List of Sattvika attitudes and behaviors for emulation

“Compile a list of all Gita verses in chapters 17 and 18 that talk of attitudes and behaviors connected with Sattva Guṇa. Read them with meaning every day. I did this when I studied Gita. They are the attitudes and behaviors you must cultivate in order to make them your own. Make them your own even by faking or acting them out. All spiritual practices are meant for this only.”

- Pujya Swami Dayananda

आयुःसत्तवबलारोग्यसुखप्रीतिविवर्धनाः ||
रस्यः स्निग्धः स्थिरः इद्यः आहारः सात्त्विकप्रियः || १७.८ ||

āyuḥsattvabalārogaḥṣukhaprītivardhanāḥ
rasyāḥ snigdhaḥ sthirāḥ hṛdyāḥ āhārāḥ sāttvikapriyāḥ (17.8)

Succulent, creamy, fortifying and pleasing foods, which increase longevity, mental clarity, strength, health, pleasure in taste and aesthetic pleasure, are loved by sāttvika people.

अफलाकाङ्क्षिभिः विधिहर्षो य इज्यते ||
यष्टव्यमेवेति मनः समाधय स सात्त्विकः || १७.११ ||

aphalaṅkāṅkṣibhirajño vidhidṛṣṭo ya ijayate
yaṣṭavyameveti manah samādhyasya sa sāttvikah (17.11)

That ritual, which is known through the śāstra, which is performed by those who do not expect a result (other than antaḥkaraṇa-śuddhi), by making up the mind, “This ritual is just to be performed”, is sāttvika.

देवद्वजगुरुप्राज्ञपूजनं शौचमाजधवम् ||
ब्रह्मचयधमहहंसा च शारीरं चाश्चत्त्विका || १७.१४ ||

devadvijaguruprājñapūjanam śaucam ārjavam
brahmaṁcaḥsiṁsā ca sārīrāṃ tapa ucyate (17.14)

Worshipping deities, brāhmaṇas, teachers and wise people, external cleanliness, straight forwardness, self-discipline and not physically hurting are (collectively) called discipline of the physical body.

अनुद्वेगकरं वाक्यं सत्यं प्रियहितं च यत् ||
स्वाध्यायाभ्यसनं चैव वाङ्क्मयं तपं उच्यते || १७.१५ ||

devadvijaguruprājñapūjanam saucam ārjavam
brahmaṁcaḥsiṁsā ca sārīrāṁ tapa ucyate (17.14)
Speech, which does not cause agitation, which is true, pleasing and beneficial, and daily repetition of one’s own Veda are (collectively) called discipline of speech.

Mental cheerfulness, cheerfulness in expression, absence of pressure to talk, mastery over the mind, clean intent – this (these together) is called mental discipline.

That three-fold tapas, observed with total śraddhā by people who have no expectation of results (other than mental purity) and who are composed, is called sāttvika.

That charity, which is given to one from whom one does not expect a return, in the proper place, at the proper time, and to a worthy recipient, thinking, “It is to be given”, is considered sāttvika charity.

kāryam ityeva yatkarma niyatam kriyate’rjuna
saṅgam tyaktvā phalam caiva sa tyāgaḥ sāttviko mataḥ (18.9)
“It is to be done”, thinking thus, when only the enjoined karma is done giving up attachment and result, Arjuna! it is considered to be a sāttvika renunciation. [Note: (1) सङ्गं, attachment = abhimānam that I am doing such and such karma. (2) फल त्यागः = not expecting fixed outcome or punya for any particular gain other than antahkarana śuddhi. (3) Sāttvika tyāga involves doing action. Giving up here is giving up of सङ्गं and फलं]

सर्वभूतेषु येनेकं भावमत्ययमीक्षते ।
अविभक्तं विभक्तेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि सात्त्विकम् ॥ १८.२० ॥

sarvabhūteṣu yenaikaṁ bhāvam avyayam ikṣate
avibhaktaṁ vibhaktesu tajjñānam viddhi sāttvikam (18.20)

Know that to be sāttvika knowledge by which one knows one changeless existence in all things (and beings) and the undivided among the divided.

नियतं सङ्गरहितमरागद्वेषिुः
अफलप्रेप्सुना कर्म यत्त्सात्त्विकमुच्यते ॥ १८.२३ ॥

niyataṁ saṅgarahitam arāgadvedātaḥ krtam
aphalaprepsunā karma yattat sāttvikam ucyate (18.23)

That action, which is enjoined and which is done without attachment, without being impelled by likes and dislikes, by a person without a (binding) desire for result, is called sāttvika.

मुक्तसङ्गोऽनहंवादी धृत्युत्साहसमन्वितः ।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योनिर्विन्निकारः कर्ता सात्त्विक उच्यते ॥ १८.२६ ॥

muktasaṅgo’nahāṁvādī dhrtyutsāhasamanvitah
siddhyasiddhyornirvikārah kartā sāttvika ucyate (18.26)

The one who is free from attachment, who has no egotism, who is endowed with resolve and enthusiasm and is unperturbed in success and failure, is called a sāttvika doer.

प्रवृत्तिः च निवृत्तिः च कार्याकार्य भयाभये ।
बन्धं मोक्षं च या वेत्ति बुद्धिं सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी ॥ १८.३० ॥

pravṛttiṁ ca nivṛttiṁ ca kāryakārye bhayaabhaye
bandhaṁ mokṣaṁ ca yā vetti buddhiḥ sā pārtha sāttviki (18.30)
The mind, which knows the pursuit of karma and renunciation, what is to be done and what is not to be done, what is to be feared and what is not to be feared, and bondage and freedom, that mind Pārtha is sātvikī. [Note: knowing what is to be feared = being prudent and keeping away from harmful entities like tigers or muggers]

The unflinching resolve, with which one sustains, by practice, the activities of the mind, prāṇa and organs of action and knowledge, that resolve is sātvikī, Arjuna. [Note: sustains activities of mind, etc. = uses them in conformance with dharma]

That in which one discovers joy by repeated practice (of meditation) and gains the end of sorrow, which in the beginning is like poison (and) when there is transformation, is like nectar, that happiness is called sātvika, born of the clarity of self-knowledge.

om tat sat