

Overcoming Selfishness

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Many a time, we end up being selfish and self-centred. Seldom do we look beyond our needs and interests and seldom do the needs and plight of others bother us. Living for others is now the motto of only a few noble souls. We fail to realize that while selfishness keeps the mind under constant pressure, selflessness keeps it serene.

Instances of our selfishness are at times subtle and at times blatant. We are selfish when we do not give time to our children, our parents and our loved ones; we are also selfish when we do not shower praises our contemporaries deserve; not solving the problems of others when we very well can also falls in this ambit; not spending on the needy for fear of ending up poor is also a selfish act; we are selfish when we do not realize that a wedding function or festivity might bother our neighbours; we are also selfish in not supplicating for others as much and as frequently as we can; a thing as trivial as smiling to make someone's day too at times does not cross our mind.

Selfishness, it seems, is deeply ingrained in us and we need a constant effort to get the better of it. Perhaps the starting point to combat it is to start with not so difficult a task: we can begin by just looking around our house to find things which will never be needed by us and which are totally redundant. Experience shows that if one looks with such an eye, one ends up with loads and loads of such things. Parting ways with them should not be very difficult as these things have little or no use for us in the first place.

Some of the following tips may help us further in this effort:

1. We should stop taking credit for good deeds we do, and in fact hide these deeds from others thinking that God knows them and He will duly reward us.
2. We should take up some voluntary work and try to spend time, effort and our skills for others.

3. We should save money every month specially to use it for the welfare of the needy. This money should be over and above the designated amount God has imposed on us.

4. Reading inspirational stories of selfless people and spending time in their company if one is lucky enough to have them around helps a lot.

5. A selfish motive may be of help here: we can forget our own pain if we become selfless. When we live and work for others, it makes us see how better off we are than so many others and this makes us thankful and satisfied souls.
