

“ Without money we'd all be rich ”
— gauti

THE SPEAKING TREE



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Physical suffering eludes no one, including saints. Why is this so? Log on to speakingtree.in to find out the answers

MASTERSTROKES

Spiritual practice cuts through self and selfishness, reduces conflict, and increases compassion. And that is the best we can do

Rabbi Rami

Work doesn't fatigue you. It is the thought of the self that drains you of energy

Jaya Row

Hope is important because it can make the present moment less difficult to bear

Thich Nhat Hanh

Wonderment is a state of a heart-filled mind. Suffering cannot find its way in. Ultimately, all suffering is a fragment of the ego; it is rooted in a mind which thinks of itself as separate. All spiritual practice is for the purpose of healing us from this affliction

Paula Horan

God measures love only through the extent of the kindness you show to others

Shri Shri Nimishananda

Humanity is, in fact, the true religion

Baba Hardev Singh

For freedom from the mind, delete 'I' from your dictionary, and the rest will be done by itself for 'I' is very dangerous for the mind

Shailesh Kumar

People who control their thoughts win the race of life. The rest will keep on thinking or even blaming the Almighty

Sauabh Chakresh

The fact is that nobody is born and nobody is dying. We are just changing our forms to transform and to evolve into something better. It's a movement where one travels from love to greater love, from understanding to acceptance and from life to death to begin afresh

Sreedevi Menon

Love is a symbol of giving. It means, I give, give and give...

Mann Belani

Seeker **N K SHARMA** is a naturopath and Reiki expert. He says the supreme energy treats everyone equally, so even saints must give equal importance to their mind, soul and body

WHY SAINTS FALL SICK

When we talk of saints, we picture a godly, holy personality, an enlightened person, in tune with the ultimate laws of the universe, in control of his body, mind and soul. If a worldly person becomes sick and suffers, it is considered normal. But down the ages, several saints have suffered from cancer, heart ailments, joint pain, and digestive disorders. As devotees, we don't doubt them. But we often wonder, why saints fall sick.

Isn't physical sickness connected to the state of well-being of the body, mind and soul? Saints have died of disease just like ordinary people have. Several saints are bald, the loss of hair perhaps indicative of stress, low energy, poor nutrition or simply a genetic factor. Perhaps, subsisting on *bhiksha* or alms creates a situation where they ingest food that is harmful. Sweets and fried items are usually what is distributed as *prasad*.

There are some simple laws of health that when ignored, might adversely impact health. Nature does not recognise saints, doctors or enlightened persons. Nature treats everybody the same. Usually, saints just care for their soul and its liberation and they neglect their health.

God may be a spectator, but His laws work every time and everywhere. He is a fragrance, an expression that is present all around us. He is not interested in our disease or health, poverty or riches, death or life, happiness or sufferings. Everything manifests according to the laws of nature.

Many saints live in extreme conditions; this is risky. Abstaining from food for a long time by fasting debilitates the body. While their soul may be at a higher plane, their body is still vulnerable. Hence, they suffer diseases or die early. Sometimes drinking only liquids weakens digestive muscles. Eating only boiled food without salt and spice is also not a good idea. Boiled food is deficient in *prana* energy and nutrients, leading to severe deficiency and weakness.

Another harmful practice is drinking milk or eating milk products. Cow's milk is designed to grow a calf at an ultrafast pace from 80 pounds to 2,000 pounds in two years. In contrast, humans mature in 20 years. The chemistry of cow's milk is designed for the calf to nurture hair, nails, horns, a large structure and a small brain.

Milk is okay as infant food but digestive enzymes required for milk digestion are missing in adults. Only occasional use of milk is okay; in the long run, it can damage our blood chemistry.

Normally, saints, live totally on traditional food — cereals, *roti*, rice and *dal* with salt, spices, oils and processing. But we have modified our cereals by cooking and adding spices to suit our taste buds. Our natural instinct does not allow our taste buds to relish raw cereals. Also, depending exclusively on cereals creates acid residuals, cause hardening and stiffening of arteries and joints, making the body heavy and stiff. Then, we take recourse in yoga and exercise.

Fruits and nuts don't require spices, butter or cooking. Natural food doesn't need to be modified; only unnatural food unfit for human consumption



WOODEN STATUE OF A STARVING BUDDHA IN MANDALAY, MYANMAR

need no meditation. This statement too, is your personal view and is not true.

Shrikrishna Saran

Please Cite Research Studies

■ I do wish some studies were there to back up all that is written in the article. These are just broad generalisations.

Inder Mohan

Saints Are Elevated Souls

■ It is not right for us ordinary mortals to pass judgement on the health and life of saints. Many have suffered from serious illnesses, but we do not know the purpose and background of it in the big picture of the Creator.

Your blog is attaching excess importance to the body. While the body needs to be kept healthy, we have to follow our own pattern, as each person's constitution is different from other's. So what food and regimen may suit one, may not suit another. The bottom line is that one should "listen" to his body and follow a lifestyle that seems to suit him rather than going by the universal concepts that seem to be listed in the blog.

Kishor Kulkarni

Saints In A Material World

■ Most saints are not taken care of well by their own relatives and people in general. At the same time, churches of repute have done a lot for their saints! Morality and religion is not regarded highly in this materialistic society — this could be a reason why saints are not treated well and they too fall ill just like the rest of us.

Raman Ramamurthy

Different Levels In Sainthood

■ If the saint has purified his mind and realised the soul completely, then he will not fall sick. But all our saints are in different stages of purifying their mind and realising soul and God.

Viet Kumar

Saintly Sufferings

■ Your blog lays excess stress on the physiological aspect. There is a view that many times saints take over the karmic burden of their devotees who are suffering terribly and work that out on their own bodies in the form of diseases since there is no escape from karmic consequences. This idea of transfer of karmic burden, is not beyond saints directly tuned in to the source of all laws. Since for these saints, their bodies do not matter much, they can withstand this self-inflicted suffering. They also voluntarily suffer physically to exhaust their *pranabha* in this life only.

Narendra Murty



BLOGROLL

must be modified.

When saints sit and meditate for long hours, it reduces their metabolic rate and circulation. Meditation is for awakening. Once we are awakened, we need no meditation, but the need for continuous meditation confirms we are still struggling with ourselves and are not yet awakened. Our bodies are designed for physical activity and movement. Meditation is a path, a tool; it is not a way of life.

Sex and emotions needn't be suppressed but can be transformed by meditation and awakening. Suppression leads to stress, frustration and guilt.

Saints are torchbearers of society; their clear understanding of the laws of the human body and good health can

lead humanity towards wellbeing — if they themselves practise it. A true saint is one who has full control over the mind, soul and body. ■

SEEKERS' COMMENTS

Saints Are Humans, Too

■ Saints possess bodies that are perishable and they too will fall ill just like the rest of us.

Biplab Sengupta

No Basis In Science

■ Is your statement on cereals true scientifically and logically? All are earthy elements and nothing is being imported from outer space. Can you cite a scientific study to support this?

Once we are awakened, you say we