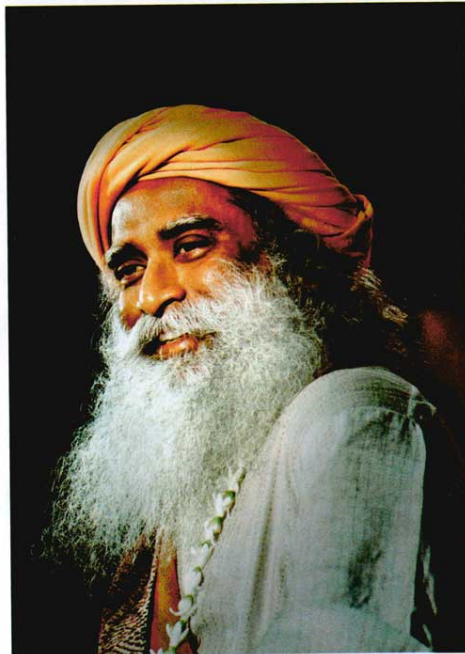


Can a Stock Market Crash Be Good for You?

Sadhguru, Isha Foundation



Q: I've been having trouble in the stock markets lately and my mind has gone into depression. How do I change this?

Sadhguru: The word "depression" is used only with reference to your mood, not to the mind. If mental activity found depression, that would be wonderful. But it is only the mood which is depressed; the mental activity is actually going out of control. People can cause depression in your mood in so many ways. If they take away what you think is precious – it may just be a pebble or lots of money or someone you think belongs to you – you will become depressed in your mood.

Right now, if the stock market goes down, the whole nation can get depressed. Many of these people may never even have touched that money. It is just that everyday they were seeing the graphs rising and their mood was in ascendancy. But now they see the graphs falling, so their mood is falling. It is just that what they expected to happen is not happening.

Bulls, Bears and... Donkeys!

These kinds of situations have been happening for ages. To put it very simply, for someone who does not understand all these complexities of financial markets – actually nobody does – just like the weather, they keep predicting! It is like this: one man sold a donkey to someone else for 100 dollars. The seller was supposed to deliver his donkey but he came in his pickup truck and told the buyer, "I'm so sorry, the donkey is dead." Then the other man said, "Fine. Just give me back my 100 dollars." But the seller replied, "I'm so sorry, I've already spent it." Then the buyer insisted, "Okay, then give me the dead donkey." But the first man said, "What are you going to do with a dead donkey?" The other man said, "I'm going to raffle it." "Who is going to buy a raffle ticket for a dead donkey?" "It doesn't matter, just give me the donkey."

I asked him what happened and he said, "I just lost 60 million." I told him, "That's not even 2% of what you are. 60 million does not mean you won't eat or stop driving the car you are driving. You are not going to sell your house or anything. It's only the numbers that are changing. Nothing has really changed in your life."

So the seller unloaded the dead donkey in the other man's house and went away. Then, a few days later, the guy who sold the dead donkey found the other man happy, spilling money all over the place. So he asked, "What happened?" The other man said, "I raffled it. Two dollars per ticket, and 500 people bought it." So he got 1000 dollars. "Didn't you get into trouble? Didn't anybody get angry with you?" "Yeah, only the guy who won the raffle, so I gave him back his two dollars! 100 dollars to you, two dollars to him, 898 dollars for me – clear profit!"

People have been selling dead donkeys to each other for a long time. It is just the volume that is becoming bigger.

A few years ago, when I was in Davos, the markets had dipped 8-12% and there was gloom in the whole place. One person, who came from Australia, lost something like 60 million dollars in one day. He was supposed to meet me for lunch and when he came, he had such a long face. He was constantly on his Blackberry because things were not going right. I asked him what happened and he said, "I just lost 60 million." I told him, "That's not even 2% of what you are. 60 million does not mean you won't eat or stop driving the car you are driving. You are not going to sell your house or anything. It's only the numbers that are changing. Nothing has really changed in your life."

This man was also very passionate about ecological issues. So, I said, "The way we have set up the economic system right now, the only way the ecology can improve is if the economy goes down. The

way we have structured things, ecology and economy are going head on at each other. You are anyway a great enthusiast about ecological issues, so here it is! Celebrate! 60 million down means less smoke, less greenhouse gases, less everything!"

Fixing Your Inner Upheavals

I am not trying to philosophize the loss. The point is you are linking your wellbeing to something that is never 100% in your control. If you link it to the stock market, to your relationships, to anything on the outside, you never have 100% control over it. Whoever you may be, however powerful you are, you do not have 100% control over the outside situation. Then you being happy, loving and peaceful will be just by chance. So, first we must fix the inside, then work on the outside, and the world would be beautiful. Only when there are no inner upheavals or issues, will you be able to handle outside issues well.

A spiritual process is just that: taking care of the subjectivity of who you are, not just fixing the objective aspects of your life. If that is not taken care of, you will have everything and you will have nothing.

If you truly want to enhance the quality of your life, you have to take the step and be willing to invest a little bit of time for your inner wellbeing. If this is done, you will see a remarkable change in the way you function. Now that the market is down, it is time to spend some time on this. When there was money, it took away your time and life. Now that the taps are closed, there is lots of time – this is the time!

Ranked amongst the fifty most influential people in India, Sadhguru is a yogi, mystic, visionary and a New York Times bestselling author Sadhguru has been conferred the Padma Vibhushan by the Government of India in 2017, the highest annual civilian award, accorded for exceptional and distinguished service.