



SOUL SOUP

Precious Gift

When I was in my 30s and newly married, I followed my husband to his hometown in Japan, where a son bringing home his American wife was unheard of. But my elderly mother-in-law set me at ease at the very first meal, announcing that I could do anything I wished because there were no expectations. I never forgot this gift. A few years later, we moved to Los Angeles. I missed my family. An elderly neighbour, one day, made a picnic and invited me and my child to join him. He said, "Don't worry, I decided I like you. You can make any mistake...it's okay." I never forgot this gift. Later, when we moved to NYC, I had a baby and experienced post-partum depression. One day, I took my baby out in the stroller; I knew I had a terribly unhappy expression on my face. An elderly gentleman beamed a bright warm smile, as he passed by me. I never forgot this gift. This week, as I walked our dog wearing my mask, hoping I did not appear silly, an elderly fellow rode a bike down the road and nodded to me, saying, "You look lovely, dear!" I will never forget the gift.

— Lettie, sunnyskyz.com

THIS WEEK

May 3: Mahavira Swami

Kevalgyan Diwas

May 4: Agni Nakshatram begins

May 6: Narasimha Jayanti

May 7: Buddha Purnima, Chitra

Pournami, Vaishakha Purnima

May 8: Narada Jayanti

Reformat Your Memory

ANIL K RAJVANSHI tells us how to stop unpleasant thoughts and memories from affecting us adversely

From my younger days, I have had the ability to sense when somebody is thinking about me. This ability allows me to react even before the person has spoken or made his intentions known — most of the time with disastrous results.

Most people, now and then, do exhibit this ability of reading the mind and I feel everybody has this capability though they may not be aware of it.

Brain Power

The brain is not only an instrument that can create thought but it can also send this signal and receive external thoughts. We do have painful memories associated with people, places and objects. Quite often, negative thoughts from them bother us.

How is the external thought received and is it possible to stop it from affecting us? Taking the analogy of modern computers or phone apps may provide a possible answer.

An app in the phone or laptop gets its update, notification and data only when the app is on the instrument. If the app is removed from the device, then, no data can be received, though that information is in the 'environment'. Similarly, if the painful memory of a person or event is removed from the brain, then, no thought about it can be processed by it.

How do you selectively remove painful memories? Recently, scientists have discovered that if we think about a certain person, object or event, then that memory becomes pliable, that is, it can be modified with a new memory. Neural pathways, when active, are amenable to modifi-



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cations. If, at this time, happy memories are remembered actively, then they might weaken and replace negative thoughts.

In a hypnosis session, it is commonly seen that the hypnotist suggests new ideas and thoughts to the patient and these get implanted in the brain.

This is useful, especially when a patient is talking about a painful past episode. This way, unpleasant memories can be modified with new, suggested memories. But this is a dangerous process since the other person can play with the patient's memory, and there have been cases of false



memory implanted in quite a number of hypnotised patients with harmful results. Implanting of new memory by oneself is difficult.

So, a better way to do so is to practise yoga and meditation. When one is immersed in deep thought on a subject for a long time, then the majority of neural pathways in the brain are used mostly to focus on that thought. This allows other memories to weaken and provides possible opportunity for removal of unpleasant memories.

Sanyam, deep thought, according to Patanjali Yoga, can be cultivated with long practice and is the surest way to make the brain supple. Then, unpleasant memories can be reduced and rendered irrelevant.

In such circumstances, when external thought impinges on the brain, then it will not be registered, since the memory of that thought (app) is missing or has become corrupted.

Often, when a virus affects the computer, the best way to remove it is by formatting the hard disk. Weakening of memories by *sanyam* provide mechanisms in the brain to do just that, and this is far better than tinkering with selective removal of memory.

The loosening of memory also helps one in becoming detached. It is memory that gives rise to attachment either to people or property; when memory becomes weak, detachment results. That is the basic tenet of Patanjali Yoga Darshan. ■

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ACHARYA DIVYACHETANANANDA AVADHUTA says good thought and action can strengthen immunity

Positive Microvita And Covid-19

We are currently battling a pandemic caused by the spread of what is being called an invisible virus, the novel coronavirus Covid-19. The founder of Ananda Marga, Shri Shri Anandamurti, also known as Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, had written a book titled *Microvita In A Nutshell* in 1986. He wrote that there are entities that come within the realm of both physicality and psychic expressions, smaller or subtler than atoms, electrons or protons that in the psychic realm, may be subtler than ectoplasm. He called such entities microvita and microvita, in plural. The position of the microvita is just between ectoplasm and electron, but it is neither of the two. Billions of microvita form a single carbon atom. The microvita move throughout the universe from one celestial body to another, regardless of atmospheric conditions like temperature and pressure. These entities, with their mysterious movement, create minds and bodies, and they also destroy minds and physical bodies in any other part of this universe.

There are three types of microvita: one which comes under the scope of a microscope, known as virus, and another type which cannot be seen with a microscope but can be perceived and felt through their actional vibration. The third category of microvita come only within the scope of a special type of perception and may be realised by persons having spiritually oriented minds. Spirituality tries to link microcosm, the unit mind, with the invisible 'Macrocosm,' the Supreme Consciousness. Microvita is closer to the realm of ideas than matter. According to Shri Shri Anandamurti, 'virus' is a vague term. The

better term will be 'microvita' and not virus. So we can say, in the realm of microvita, the coronavirus Covid-19, is a crude, negative microvita.

According to their nature, microvita are of three types — negative, ordinary/neutral and positive. Negative microvita function on their own, through nature, while positive microvita function through specially created waves. Negative microvita move with the help of inferences — sound, touch, form, taste and smell. When a negative microvita penetrates one's body, the person feels very uneasy. But when millions of negative microvita enter, it does not take more than a few seconds for even an elephant to die. Covid-19 is a type of negative microvita. Negative microvita primarily function in the *Muladhara* and *Swadhishthana* chakras and gradually rise upwards.

The chakra is a collection of glands and sub-glands that controls the 50 propensities of the human mind. A mind engaged in degenerating thought may invite negative microvita. Good company, books, literature, song and kirtanas, and devotional chanting elevate the mind. This attracts positive microvita. The body is more receptive to positive microvita if one is a vegetarian. The number of positive microvita can be increased by spiritual practice.

To ward off the ill-effects of Covid-19, we should meditate on the Guru Chakra, the pineal gland. Practise asanas like *Sarvangasana*, *Matsya Mudra*, *Bhujangasana* and *Vayavi Pranayama* to strengthen the immune system. Follow physical hygiene, washing of hands, feet and other exposed body parts with soap or use an alcohol-based sanitiser. ■

The writer is a disciple of Anandamurti