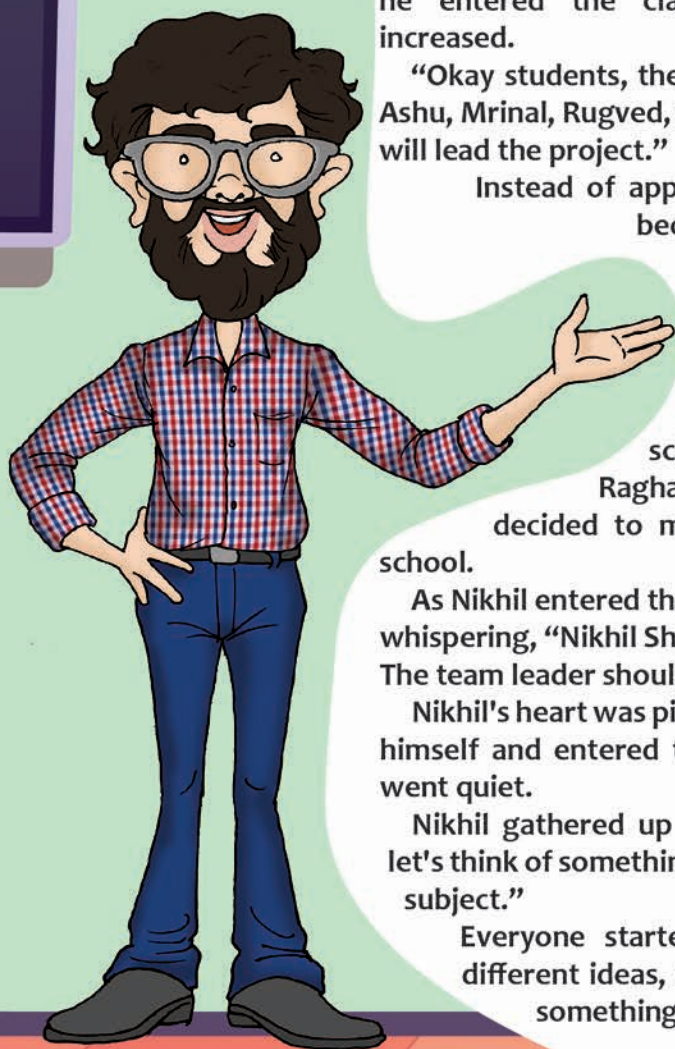
"Give me your ideas for the science fair by next week," said Mr. Raghav as the class ended. The team decided to meet in an empty classroom after school.

As Nikhil entered the classroom, he overheard the team whispering, "Nikhil Shashtri! What came over Mr. Raghav? The team leader should've been Rugved."

Nikhil's heart was pierced by these words. He composed himself and entered the classroom. Suddenly, everyone went quiet.

Nikhil gathered up some courage and said, "Friends, let's think of something good! Science is a very interesting subject."

Everyone started brainstorming. They each had different ideas, but they eventually agreed to do something called the 'Windmill Project'.





Mr. Raghav liked the idea. They immediately got to work.

The team thought of making the windmill blades from used x-ray films. Although the idea was simple, they couldn't find the materials that easily.

"Oh dear, why is it so difficult to find something so simple?" Ashu and Mrinal were tired of searching for x-ray films.

Eventually, after a week of searching, Nikhil had managed to find some old x-ray films from his uncle. The blades were made, but then came the task of getting a generator. Rugved took the responsibility of ordering it online.

"Rugved, what's the delivery date for the generator?" asked Nikhil.

"Oh no! I completely forgot to order it!" There was so much regret in Rugved's voice. He immediately put aside his work, took his phone in his hand, and opened the website to place the order.

"What happened, Rugved? Why do you look so tense?" asked Ashu.

"This item is out of stock! What do we do now? By the time it's back in stock, our project's submission deadline will have passed!" He was deeply disappointed.

They took their problem to Mr. Raghav, but he told them to come up with a solution on their own.

Everyone was worried. Winning aside, right now it was difficult just to complete the project. Mrinal looked like she was about to cry.

"The project should've been named 'Sorry for the Delay' instead of the 'Windmill Project'," said Mrinal. Nothing was going as planned.

"Let's calmly go home and think of ideas there. We'll definitely find a solution," Nikhil told his teammates. But nobody believed him. Everyone had given up.

Later that evening, Nikhil was sitting on the balcony with a glass of milk. He noticed a bicycle and suddenly had an idea. "That's it! Grandpa's old bicycle has a dynamo. Even that's a type of generator. It converts mechanical energy generated by pedalling





into electrical energy. A windmill also works on the same principle!”

The next day, Nikhil brought a dynamo and a small light bulb to school. The team loved his idea. After school, everyone worked on the project and connected the dynamo to the windmill. When the blades of the windmill turned, the light bulb lit up. Everyone clapped and were filled with excitement. They were now eager to display their project at the science fair. They placed the project in a corner of the classroom and everyone left contentedly.

The next day when they came to school, they were shocked to see the condition of their project. It had been a very wet and windy night and the classroom window had been accidentally left open. The team's project was completely soaked.

“It’s all over,” said Ashu.

“Let’s tell the teacher to remove our school’s name from the competition,” Mrinal said quietly.

Nikhil’s hopes were also shattered. During recess, Nikhil sat in a corner thinking about the water which had ruined the project. Just then, Mr. Raghav came and placed his hand on Nikhil’s shoulder.

“Sir, I’m sorry. You chose me to be the leader, but I’ve failed,” Nikhil said sorrowfully.

“Nikhil, do you know why I chose you?” Mr. Raghav asked calmly.

“No, sir. Even I was surprised that you selected me,” replied Nikhil in a timid voice.

“Young man, do you remember your admission process for this school? Based on the report card from your previous school, we initially rejected your application. But you didn’t accept defeat. You would come everyday and sit in the school office. Finally, you convinced me that the low grades from your previous school were due to illness, and that you should be given the chance to take the school entrance exam. You went on to pass the entrance exam, but I had already ‘passed’ you before this based on your eagerness. You didn’t accept defeat then, so why now?”

“Sir, I was alone when I was going through the admission process, but now I have a team. I’m dependent on them.”



“But you’re not dependent on anyone when it comes to keeping determination or showing enthusiasm, right?”

Something sparked in Nikhil’s eyes. He immediately stood up.

He thanked his teacher and ran to the windmill. He removed the dynamo and rushed home. The dynamo was still working when he tested it. It was only the windmill blades that weren’t working.

The next day, Nikhil met his friends and said enthusiastically, “Friends, we have two days left, but I can’t do this work alone.”

“So are you talking about rebuilding the model? That’s impossible!” everyone said together.

“If we’ve already accepted defeat, then there’s no chance of winning. But if we try, then there’s still a chance. Plus, now we even have experience of building the model.”

Nikhil tried to convince everyone. Although it wasn’t an easy task, Nikhil was determined, and he managed to convince everyone to give it another go.

They didn’t repeat the mistakes they made the first time, so the work was done quickly.

The judges were very impressed with their project in the competition, and they were awarded second place.

When the team handed over their trophy to Mr. Raghav, he proudly said to them, “You know what’s a bigger victory than this trophy? The strength gained by overcoming your obstacles!”

Nikhil and his team learned a big lesson that day: if there is firm determination, then it’s possible to overcome even the toughest difficulties!



# Same <sup>but</sup> Different





In Misoli...

This hotel is so dirty and the food is tasteless. Dad, when are we going paragliding?

In the evening.

In the evening...

Let's go, I'm ready to go to the gardens.

Gardens? We were supposed to go paragliding, weren't we?

Yes, dear, paragliding is right near the gardens. While you have fun paragliding, I'll enjoy the gardens.

At the security post on the way...

Sorry, sir, the road ahead is closed due to bad weather.

At the rock garden...

When will it open?

Can't say, sir. But there's a rock garden nearby where you can enjoy some beautiful scenery.

What a strange wall they've built. It's obstructing the beauty of the hills in the distance.

Just like how we build a wall with rocks of our own negativity, right?







On Monday at school...







Misoli. Luckily, I got a chance to paraglide! Shortly after I finished, the weather turned bad and they had to close.



What?! You went to Misoli? It's unbelievable that we both went to the same place, yet had completely different experiences!

What?! You were in Misoli too? But then why didn't you enjoy the place?

Because I've built a wall of negativity. I now have to break it.

What?

Nothing. Come, shall we go to the garden for a walk?



# Ollie's Challenge

I am Ollie the Owl. I also live in Didima Jungle like Aaloo and Chilly. I read a lot and from what I learn, I create different challenges for Aaloo and Chilly to solve. Today, I brought a challenge for you. So, get your pencils ready!

Today, Chilly brought chilli cheese sandwiches for lunch. Aaloo loves them. As soon as recess started, they both eagerly opened their lunchboxes. They saw Theo coming from a distance. Just as Chilly was going to call him to come have some of the sandwich, Aaloo said, "Leave it, Chilly! Theo will eat everything. There'll be nothing left for us to eat." Aaloo happily ate almost all the chilli cheese sandwiches.

In the evening, as usual, Aaloo and Chilly went out for chilli ice cream. There, they found out that a new mango flavour had been released. Immediately, Chilly remarked, "Yuck! I don't want to eat it. Mangoes are way too sweet." Aaloo, however, ordered a scoop of mango ice cream and loved it, but Chilly refused to even taste it.

From the ice cream parlour, they went to the library to watch Pujyashree's live *satsang* on the Kalpatop and to do some activities. As they were walking, Aaloo saw everyone having fun in the lake. Seeing that, he said to Chilly, "We always go for *satsang*. Let's play in the water today." Thus, both of them went to the lake instead of the library.

At the lake, Cuckoo and Nightingale were singing a melodious tune. Hearing this, Aaloo excitedly told Chilly to sing with them. Chilly, who suddenly became nervous, replied, "I won't know how to sing along with them."



What do you think after reading this Akram Express? Did Aaloo and Chilly create any obstructions for themselves throughout the day? Read the obstacles listed below and tick whether it was Aaloo or Chilly who created the obstacle. Then find the matching understanding from the list further below, and write its number in the blank circle.

If one thinks, 'I don't know how to do this,' then an obstruction is created on one's ability to learn.

Aaloo

Chilly

If there's no firm determination to do something, then an obstruction is created when one does want to do it.

Aaloo

Chilly

If you push away food which has been put in front of you, then you won't get that food when you want it in future.

Aaloo

Chilly

If we stand in the way of what someone is about to receive, then we also won't get it when we need it ourselves.

Aaloo

Chilly

#### Understanding:

1. You should eat what comes your way. If you have been served an item you don't like, then at least have one bite.
2. When you make a firm resolve to do a task and think, 'Why wouldn't I be able to do it?' then the obstruction breaks.
3. If pratikraman (to confess, apologize, and resolve not to repeat a mistake) is done immediately after uttering negative words, then the obstruction is broken before it is created. So, if you repent for it, ask for forgiveness, and make a resolve to not do it again, then the obstruction can be erased.
4. If you make the firm resolve to go somewhere and decide, 'I want to go,' then, with that determination, the obstruction against you going will break.

# When Lord Rushabhdev's First Fast Was Broken



Millions of years ago, Lord Rushabhdev, the first *Tirthankar* (the absolutely enlightened Lord who can liberate others) of the past cycle of twenty-four *Tirthankars*, took *diksha* (initiation into monkhood) in a grand ceremony in the presence of celestial deities. On the same day after taking *diksha*, Lord Rushabhdev also took the vow of observing absolute silence.

When the Lord went for alms, the villagers welcomed him by piling gold, pearls, and gems at his feet. But the Lord silently moved ahead, finding nothing to eat. After taking *diksha*, more than thirteen months had passed. The Lord had been fasting for four hundred days. Wandering from village to village, one day the Lord arrived in Hastinapur.

It was noon. The Lord set out into the town for alms. People were trailing behind him as he moved ahead.

The people were talking amongst themselves saying, "The Lord isn't taking anything nor is he speaking." The people of the town were offering all sorts of jewels and ornaments to Him.

Prince Shreyanskumar emerged from his palace. The commotion amongst the people reached the Prince's ears. He was overjoyed to see the Lord and bowed down to Him with deep devotion. Just as he was bowing down, he attained the knowledge of what the Lord would accept as alms.



Immediately, Shreyanskumar offered golden pots full of sugarcane juice to the Lord. Shreyanskumar requested the Lord, "Lord, please accept this sugarcane juice." The Lord extended his palms. Shreyanskumar lovingly served the sugarcane juice to Him. Thus, Shreyanskumar served the Lord his first meal after his long fast.

The energy created by the Lord breaking his fast caused five lights to appear in the sky.

There was a reason why Lord Rushabdev did not receive anything in alms that he could eat or drink for thirteen long months...

In a previous life, the Lord had seen a farmer beating his bulls with a stick because they were eating his crops while working. The Lord's heart melted while seeing the innocent animals getting beaten.

In a bid to save the bulls from being beaten for eating the crops, the Lord advised the farmer to tie a piece of cloth around each bull's mouth. The farmer did as he was advised, but at the end of the working day, the farmer forgot to remove the cloth. As a result, the bulls remained without food and water for thirteen hours and groaned profusely.

It was due to the Lord's advice that the bulls were deprived of food and water. Due to the Lord's small mistake, the bulls had to go without food and water for thirteen hours.

As a result, in his next birth, the Lord had to endure many obstacles for thirteen months before obtaining his first alms.





Why are the yummy desserts melting? To find out  
... make sure to read...  
'Oh No! Creamland Is Melting!'



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