

# INNOCENCE AND CHILDREN

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Innocence is something, I told you, is a innate quality, and you should not deceive yourself by thinking you are innocent. On the contrary, you just put some introspection upon yourself and see for yourself what have you been doing so far, as far as others are concerned. What is your attitude?

I've already talked to you about emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is the expression of innocence. It is the expression of Shri Ganesha within you. Children who are gifted with this will always try to please you. They know what you want, what you need. They'll give you all the joy that you want. They'll do all the things that you like, just to please you. They don't have their own wants. They don't want to have their own demands. They never say, "I want this. You do for me." Never. They just want to see what you want, what do you want to have and they put all the effort to supply you with that, whatever you want.

It's very interesting how the children behave towards others. Elders. Just like, I would say, a great understanding, we should say, like a very elderly personality. So, in innocence, you become extremely grown up, matured. Very matured. With that maturity you know what this person needs, and what the other person should not have. And the way they establish is very interesting.

Children are the most interesting things, I think, in the world. For me roses are very beautiful, but children are the most interesting things. And, they teach you so many things that

you are surprised at their innocence. So many jokes are there about the children — how they behave, how they talk. And they are so innocent that they will tell everything to everyone. They have no way of hiding anything. It's very difficult. I know one joke, when a gentleman came to the house for dinner. So the child was looking at him very intensely. And then he says, "Mother, he doesn't eat like a horse, as you told me." So everybody was shocked. "You see, he doesn't eat like a horse." Mother must have told him, "He eats like a horse." So he looked at him, "He doesn't eat like a horse." You see, they are so innocent sometimes, they say things by which you can get exposed completely.

There are so many jokes about it. And, if you write some books, writing the jokes of children, I tell you, people will just enjoy it, because so innocently they say things which are nothing but the truth.

And they cannot tell lies. They are so truthful. That's the quality of innocence. They never tell lies. "You did this?" "Yeah, I did." "You didn't do this?" "No, I didn't do." They never tell lies. It's we, the grown-ups, teach them how to tell lies, how to be cheating.

Then we teach also our children another bad thing, that is, "You must possess everything." Especially in the West, is a thing they do. They tell the child that, "This is yours, you should not give it to anyone, this is your own." On the contrary, you

should tell them, “You can do what you like.” Leave it to their innocence. You’ll be amazed, they’ll give away everything that they have. In such a beautiful manner they’ll behave, that you’ll be amazed how they try to please everyone, and try to do something to entertain you.

All their capacity of this is so great that sometimes one wonders how these little things have developed these capacities. It is the blessings of Shri Ganesha. It’s His blessings that children are so very sweet and so much entertaining, and so beautiful. Try to become like them. We have to be like them. You might have read many books, you might have got lots of degrees, you might be something great, but you are not childlike. You have to be a childlike person. Otherwise, no one likes your company. We call them bores, but actually boring comes with the people who have no innocence in their heart. They are trying to tell you, “You must do this. If you want to be successful, you do that.”

All these lectures are useless for children.

In the same way, it should be within your own understanding that this is all nonsense they are talking. As the children don’t care for what you suggest to them: to be nasty, to be horrid; in the same way, if you are innocent you will not accept it. You may listen to anything, let them tell you anything they want to, doesn’t matter. You will never do that, because you cannot, because you are innocent. And the innocence will guard you, it will give you proper guidance what is to be done, what is not to be done.

Now try to introspect and see for yourself: are you innocent or not? People think that somebody is trying to overpower you, is trying to harm you, is trying to put you down. Nobody can put down innocence. Innocence is a quality that survives all kinds of nonsense. And not only that, but age, your health, your mind, your thinking, and your emotions are extremely innocent and you enjoy yourself.