

## The Avanti PRE Curriculum

### Exercise Sheet 7.5.2a (Story)

#### “The Yogis Cloth”

A young yogi lived by the side of the river. His life was simple and carefree; he practiced yoga almost all day long. Because he had no other responsibilities, he had plenty of time to sit peacefully with closed eyes, his thoughts fixed on the Lord within his heart. This was his daily meditation.

One day, after bathing in the river, he washed his only piece of cloth and lay it out on the rocky bank. While waiting for it to dry, a thought crossed his mind, “I am wasting time waiting for this. If I had another piece of cloth I could get dressed right away.” Just then an old sadhu (a wise man) passed by. This sadhu could read the thoughts of others. He stopped and spoke with the young yogi. “My dear son, I know what is on your mind. You want to save time. But rather than collecting more and more possessions, it’s better to be happy with what you have.” He then offered the yogi his blessings and continued on his way.

The young yogi pondered the sadhu’s advice, but decided that just one extra cloth was not too much to desire. So he went to the marketplace and bought one. He was happy.

The next day he bathed in the river as usual, washed his cloth, and draped it over the rocks to dry. Then he put on his nice new cloth and went to perform his meditation. Later in the day, when he came back, he discovered that a hungry mouse had nibbled holes in his old cloth. At first he was dismayed, but then thought, “I know! I’ll get a cat to chase away the mouse.” He went to the market once again and this time bought a cat. He again felt happy.

He spent the next day peacefully meditating. But, as evening approached, he was disturbed by the cat, which began to meow. “Oh, he needs milk,” he groaned. And so he reluctantly left for the market again, this time gleefully returning with a cow.

The next day was peaceful – that is, until the evening, when the cow began to moo. “Oh no! I’m not going to milk it every day!” thought the yogi. “It takes too much time.” So he went to the village and asked a young woman to be his wife. She could get milk from the cow to give to the cat who would keep the mouse away from the yogi’s cloth which would have no holes in it. And so the yogi was happy – for a while.

Then one evening, his wife complained, “I’m sick of you just meditating all day. I want a home.” So the yogi (after going to the market several times) built a house.

But then, his wife was lonely and wanted children...

As time went by, the yogi meditated less and worried more. He was constantly busy looking after his house, his growing family and the animals. Sometimes, during a rare moment, of peace, he reflected on those carefree times when all he possessed was a single cloth.

One day, thinking like this, he saw again the old sadhu again passing by. The holy man smiled and remarked, “I see you are in a pensive mood, so I will tell you again, ‘It is better to be content with what you have, because when it comes to wanting things, there is no end’.”

## Questions:

1. What is the first thing that happened in the story (i.e. what set off the whole chain of events)?
2. Why did the yogi want more? What did he think he would gain from this?
3. What, do you think, is the moral of this story?

## Extension Questions:

4. What do you like or dislike about the story? Do you agree or disagree with what it is trying to say? Please explain your answer.
5. Is attachment always a bad thing? Are there some things we should be attached to?