

6. The Letter 'A'

Worksheet 1

COMPREHENSION

Self-pity is one of the indications of immersion in the little ego-self. If we harbour self-pity, our attitude is always subjective, taking everything personally. We cannot be objective about anything. As a result, we constantly feel sorry for ourselves. To be objective is to think in terms of what is the best attitude to have towards our work, in our relationship with others, and above all, in our relationship with God.

When we are wallowing in subjective consciousness, we are extremely touchy. No one dares to approach us with any constructive criticism, because we are always on the defensive. Defensiveness is a symptom of self-pity. Train the mind to stand aside and impartially analyse a situation, and your reaction. Acknowledge what is true when it is pointed out to you.

If you become sad, moody, or go to pieces because someone has criticised you knowing that this is one of your weak links. God tests each of us in those areas where we need to develop strength... He brings into our lives in those circumstances that give us opportunities to recognise and heal all of the psychological weaknesses in our consciousness.

The twin of self-pity is self-justification, the urge to always defend and justify our behaviour. Resist the compulsion to explain yourself every time you are confronted with your faults and mistakes. If, for example, someone says to you that you gossip too much, or always look on the dark side of things, hold back and silently introspect. Maybe that person is right, and is acting as a true friend.

[From A speech by—Sri Daya Mata]

A. Read the given passage and answer the following questions.

1. What is self-pity?
2. What do we do when we are subjective?
3. What should we do when something true is pointed out to us?
4. Why are difficult circumstances brought into our lives?
5. What is self-justification?
6. What should we think when someone criticises us?

B. What is the difference between the following pairs of words.

1. (a) subjective _____
(b) objective _____
2. (a) defensive _____
(b) offensive _____

- 3. (a) constructive _____
(b) destructive _____
- 4. (a) criticism _____
(b) praise _____
- 5. (a) introvert _____
(b) extrovert _____

C. Say if the following statements are true or false.

- 1. If we indulge in self-pity, we are only thinking about ourselves. _____
- 2. Self-pity means we are constantly sorry for others. _____
- 3. Being touchy and taking everything personally is very good. _____
- 4. God brings us difficult circumstances to give us opportunities to recognise and heal our weaknesses. _____
- 5. Self-justification is the urge to always defend and justify our behaviour. _____

Worksheet 2

GRAMMAR

A. The following sentences indicate action that will take place in the future. Use the appropriate verb/phrase or clause mentioned in the Help Box to complete them.

about to are going to hear shall
will have moved stops shall tell is going to be

1. He _____ join the army after college.
2. The Principal _____ us if there _____ a visit by the Chief Minister tomorrow.
3. This evening we _____ a talk about comets.
4. Our neighbour _____ into his new house by the time we return.
5. The train _____ at Gwalior at 10 pm tonight.
6. Are they _____ play the National Anthem finally?

B. Tick the correct tense using the given sentences.

1. Boys are playing cricket. (Present perfect/Present continuous or progressive)
2. Prakash wrote a letter. (Past perfect/Simple past)
3. Rachna has been working for last two hours. (Present perfect continuous/Past perfect continuous)

C. Change the present tense into the past tense.

1. He reads a book. (change into simple past)
2. He has completed his work quickly. (change into past perfect)
3. He is writing a letter. (change into past progressive)
4. He is a good boy. (change into simple past)
5. Arvind has been working in this company since 19th April 2011. (change into past perfect continuous)

Worksheet 3

VOCABULARY AND WRITING

A. Some stanzas of poetry are given below. Explain them.

1. Gather ye rose-buds while ye may;
Old Time is still a-flying:
And this same flower that smiles today,
Tomorrow will be dying.
2. I love tranquil solitude;
And such society
As is quiet, wise and good.

B. Underline the odd sentences in the following passage.

It is the craze for speed that is responsible for many motor accidents. Last year, I witnessed what might have been a fatal accident on the Grand Trunk Road. I was driving down from Shimla. The old man was carrying a basket of apples. As I neared Chandigarh I came upon the wreckage of a car on the road. Some people enjoy singing. I was told a truck had hit into the car. Fortunately, no one was killed. It is dangerous to drive so recklessly and so fast.

C. The underlined words are used differently in the following sentences from their usual meanings. What do they mean here?

1. We must not harbour self-pity.
2. Some people keep feeling sorry for themselves.
3. Train the mind to be impartial.
4. Being sad and moody is a weak link in us.
5. You may be confronted with a difficult situation.