

Parent's Pure Love : A Sacred Gift for Children

~ Saheli Sheth (Peoria, USA)

“Dobi [fool],” an older adult mockingly called me, assuming I didn't know how to cook. My brain quickly scanned whether the tone was joking or harmful. It sounded harmful.

Next, my heart registered an immediate emotional reaction: *“Ouch, that hurt.”* My mind would have made its way to remember *nirdoshbuddhi* and all the spiritual lessons I've been taught for moments like this - but before I could get there, I was surprised by how my mind naturally responded to the pain.

My mind told me: *“You didn't deserve that. Neither your guru nor your parents have ever called you a disrespectful name. What was said to you didn't come from a place of love, and so it wasn't meant for you.”*

I walked away from that interaction with a smile, unaffected. Why? For years, my parents have been pouring love into me, so hearing anything that wasn't loving felt so intuitively wrong to me. It was natural for me to let go of anything that didn't come from a place of respect. **When you give your kids healthy love, they will reject anything that's not healthy.**

Sant Bhagwant Sahebada has also said: “If someone calls us a donkey, does that make it true? Does that mean we grow ears or a tail? **When we react to it or feel upset by it, that means we've accepted the words that were said.**”

My parents have shown me **what love is**, so now I recognize what love isn't. When others raise their voice at me or treat me with disrespect, the alarm bells in my mind go off. I know that if the very people who raised me and saw me at my worst still treat me with love, then **the God within me would not want me to accept anything less.**

In the same way, God and my guru have modeled a high standard for love. Several years ago, as impulsive teenagers, a couple of *satsangi* friends and I were given the seva of transporting Sadguru Sant PP Shantidada to another town. During that night's hour-long drive,

construction blocked the dimly lit roads, forcing us to take a detour, and eventually we became lost. Imagine three newly licensed teenagers and a Sadguru Sant! One can picture the sheer panic of the adults at home, anxiously waiting and possibly regretting their decision to leave their beloved Shantidada in our company.

When we finally reached our destination, Shantidada came to our rescue. He spoke of the glory of taking the scenic route and spending extra time with us. Though any well-intentioned adult might have been upset with our mishap, Shantidada treated us with the same love that he always has.

He didn't have to. He could've blamed us for getting lost. He could've thought we were irresponsible teenagers. But instead, Shantidada stayed true to his values of seeing everyone as divine and flawless. He recognized God was working through us even in that moment, and with that awareness, He showered us with immense love.

Love is not calling others names or raising our voices at them. It's not criticizing them for their mistakes. It's not comparing people to others or wishing they would be different. I know this because my guru has treated me with love.

What is my guru's love? Love is seeing the strengths in others. It's speaking with sweet words that soothe the soul. It's patience and grace when inevitable mistakes are made. It's loving the other person as they are.

May we follow the examples our guru has set for us. They have given us a template of healthy, boundless love. Because we have such a pure blueprint of what love is, we can recognize what love isn't.

May we give our children and loved ones this same sacred gift: When we show them what love looks like at home, this shields them from unhealthy friendships and relationships outside the home. From then on, they will only seek pure love, ultimately spreading it throughout this world. ◆