

## Sikh Summer Camps Blues

Some of you will be feeling the post camp blues we all go through at this time of the year. Leaving sangat is never an easy thing to do. Wherever you had your experience, be it at Sikh2Inspire, Sikhi Camp, Khalsa Camp, Singhs Camp etc you will all inevitably go through a rollercoaster of emotions after the camp(s).

Your summer started with the wait for the Sikh retreats. Before you knew, it you're sitting in a car, minibus or coach on your way to a camp – to enter a 'bubble' for a week (usually subjected to a very desi timing departure).

On your approach you are apprehensive, you've heard a lot about the Sevadars and Camps. Even if you're an old hand – you still never know, quite what to expect from a camp.

The week literally flies by... filled with deep love, eye opening lectures, meeting inspiring people and realising how unique Sikhi really is. You have experienced the power of Gurbani & Guru Granth Sahib Jee Maharaj and Sadh Sangat. By the end of the camp(s) you don't want to go home, you want the peace, Anand (bliss) – that you've experienced to continue. You've experienced a spiritual high – a rarity in our lives. Yes, whilst at the camp(s) you may have done some serious soul searching, found some answers and made some new vows. BUT – you just want the feeling of love, tranquillity and togetherness of the camp to continue.

The harsh reality kicks in when you see Maharaj – Dhan Sri Guru Granth Sahib Jee leaving the camp site, the bubble has to pop. The real world awaits you on your return, with battles lines drawn from the moment you step outside the camp site. So now sitting at home – you want to experience these feelings again, you want the spiritual 'high' to continue. How can you do this? "Please, please tell me," I hear you squeal!

Sorry but in all honesty – the truth is you can only experience these same feelings at another camp – which may not be until another year. But be warned, each camp is different and the experiences are always different (your first camp is usually never surpassed by preceding ones).

Now what you can do is get glimpses of these experiences that you had at the camp(s). You'll have to work hard but the rewards are unending. Here are some hints and tips to help you along your journey:

- 1) Develop a routine of doing Sadh Sangat – company with the Holy, where only Naam is meditated upon or discussed. Try making a habit of doing Sadh Sangat and then leaving when it deteriorates into a social or where Naam is not being recited or discussed. This will ensure your Anand/bliss remains intact and is unblemished by exterior influences.

## The One Creator Lord is realised by the True Guru's Grace

- 2) Make your experiences at the camp(s) spur you on and make you steadfast in your discipline. It is easy to be lazy – take advantage of your inspiration while it lasts!
- 3) Do Sangat of those that inspired you – but be warned! These Gursikhs are only human, so they'll probably start looking normal after you get closer to them and they may lose their superman/superwoman aura that you had for them.
- 4) Keep up your relationship with Maharaj – the King of Kings – Dhan Sri Guru Granth Sahib Jee. Make them the centre of your universe. Your first point of call. Your day should start and end with you prostrating to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Jee Maharaj, in thought and deed.
- 5) Keertan & Katha/Veechar. Keertan and Naam Simran will keep your spirit elevated and help you conquer all foes. Katha & Veechar (contemplation) of Gurbani will teach you how to tackle the problems the world throws at you. We have to make use of these priceless assets.

Get working and search out opportunities for Seva, Simran and Sacrifice. Guru Nanak came to redeem the lowest of the low in Kaljug – so why wouldn't He redeem us - His Sikhs? You have been blessed to be born in Sikh households and have the opportunities of doing Sangat in events like the camps. Chin up and march on soldiers, the horizon of Sachkand can be scaled.

Vaheguru ji ka Khalsa, Vaheguru ji ki Fateh!

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