

Sattvic, rajasic or tamasic?

A QUIZ TO HELP YOU GAUGE WHERE YOU STAND IN THE GUNA GAME

by Maa Gyaan Suveera

Our mind is a bundle of thoughts, which can be categorised into three types. Like the rest of the phenomenal world they are a product of the three gunas, sattva, rajas and tamas. Together they create the maya that governs us and are the basic constituents of our subtle world, just as atoms and molecules are the basic constituents of the gross matter. Our dharmakshetra is a complex web of these gunas.

Sattva gives rise to purity, activity in inactivity, balance, humility, ethics, kindness, love for truth, and spiritual inclination.

Rajas produces sensuality, activity, extreme behaviour patterns, egoism, fluctuating ethics, oscillation between kindness and unkindness, and a worldly inclination.

Tamas gives rise to impurity, inactivity, imbalance, procrastination, unethical behaviour, unkind nature, laziness, and addictions.

The purpose of our life is to move from the lower to the higher, from tamas to sattva and finally to a state of oneness with consciousness. The impact of these three gunas on our life is an interesting study by itself!

Go through the options in each question and mark the one closest

to your behaviour. Tote up your 'a's, 'b's and 'c's to know your personality!

• **When you wake up in the morning, you**

- Feel fresh and are gripped by cosmic/God's love
- Feel fresh and creative thoughts sprout in relation to your work/business
- Feel heavy and sluggish

• **What activity do you pursue thereafter?**

- Clean the body and absorb knowledge of the Self/ God
- Check the mobile/ diary for the day's appointments
- Unaligned and blank mind with random thoughts ranging from gossip, arguments, to enmity

• **What is your state of mind while going to work?**

- Peaceful, calm, dutiful, still absorbed in the knowledge of Self/ God
- Enthusiastic, bubbling with energy, calculating the day's targets, smiling and beaming!
- Dragging yourself to work,

cursing all those for whom you have to work and earn, and pitying yourself for the load that you shoulder

• **What is your attitude at work?**

- Cheerful, smiling and ever helpful
- Cheerful, smiling and helpful when you think it will be beneficial
- Frowning and creating tension most of the time

• **What does your work desk look like?**

- Empty table with minimum work tools – stationery, pen/ pencil which last for months or years
- Ostentatious table arrayed with hothouse flowers, fancy stationery items, frequently arranged and rearranged
- Untidy and clumsy, stained with ink, and bestrewn with waste paper, empty pan-supari packets and cigarette packs

• **On what do you lunch?**

- Eat simple, clean food, preferably home cooked and packed neatly in an



Illustration: Jeroo V.

unassuming tiffin carrier which has been used and maintained for years!

- b) Eat a sumptuous meal from home or outside topped with a sweet dish, from a fancy tiffin carrier!
- c) Anything that you can get at a good bargain, cooked and presented in any way, stale or unhygienic, eaten clumsily, without enjoyment and with resentment.

• **How is your language at work?**

- a) Soft, and gentle words politely uttered without undue emphasis and without authority
- b) Modulated speech which changes according to the person to whom one speaks, authoritative and emotional
- c) Sarcastic tone, abusive speech, double entendres and unmodulated pitch

• **How do you appraise a stranger?**

- a) Look at the face and under-

stand his requirement

- b) Assess his social/economic status through clothes and accent first before proceeding to business
 - c) Take note of his figure, and sex appeal, before registering his need
- **How do you greet people?**
- a) With a simple unassuming namaste or hello
 - b) With a creative and impressive salutation each day



c) Sarcastically

• **How do you sit?**

- a) Maintain one body posture for a long time, with feet generally grounded
- b) Relaxed posture, cross-legged; alert and smart when needed
- c) Restless; get up frequently, itch, yawn, and disturb others

• **How do you dress?**

- a) Simple neutral colours, closer to white and pastels, have few but well-maintained clothes, not fashion conscious, may use talcum powder but not exotic perfumes
- b) Flashy clothes a la mode, frequent changes, use of perfume, cosmetics, and expensive accessories
- c) Badly kept and shabby clothes, unwashed and unironed, clumsily worn without care, maintenance, or accessories

• **How is your footwear?**

- a) Simple clean footwear, one pair; removes footwear when needed without prompting
- b) Fashionable and numerous footwear, matched to the attire, need to be prompted to remove footwear at places like home
- c) Unpolished, dirty and soiled footwear, stinking socks, oblivious to the need to remove them at places

• **What do you read?**

- a) Serious philosophy and deep literature with contemplation, good books, magazines like *Life Positive* (!), and health journals.
- b) Light reading, glossy magazines
- c) Detective journals, sex scandals, horror stories, and provocative magazines

• **What movies do you prefer?**

- a) Classic, historical, art movies, low-budget sensible films
- b) Glossy super-starrers with elaborate settings
- c) Films that glorify violence, sex and horror

• **Your favourite music?**

- a) Classical, simple, instrumental, soulful, based on pure ragas
- b) Elaborate orchestra, heavy metal music, remix and fusion music
- c) Chaotic, noisy and high-

pitched, with provocative lyrics and sounds

• **Your favourite colours?**

- a) White and pastel colours
- b) Blue, green, orange and red in pure tints/tones
- c) All dusky colours, black

• **Your conduct on returning home.**



The three gunas, sattva, rajas and tamas, are the basic constituents of our subtle world



- a) Wash hands and feet, have a bath, wear clean, simple home clothes
- b) Have a wash and change into fashionable lounge wear
- c) Wear the same work clothes until you sleep, and even sleep in them

• **How do you interact with your family once home?**

- a) Talk little about your work

and listen to everyone smilingly

- b) Boast about your achievements
- c) Describe all your negative experiences – your fights, and the abuses and ill-treatments you received

• **Which of these is closest to your belief?**

- a) Grace, universal brotherhood, welfare, and good wishes for all, belief in God and destiny, belief in karmas, universal awareness, and understanding of universal laws, life based on a personally set value system
- b) Belief in deities, religion, God, ritualism, and social norms, follow familial and social value system
- c) No belief in God, no belief in self, no clarity, may get victimised in blind ritualistic ways, complete unawareness, prefer to live life without awareness

The ‘a’s stand for sattvic gunas, ‘b’s for rajasic gunas and ‘c’s for tamasic gunas. To know yourself, count the a, b and c marked by you. For instance, if you have marked five ‘a’s, 11 ‘b’s and 3 ‘c’s, you are a rajas-sattva-tamas person. With the tamas count being lowest, you may actually be called a “rajo-sato” person; the rajasic qualities rule you. ☺

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