

The Spiritual Scientist

An ezine for those who think!

The Emotional Snowball

Dwelling on sense objects causes lust to catch on fire. Lust produces anger, born of unfulfilled desire. Anger breeds confusion and bewilders memory, causing lost intelligence and endless misery. (Bhagavad-gita 2.62-63)



These immortal verses from the Gita describe a fundamental principle of human psychology, a principle that has been thoroughly exploited by the advertising industry. Let's understand this principle through the analogy of a snowball.



Through catchy sponsorship tags, jazzy billboards and dazzling TV commercials, the advertising industry brings consumer products in front our senses again and again. And almost all of them exploit the female form - depicted at various imagination-triggering levels of dressing or undressing - to catch attention.

John enters a supermarket and his senses are bombarded by ads of lifestyle products, products that are not on his shopping list. Contemplation on the ad creates a small pebble of desire, lust, in his mind. As the pebble keeps rolling down in his mind, the initial "That's nice" feeling soon becomes an irresistible "I want it" craving. Then a sudden wave of fury "Who can stop me from getting it?" pervades his mind, which in turn confuses him into believing these imaginary needs to be real. This confusion sabotages his memory about his recent resolution to not spend needlessly. With the memory knocked down, the emotional snowball then crushes the intelligence, thus wrecking the last defense against conquest by irrationality.



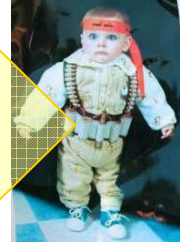
Purchasing an extra product might not appear such a serious problem, but what if it





becomes an addiction?

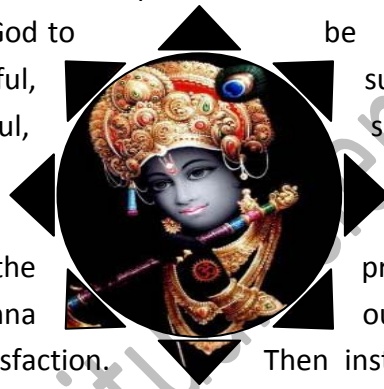
And the emotional snowball principle can be exploited for far greater kinds of irrationality. By seducing gullible young men with promises of virgins in paradise, vested interests convert them into suicide bombers.



How do we avoid letting irrational emotions take charge of our lives?

We all need - and lack - a satisfying object of thought. Consequently, we live in a state of mental dissatisfaction, a state which impels us to constantly search for and contemplate on external objects as potential sources of pleasure.

The great wisdom-traditions of the world explain that the most satisfying object of thought is God. The Vedic tradition reveals God to be Krishna, the supremely beautiful, supremely powerful, supremely wealthy, supremely wise, supremely peaceful, supremely famous all-attractive person. And the easiest and best way to think about Krishna is by chanting his holy names like the *Hare Krishna mahamantra*. By cultivating the practice of regular chanting, we can make thoughts about Krishna our default thoughts and thus experience constant internal satisfaction. Then instead of being crushed by the emotional snowball, we can crush it in its formative stage - while it is still a pebble.



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