

Section 1: Money and emotions

This is second sutra of *Samadhi Pad*. In simple terms, it means all our actions are based on various emotions that arise in our mind at a particular point in time. These emotions are manifestations of various latent impressions we have within us. They could have been accumulated over years and, as per scriptures, even past births. We perceive the world the way we feel from within, based on our emotions.

For example, if the colour of the glass of our spectacles is red, we will see everything red. If the colour is yellow, we will find the whole world yellow, and so on and so forth. Imagine a spectacle wherein the colour of the glass keeps changing continuously and automatically. One who is wearing those spectacles will have different perceptions of the colour of the world around him and it will keep changing continuously. This is certainly a disturbing phenomenon.

Only when the colour of the glass stops changing and becomes transparent is when we will be able to see the true beauty of our surrounding. Similarly, only when the flickering of our mind stops, will we be able to see our true self and enjoy our life.

Yoga is about reaching a state where the mind does not flicker at all. It remains firm, steady. Once the mind remains steady, we will enjoy the state.

When it comes to money, a variety of emotions arise in our mind. Our reactions are based on those emotions.

As human beings, we require money for some of our basic survival needs, viz. food, water etc. Since these have to be purchased from the outside, there is need for money. For other living beings, nature provides for these needs and they do not have to go to a shop to purchase them. Hence, they do not need money.

The second set of needs comprises protection and safety. For protection and safety, we need clothing, shelter, etc. Once again, since money has to be paid for these, we feel the need for money. Other living beings do not require external clothing and shelter and hence, do not require money.

Because money is required for our basic survival needs, we fear not having money. Actually, the fear is not about not having money. It is a fear about survival. "How will I survive, if I do not have money?"

The moment there is fear, there is bound to be insecurity; the insecurity of losing what we already have or what we are likely to own in the future. Fear and insecurity will lead to anxiety. Anxiety will lead to greed – we begin to feel, "Let me get more and more so that I don't have to worry about survival."

As per Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, the third, fourth and fifth states of need comprise love and belongingness, followed by self-esteem and lastly, self-actualisation. These cannot be purchased with money.

However, since the first two sets of needs are fulfilled by money, the human mind tends to imagine that other higher states of needs can also be fulfilled with the help of money. Though at some level we know that this is not true, our latent impressions, surroundings, etc., also play a role.

An advertisement showcasing a woman in a particular brand of jeans, getting more attention than another who is not wearing that brand will leave a latent impression in our mind. Similarly, a family going out for a weekend in an SUV and feeling happy leaves an impression.

We all know that pairs of jeans cannot be the deciding factor when it comes to getting attention. Joy cannot come because an outing is in an SUV. However, those impressions in our mind do play a role. We may want to purchase that pair of jeans and that SUV. Money will be needed to purchase the pair of jeans and the SUV.

Then again, we may have heard a friend, who has more money than we do, say, “We celebrate birthdays of our family members by going out to dinner at five-star hotels only.” If that statement has been interpreted by us (READ: Mind) as, “those who have arrived in life celebrate birthdays in five-star hotels,” our mind will aspire for it. We will need money for it.

From here on, the mind plays havoc. The moment we feel money is needed to get attention, respect, a sense of belonging in society, etc., the mind goes into a tail-spin. Feelings related to money will arise; inferiority – “What will people think if I do not celebrate my birthday in a particular manner?”; ego – “I have arrived in life because I carry a particular brand of bag,”; jealousy – “He must have acquired money by using inappropriate means,”; frustration – “When will I get enough money to go on a foreign vacation,”; anger, etc..

Those emotions do not let us enjoy our current state of being.

In the first section, we will have a look at those emotions and how we may behave when they arise in our mind.