

[Make Proper Use of the Internet](#)

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MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Make Proper Use of the Internet

BAPS leader warns Hindu Youth about the lure of pornography and other dangers

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Science has advanced tremendously today. Now we have the internet. But before using anything we should exercise the power of discrimination (vivek-buddhi) as prescribed by our shastras. Such discrimination develops through the company of good people, the realized sadhu and God. The Internet is both good and bad. With relation to business and academic studies, it is very lucrative.

At present you should have only two priorities: studies and satsang. But in logging onto academic sites, one may also encounter the Internet's dark side. Many are overconfident about themselves, thinking that nothing will happen by looking at such things. But even the great have fallen. There are examples of people who were greater than us, from our sampradaya [lineage of teachers] and others, that have succumbed to such obstacles. Ekalshrungi Rishi was a recluse who was not even aware of the distinction between man and woman. From childhood his father had taken such care to

seclude him. He was a person of strong mind, yet he fell. Similarly, you may feel nothing will happen to you, but these are enticing matters. A click of the button, then a brief glance and you feel like seeing a little more. And then you go deeper and get drowned in it. If there is no discrimination, you will lose everything. You will decline in your studies and then ruin your life.

New research and more discoveries are being made. First came the telephone, then TV, video, Internet and now the World Wide Web. And tomorrow morning something else will arrive and it will be faster! The element of "speed" is demonic. There are glamorous and pornographic videos published by people who want to earn money. They are not concerned whether your thoughts get corrupted, society gets spoiled and the country devastated. The authorities get taxes from them, so they will not be able to stop them. There is only one means to stop it--personal understanding, to realize it yourself. When you realize that drugs, tobacco and other addictions are poisonous, then you will be able to stay away from them.

The only reason for such evils in life is the lack of discrimination in daily living. If you mentally resolve that you don't want to use them then liquor, tobacco, etc., will not touch you. Otherwise, these demonic things are so alluring that one gets enticed. Within them lies desires, so on contact with such things there is obviously a great attraction. No matter how strong you may be, you will lapse. Therefore, if you are vigilant, then you won't have problems. Be cautious and don't ever see or use the bad things on the Web.

The Internet seems good, but its dark side can be like slow poison. As you experience it more and more, you spoil your life. Spread this message so that others may be saved. To save a drowning person is our duty.

You can chat on what is necessary [in chat rooms] but not on unnecessary things. There is no objection to chat on academic or business aspects. If you want to know about religion, then you can chat. There is no objection to chatting about things that enhance your character, culture, faith in religion and God, and make your life good and philanthropic. But there is no benefit in chatting about things that spoil your life, family and society. This means that you should not chat about and listen to bad things.

Today, we see that people get so absorbed on the Internet that they spend hours and nights looking at it. And its influence is more on the youths. You should use it for a little while only. Once you get the answer to your question, then you should end it. There's no need to expand it further. If it is related to your studies, satsang and business, then work on it, but otherwise don't waste your time.

Give all your attention to what is related to your academic studies. Secondly, spend time for devotion and satsang, for that will mold your life and help you control your mind. You will reap its benefits in the future. You will not be affected by bad influences. With your remaining time, serve your mother and father. Do the household chores, respect your parents and please them by obeying their wishes.

In brief, spend the amount of time necessary but don't waste it. If you spend a little more time in good things, then there's no objection. If you spend 15 minutes extra in matters related to study or temple, that is OK. But you should not spend a single minute in bad things.

[A youth asked what to do about getting "bored" with religious service.] When you were to come here to America, were you bored? Of course not. One doesn't get bored in one's own physical activities because one finds it worthwhile. But in reality, it is full of misery. Why should it be boring when one wants to go to God! One gets bored because one does not have the resolve for the spiritual path like that for the activities of one's own life. Were Maharaj, Gunatitanand Swami, Bhagatji Maharaj, Shastriji Maharaj, Yogiji Maharaj [the gurus of the Swaminarayan lineage] ever bored? So many obstacles came their way, but they never retreated and resigned. Therefore, we want to go all..... the.... way to Akshardham [the Lord's abode], so you should not get bored. [Swami's unique style of saying "all.... the... way" tickled the youth and became one of the highlights of their time with him.]