

## The Secret of A Healthy Life

Good health and proper understanding are the best blessings of life. Good health is closely related to proper understanding. It is said that a stable mind resides in a healthy body. The mind, thoughts, and understanding of an unhealthy person will never be mature. One can judge a man from the status of his health. People with good moral conduct are healthy, strong and free from disease. They always have a smiling face. These people have a kind of magnetism. Everyone wants to talk to them, make friends with them and be with them.

The reason for the current disease, sorry, frailty, dissatisfaction, strife and lack of peace in our lives is because of lack of proper understanding. This lack of understanding makes us roam in the mire of greed and delusions, and does not allow us to come on the path of heavenly peace, natural satisfaction and endless virtues. Test on ambitions on the touchstone of truth an propriety, weigh it on the balance of spiritual benefit, and immediately throw away those thoughts that are obstructing the righteous path.

Then you will realize how happiness, peace and good health enter your life. Moral discretion is a man's greatest Guru, director and harbinger of luck. In ancient India every citizen was a worshipper of moral discretion. Morality in the form of *Gayatri Mahamantra* was worshipped. The test of the strength of soul in those days was to accept and adopt only that which is proper, derived by logic and acceptable to the intelligence, and to throw away the useless garbage of traditional muddling thoughts.

Discrete people have always been discarding , according to the needs of the times, unnecessary customs, habits, traditions and beliefs, even though, these may have been introduced or adopted by great people in their times. If this mode of thinking is destroyed, one should realize that all else is destroyed, including good health. The truth of the matter is that we are living in a terrible era of illusions. Instead of thinking along the straight and truthful lines, we have become habituated to think in the opposite direction. As a result we are roaming dazed in the labyrinth of our on perversities. It is a quirk of destiny that on one hand our intelligence is used in making money, plotting strategies to satisfy our curiosities, and creating miracles, while on the other hand the same intelligence discards ideals, and gets entangled in such problems, that one is tempted to brand it as downright foolish. The path to happiness, good health and long life is straight and simple, and free from cunningness. Our own foolishness is the mother of all our troubles.

Wrong beliefs, lowly thoughts and tastes, and wrong choices, in the name of sophistication are mistakes that have snared people in their net and fooled them. If we wish to continue to rot in this situation, we must also realize that our individual and collective health is bound to be destroyed in the near future. We must immediately free ourselves from the illusion that costly foods can make a person strong and that freedom from disease can be achieved with costly medicines only. The world we live in today can only be termed as the world of mad men. When people throw morality, vision, propriety, and long term benefits to the winds and are immersed in making money by deceit, they should be ready for trouble.

It appears that today all our intelligence is centered on making various rich dishes for destroying digestion. This distorted view manifests vividly get-togethers, picnics and parties. Films, songs and music are all aimed at exciting lust and are ammunition for destroying our health. Artificialness has crept in our lifestyle and food habits to such an extent that apparently man has decided to boycott the fundamental rules of nature. The entire human society is bent upon behaving like mad persons. Bad food habits are akin to a slow suicide. In this situation superficial efforts can not avert the dangers to public health. For this we have to bring in a revolutionary change in our thinking and behavioral patterns.

Unfortunately, the daring and will power required to correct the wrong beliefs, seems to be very much lacking these days. We must firmly hold on to what is rational and right and should not hesitate in discarding wrong practices. Each one of us must have at least this much courage. Those who do not dare to accept the useful and reject the useless are half-dead. They do not follow any discussion on discretion. When they hear such a sermon, there is a temporary surge of ambition, together with a desire to follow the good path, but the moment the talk is over, the desire disappears. If a person is not ready to change his beliefs and habits, he should not hope to obtain freedom from the problems of poor health or disease.

Jungle tribes like Bhils in India, and Eskimos live in unbearable conditions are found to be healthy, cheerful, and leading a long contended life, despite living in poor economic conditions, and being deprived of costly food, fancy clothes and medical facilities. They have just adopted a simple life style close to the nature. Compared to them we live in great comfort and surrounded by amenities, we make our bodies frail. The issue of good health for us cannot be tackled by costly food and medicines. If this were so, we would find all the wealthy people well built like wrestlers, and all the poor suffering from illness. But, mostly what happens is the opposite.

We should give up our short sighted attitude and develop a rational approach of planning for a long term future. We should plan for a long life by adopting simplicity in food habits and life style. Most people can not give up indiscipline in life, the tongue – ever greedy for newer tastes – does not agree for simple food.. The other senses also want a free reign, but the nature also does not deviate an inch from its rule of punishing the indiscipline person with illness. Consequently an undisciplined person has to suffer many diseases and faces premature death. It is always possible to bring about a change in an individual with self discipline and mankind can easily free itself from the catastrophe of ill health by adopting a long term policy in the matter of eating habits.

An ill person is a burden on this earth. While groaning and suffering from illness, he is wasting the time of others who have to look after him and nurse him. He remains unhappy and makes others unhappy. His earning is suspended and there is an additional financial burden with expenses for medicines etc. His helplessness creates revulsion in others. An ill body houses an ill mind and he becomes irritable, finds fault at the drop of a pin, and makes others around him sad. His nature becomes perverse and he becomes a curse for himself, his family and the society at large. To protect oneself from this plight of ill health, all that is required is timely precaution. The adage, “prevention is better than cure” holds true always.

We should develop the habit of wearing a cheerful smile on our face. The smile is a serene and invaluable beauty. All the items of the makeup cannot give the natural glow that a smile bestows on one’s face. This is a simple formula for enhancing one’s beauty that costs nothing. You can stand in front of a mirror and see for yourself which expressions look more pleasant and attractive. People disapprove of a sad face, and expressions of anger, despair and anxiety. Everyone tries to keep away from such people.

Too much silence is considered as an indicator of lack of interest and timid nature. The circle of friends starts reducing. It is a mistake to think that a man becomes happy and flourishes with an abundance of wealth and luxuries, and therefore one must go on accumulating wealth at any cost.

Bodily strength and beauty of the face have their own importance. Money is also necessary because it helps to obtain the necessities of life. Even then it should not be forgotten that the nature and level of one’s personality are inseparably linked with the mind. Ignoring this truth results in great loss.

Howsoever great the importance of health, education, talent and position in life, their benefit is limited only to the collection of comforts and facilities. But, there is something beyond all these. If this were not so, then only the prosperous

would be the master of all they surveyed and then nobody would care for the great people.

One should understand the importance of the mind and must constantly strive not only for controlling its waywardness, but also use it for deep thinking and thereby purify it. There is great truth in the saying that one who controls himself can also rule others. Mind and soul have been described in many and varied ways – in short, it can be described as one's level of thinking. Beliefs, feelings and faith are all within its ambit. Imagination, description and guess work all work within its sphere. Habit, one's nature and respect for others, all develop here. Although it appears that thoughts spring by themselves, and impose themselves on us, actually it is not so. This is because, first, we decide on a particular line of thinking and the thoughts start flowing accordingly. If we want to change our situation, the prime solution is to change of our way of thinking.

First of all we must fight against those habits which are responsible for shackling us in situation of despair. Just as there is no cure for paralysis, bodily handicap and debility, so is the case of the man – as long as he is in the grip of attitudes and thoughts. Lazy people and people avoid work come under this category. They are incapable even though they have the capacity. A man capable of plenty of achievements wastes away his time like an incapable person because of mind's rigidity resulting in avoidance of work, living on other's expenses and lazing away. Despite having all the time on their hands, they just waste it. If a man utilizes his time constructively, he has the potential to become capable, skillful and prosperous.

Laziness tends to bind a man's mind. A lazy person does not bother even to think. He coolly accepts whatever is going on. The habit of living in a fantasy - world of imaginary progress, because of incapacity to think and act, makes such a person a laughing stock like the legendary *Sheikh Chilli* in Children's stories. Lazy people do not bother to think about progressing. Their only solace is to accuse others for their ill luck, even though they themselves are the cause. Understanding, patience, balanced mind, daring and efforts are required to change one's present situation. When a person does not get involved in the above processes, immorality takes root.

However, if disorganized thoughts are marshaled to find solutions for a bad situation, the road to progress will definitely manifest. Normally it is thought that one is healthy if one is protected from weakness and illness. A well-built, proportionate and capable body is considered a gift of God. But health is not limited merely to the body. Our thought processes, ability to discriminate between good and bad, are also links to the holistic health. Beliefs, feelings and

habits are the distinctive properties of intrinsic well being. These too should be free from undesirable elements.

Understanding, honesty, responsibility and bravery of a person reveal his mental stability. Greed, attachment, and ego must be considered as harmful as ill health. Unfortunately, people keep ignoring this serious matter.

The root cause of diseases is unnatural diet and undisciplined mind. Their combination brings disease and troubles. These troubles cannot be eradicated unless the root cause is alive. The fundamental solution is to change the pattern and proportion of diet based on very simple food. Excess of sweets and fat in the diet and non-vegetarian food should be avoided. Non-vegetarian food can never keep us healthy because it is against our natural constitution. New research on mind has changed the entire theory about health. It has been conclusively shown that a perturbed, worried, excited minded casts its bad influence on all organs of the body.

Careful attention must be paid on our daily diet. Intake of fruits and vegetables must be increased. It is better to cook the vegetables by boiling rather than frying. One must give up junk food and eat less than the demand of the hunger. The current trend of seasoning the food with spices and eating rich food is like buying illness at high price. It is also necessary to maintain mental stability by resorting to moral living. Do not allow lust to take you over. Do not allow your ambitions to run riot. The greed for wealth cannot be fulfilled even by the Gods. The easiest way to save oneself from disease is to live life close to nature and to keep one's mind free from disturbances.

A healthy attitude is not to give too much importance to minor illnesses. The immune system is always fighting against the disease. It does not accept defeat as long as the patient cooperates. We should develop a strong mental attitude towards diseases. Pains and problems are always associated with every individual. One must learn to bear illness with patience. One can lighten his suffering by diverting the mind to some light entertainment. It is the duty of the family members to reassure the patient that he is being given proper treatment and will be definitely cured.

Disease is a result of our choosing the wrong path. It can be considered nature's punishment for our mistakes. By going against the tenets of nature, we have to bear the fruits of our sins in the form of various diseases. Undisciplined behavior against the rules of nature has resulted in the roaring hurricane of diseases gripping mankind today.

Ignoring the signals from the body and audaciously tinkering with it is increasing diseases in the society. Smoking, drinking, taking very hot tea / coffee and indiscriminate use of steroids is producing a predominantly unhealthy society. Illnesses do not come on their own. They are invited by the undisciplined and the ignorant. Some light entertainment is necessary to give the mind rest and relief from stress. Periodic relaxation of mind and body is necessary during the day. Relaxation without entertainment is also possible by yogic practices. Like education, health, social interactions and proper atmosphere, entertainment too must be pure and wholesome. It cheers up the mood, creates new interest in life and recharges the mind and body with energy.

Every activity should be carried out with positive feelings. Meals should be taken as an offering from God. We should never take food under anxiety. Food taken in a tense mood becomes poison. Even a meager meal taken cheerfully makes it nourishing and healthy. A high percentage of illnesses is due to bad digestion.

It is the duty of every individual to keep his body healthy and capable of long life.

Everyone wants to be healthy but, their lifestyle and food habits are in the opposite direction. Bad food habits cause irreparable damage to body, destruction of health, pain, and even untimely and painful death. It is not at all difficult to remain healthy and capable. This is achievable simply by living in tune with the nature. What is proper and improper is signaled by our organs. Derangement in their functions alerts us for taking corrective steps. Permanent good health is achieved by disciplined living within the limits set up by the nature.

It is an absolutely wrong belief that eating more food gives more strength. Only proper digestion of the food will result in strength. Over eating burdens the digestive system and causes harm instead of giving strength. One should eat only after the earlier meal has been digested, stomach is empty and one feels really hungry. If this does not happen, one should be satisfied with one meal only and avoid a second meal. If one wants to correct his weak digestive system, the gap between two meals should be prolonged. Instead of taking costly medicines for digestion, it is better to observe fast until the digestion returns to normal.

Laziness is a bad habit. The lazy mind starts roaming in the wrong direction, justifying the saying, "an idle mind is the Devil's workshop". The idle person then starts indulging in such time wasting, pastimes as card games, ludo and chess. He starts looking out for similar company, or even entices the gullible

ones. As long as people are engaged in service, business or some gainful activity, their health remains good, but no sooner they retire, their rosy imagination of a “peaceful and happy life” disappear. It is extremely important to understand that if one takes interest in any work, it does not remain mere work, but an enjoyable activity.

There is a custom in many parts of India that people press you to eat more food to express their love for you. In such a situation, one must politely and firmly say “No” to such insistence. Many people over eat because of their greed for tasty food and then suffer indigestion. One does not become weak by reducing the food intake. With over eating, one becomes a victim of indigestion and the digestive system becomes weaker and weaker with continued over eating. Compared to the number of people dying from starvation, double the number dies from over eating. Man is attacked by external microorganisms and also affected by changes in weather resulting in lowering of the body resistance. There may also be other reasons for lowering the body resistance. But the most common cause is over indulgence in food.

People doing hard mental work and avoiding physical work usually do not have good health. Actually, every limb and organ of the body must get due exercise to attain its normal activity and strength. Those who have the practice of hard physical labor, or do not get such an opportunity, pay a heavy price for laziness and weaken the body’s constitution. One must always breath deeply to maintain the dynamic activity of the lungs and help the body get proper supply of oxygen.

A large part of the lungs sitting in stoop remains inactive, this leads to disease such as asthma, tuberculosis, cough, and also increases bacteria count in the lung. One should always breathe through the nose and move one’s hands forwards and backwards like a soldier, while walking. If one follows a simple life style, there will be no cause for suffering the punishment for going against the norms of nature. Following are the ten golden rules for healthy life:

- Celibacy must be observed to the maximum possible extent.
- Protect yourself from mental lust. Just as one feels an innocent joy on seeing a beautiful flower, so one should feel on seeing a person full of beauty.
- Go to bed early, and rise early.
- Pay sufficient attention to cleanliness of the body, clothes and surroundings.
- Don’t shy away from physical work. Follow a daily routine of exercise that will tire you heavily.
- Avoid negative emotions like anger, anxiety, despair, jealousy and cultivate a habit of wearing a cheerful smile.

- Do not cover yourself excessively with clothes. The body should be trained to withstand mild changes in weather.
- Protect yourself from addiction of any kind. Dread bad company like a poisonous snake.
- Discard artificialness in foods and life style. Do not burn in a fire of ambition.
- Do not try to imitate others. Develop courage to walk alone firmly on the chosen path.

It is not necessary to take extraordinary measures, or perform religious rituals to remove illness. All you have to do is eat simple food and shun sedentary lifestyle. Here are ten golden axioms regarding food habits for healthy life:

- Eat to live, and not live to eat.
- Do not indulge in junk food for the sake of taste. Decide your food based on its nutritive value.
- Do not eat without feeling hungry.
- Never overeat.
- Avoid spices, pungent and preserved food.
- Take only the food that suits your digestion.
- Take lots of fruits and green vegetables.
- Avoid more than two meals a day.
- Take only liquid breakfast like milk or buttermilk.
- Chew food thoroughly and eat in a cheerful frame of mind.

The latest scientific research has proved conclusively that body is deeply influenced in controlled by the mind. When the mind becomes disturbed, diseases called psycho-somatic (psyche=mind, soma=body) occur and simultaneously disturbed mental conditions also take place. The mind is the lord of the body. One whose mind is full of woe or excitement will certainly influence the functions of the body and will not allow it to be at peace. Extreme emotions of sorrow, anger and fear adversely affect the body functions. It is essential to maintain the balance of mind for enjoying good health.

***About the Author:*** **Shriram Sharma Acharya:** A seer-sage and a visionary of the New Golden Era. His personality was a harmonious blend of a saint, spiritual scientist, yogi, philosopher, psychologist, writer, reformer, freedom fighter, researcher, eminent scholar and visionary. He pioneered the revival of spirituality and creative integration of the modern and ancient sciences and religion relevant in the challenging circumstances of the present times. In 1979, he founded the Brahmavarchas Research Institute, the research center in Haridwar (India) dedicated to the integration of the modern and ancient sciences

in a practical way motivated by the noble goal of health and happiness for all. This center houses well equipped laboratories of Haemetology, Biochemistry, Neurophysiology, Cardiology, Phytochemistry, Psychometry, Yagyopathy etc. At the age of 15, (Jan 18<sup>th</sup>, 1926) a great Himalayan yogi, Swami Sarveshvaranandji appeared before him in astral body from the flame of the Dipaka (lamp) and guided him throughout his entire life. The next 24 years of his life were devoted to 24 Mahapurashcharanas –each consisting of the rhythmic recitation (japa) of 2.4 million Gayatri Mantra with strictest of disciplines. In 1943, he married Bhagwati Devi, and ever since, the saintly couple dedicatedly pursued the noble mission of spiritual upliftment of humankind.

Realizing the potential of inspiring literature and its relevance in the present era of intellectual evolution, he had chosen writing as the principal mode towards uprooting the evil tendencies and blind faith from people's minds and arousing the indwelling wisdom, strength and spiritual bliss. He wrote about 3000 enlightening books in Hindi on almost all topics concerning human life. He translated the entire Vedic Vangmaya (4 Vedas, 108 Upanishads, 18 Puranas etc.) in Hindi elucidating the tradition, style, universality and history of Vedic Literature. He also practiced higher-level Sadhana on the arduous heights of the Himalayas and established enliven contact with the Rishis of the Himalayas. During 1984-1986, he carried out the unique spiritual experiment of Sukshmikarana, meaning sublimation of vital force and physical, mental and spiritual energies. He authored a special set of 20 books highlighting the future of the world and conveying the message of the dawn of the New Era of Truth during the 21st Century.

On 2nd June 1990, he voluntarily shed his physical sheath.