Devotion and Addiction

By Sadhguru

Addiction is almost always to something physical like substances for example. But one can only be devout towards something that one holds way above oneself. Devotion cannot be practiced. It cannot be cultivated or cultured. When you are overwhelmed by something or somebody, when you place that something or somebody way above yourself, naturally devotion comes.

Addiction happens when you taste something and you like its experience. The more you taste, the more your addiction grows and the higher the possibility that you could get trapped.

Interestingly, a devotee looks more than an addict than an addict himself. An addict can hide his addiction but a devotee cannot hide his devotion. That is his problem. Even a drug addict, who has a certain degree of control over himself, can look relatively normal and deceive the world, but a devotee is not capable of such deception or pretence. His devotion bursts forth anywhere he is.

A similarity between the two is they both can create a certain pleasant or ecstatic experience within a person. This happens because the experience they are going through is strong. Do you get addicted to neem balls? Never. Devotion on the other hand implies the ‘sweetening’ of ones emotions. The ways of a devotee may look utterly silly, illogical and stupid for a person claiming to be intellectual, but a devotee is actually very intelligent. Think about this: you have twenty-four hours in a day. You can spend it exactly the way you want. What would you consider intelligent? Spending your time in utter intelligence or in complete turmoil with all sorts of problems which have no relevance to ultimate reality?

A devotee has understood that if you spend all your time in complete pleasantness, nothing entangles you. There is no pain. It may not seem logical. The concept may look silly for an intellectual person, but there is a very deep life sense involved in a devotee’s attitude towards living. More people have attained ultimate happiness through devotion than any other way.

Devotion also causes ecstasy, as opposed to the lumps of chemicals that are labelled ‘ecstasy’. Substance pills take you on a high for a while, only to ruin you in the process. The difference therefore can be summed up like this, addiction shrinks you, and devotion enhances you. Addiction can give you moments of pleasantness. Devotion gives you a constant sense of pleasantness, addiction pushes you to a corner, makes you totally exclusive to a point where it breaks your body and mind and makes you neurotic, devotion makes you all inclusive. So one destroys you, another enhances you. That is the big difference.

Isha Yoga’s Hata Yoga program will be conducted from November 21st to 23rd at IDC hall, Verna - industrial estate. For details contact 9822100305, goa.ishafoundation.org