

# WHAT IS ENOUGH?



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What is enough?

Theme of the 2024 edition of  
Pune Kabir Festival

*What is enough?*

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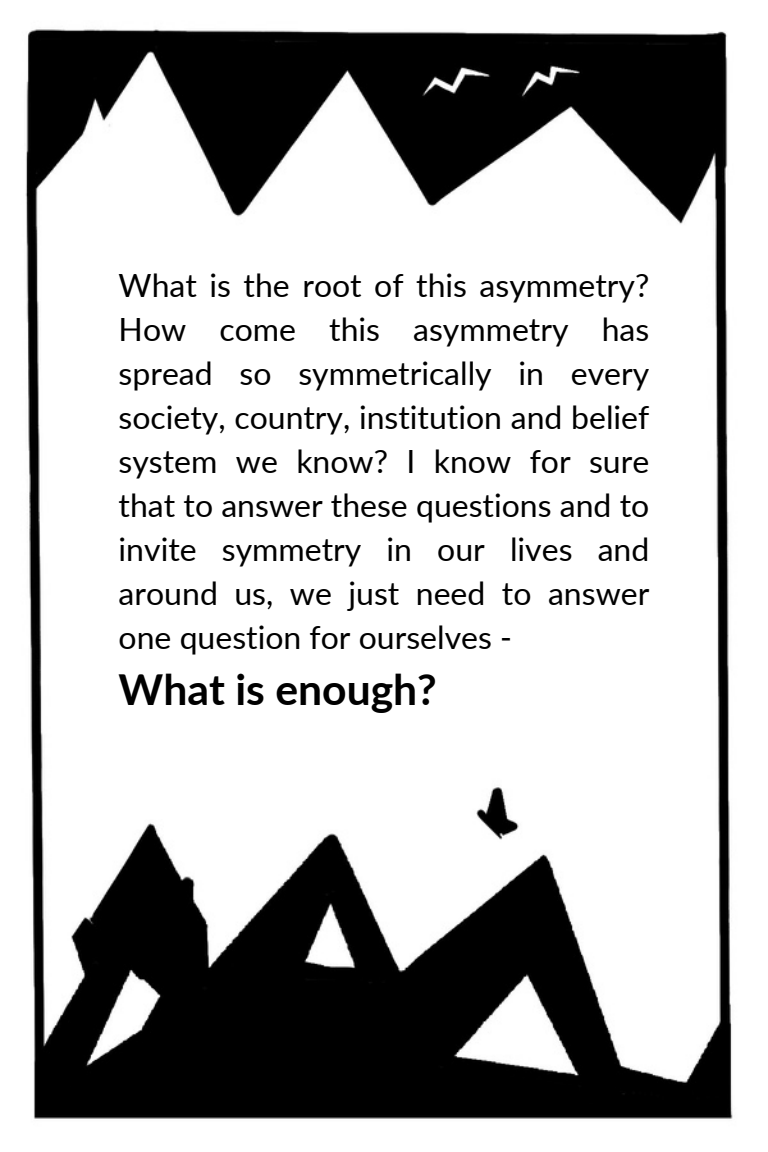
## ***What's common in a snowflake and a tree?***

While there could be quite a few 'correct' answers, the one I like the most is the fact that they both grow symmetrically. As it grows, a tree maintains multiple dimensions of symmetry. First and the most important, as much as it grows above the earth, it grows under the ground in form of its roots. It does not grow on just one side of its stem.

Top view of trees is circular, due to equal or similar growth on multiple axes around the stem. So is a snowflake. It's equally intricate on at least three or more axes. Nature does not create half or quarter snowflakes. Nature expresses itself with inherent symmetry; let it be a tree, a flower or a snowflake.

Shouldn't it be so for individuals and societies? Shouldn't an increment in our skills be mirrored by an increased understanding of how to sensitively use those skills? Should not our earning capacity be mirrored by the ability to share and enable others? On the contrary, the more we look at ourselves, our communities and countries, the more we discover an inherent skewness.

The more we hold, the more we want. The more we build, the more cramped we feel. Efforts dedicated to eliminate disparities end up creating more of them. With the advent of technology and abundance of infrastructure, the skewness has increased. This highlights the fact that technology and innovation are not 'the answers' to the asymmetry that we have created and continue to create.



What is the root of this asymmetry?  
How come this asymmetry has  
spread so symmetrically in every  
society, country, institution and belief  
system we know? I know for sure  
that to answer these questions and to  
invite symmetry in our lives and  
around us, we just need to answer  
one question for ourselves -

**What is enough?**

## ***'Enough' is not a number; it is a state of being.***

When someone asks 'is this enough?', we immediately start thinking in numbers. How much money is enough? How much education is enough? How much food or exercise is enough?

To understand what 'enough' really means, we first need to stop thinking in numbers. Numbers are not helpful; rather, they are detrimental for the very simple reason that they breed comparison. A comparing mind can never know what is enough.

A comparing mind can never know where to stop. A comparing mind is never at peace with what is.



Answering what is enough in terms of numbers is like a hanging a carrot in front of a reindeer with a stick. The poor animal will never reach the carrot in spite of running tirelessly. Ultimately, that carrot becomes the death of the reindeer. Similarly, our endless pursuit of 'numeric enough' is becoming our end. Can't we see it happening right here and right now?

In one of his dohas, Rahim calls this reindeer's carrot *chah* (a want).

**चाह गई चिंता मिटी मनवा बे -परवाह ।  
जिनको कछु न चाहिए वे साहन के साह ॥**

When desires dissolve, worries disappear. The one who wants nothing, is the king of kings.

Quantification is helpful and serves an important purpose in our lives but when we try to quantify something like the idea of enough, it creates complications.

*'Enoughness' is a quality of being and not a quantity to possess.*

To make this understanding an integral part of our thoughts and actions might not happen overnight. However, it will be helpful if it remains at the back of your mind while you go through the next pages of this book.

*The world's way of quantifying wisdom was different from reality, from what Kabir embodied.*



## **Enough is not at the end, but at the very beginning.**

“When would you stop?”

“When I have enough.”

We put ‘enough’ at the end. For thousands of years, we have been told to stop when we have enough of what we are seeking. Enough of pleasure, education, money, cars, houses and the list continues.

Do we see anyone who actually stopped when ‘enough’ was achieved? Or do we see anyone around us who thinks she has achieved ‘enough’?

Putting enough at the end and associating it with the culmination of any pursuit has been one of the biggest blunders of mankind. Actually, ‘enough’ is at the beginning of new pursuits. When we say ‘enough of it’, we are able to drop one thing and pick something new.

We have always given a negative connotation to dropping something. It's like once you are out on the street, just accelerate. To reach a destination, stopping at the crossroads and dropping off the earlier street is equally important.

Being in the state of enoughness is like being at the crossroads. It opens up new directions and new possibilities.

When we are in singular pursuit of something, be it money or power, we pass through endless crossroads that give us an opportunity to diverge and flourish multi-laterally. The feeling of 'this is not enough' does not allow us even to acknowledge those new dimensions.

Kabir has a unique way of describing such people:

**बड़ा हुआ तो क्या हुआ जैसे पेड़ खजूर ।  
पंथी को छाया नहीं फल लागे अति दूर ॥**

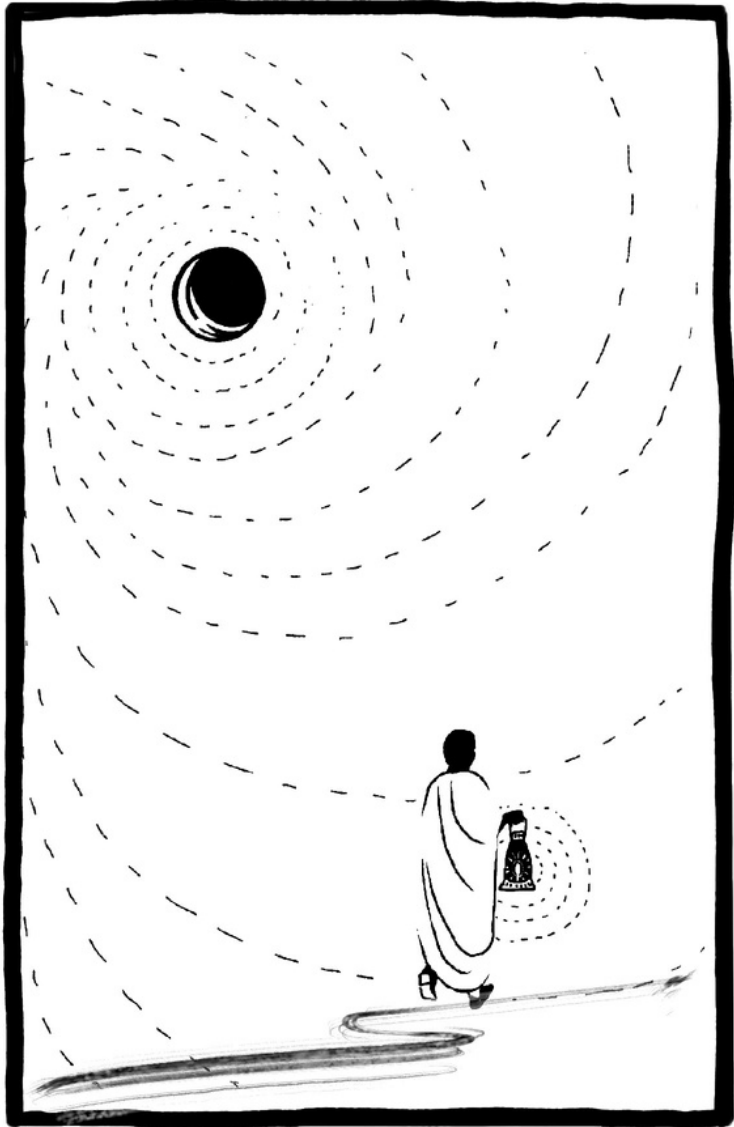
Don't grow up like a date tree; it provides no shadow to the passerby and the fruits are far beyond the reach.

*Growing without love  
is meaningless. To  
experience greatness  
embody love which  
will inevitably lead to  
compassion.*



When Siddhartha said enough of this manicured, controlled and luxurious life, a room for Buddha was made. The sense of 'enough' actually gave birth to the next pursuit of Siddhartha which was much more real, meaningful and fulfilling. And at the end of that pursuit, when he was at the very peak of his practice and pain, he said 'enough is enough' and was transformed into a Buddha.

Contrary to the popular belief, every time we say 'enough', we embark on a journey which is in a new dimension and hence, adds to the symmetry. Otherwise, the journey becomes unidimensional, unending and full of burn outs. At the end of such unidirectional journeys, we are more skewed, distorted and wanting even more.



## ***Enough is not equal to inaction.***

The word 'enough' also indicates a sense of having limits or boundaries. When we generally say 'this much is enough', we intend not to go beyond it. It may sound contradictory, but the first step of growth is actually drawing a boundary and limiting oneself.

Just to oversimplify this idea, a creator cannot create 'everything' at once. First, she has to narrow down and define what she wants to create which is nothing but a form of drawing boundaries.

When a gardener plants a sapling, the first thing he does is make a circular trench around the sapling. When it rains, that circular trench will decide how much water should be held back. In absence of that trench, the rainwater will be carried away. A bigger trench can drown the sapling. For the sapling, that trench is what is enabling life and growth.



If you have read the famous book - Crossing The Chasm, one of the core principles mentioned is narrowing down the target users. Companies that build a product for everyone or for a large market, fail. What works is developing a product that solves the problems of a very small user group and the word of mouth will take care of things and bring growth and scale.

Even in the world of business, where scale is considered holy, saying 'this is enough' is practiced deliberately. As individuals also, we use our sense of what is enough, but only in certain aspects of our life.

The sense of 'enoughness' is very closely linked to our sense of security. An insecure mind can never say that something is enough. The facets of our life where we feel secure, we immediately start acting out of a sense of abundance and enoughness.

That's why, quite a few times, we see people who have less, share more and on the other hand, many times, people who possess much more, are scared to share. Our ability to share is linked with our idea of enoughness which is in turn linked to our idea of security. That's why, every saint has worked very hard on breaking the cycles of insecurity in our minds.

Tukaram says,

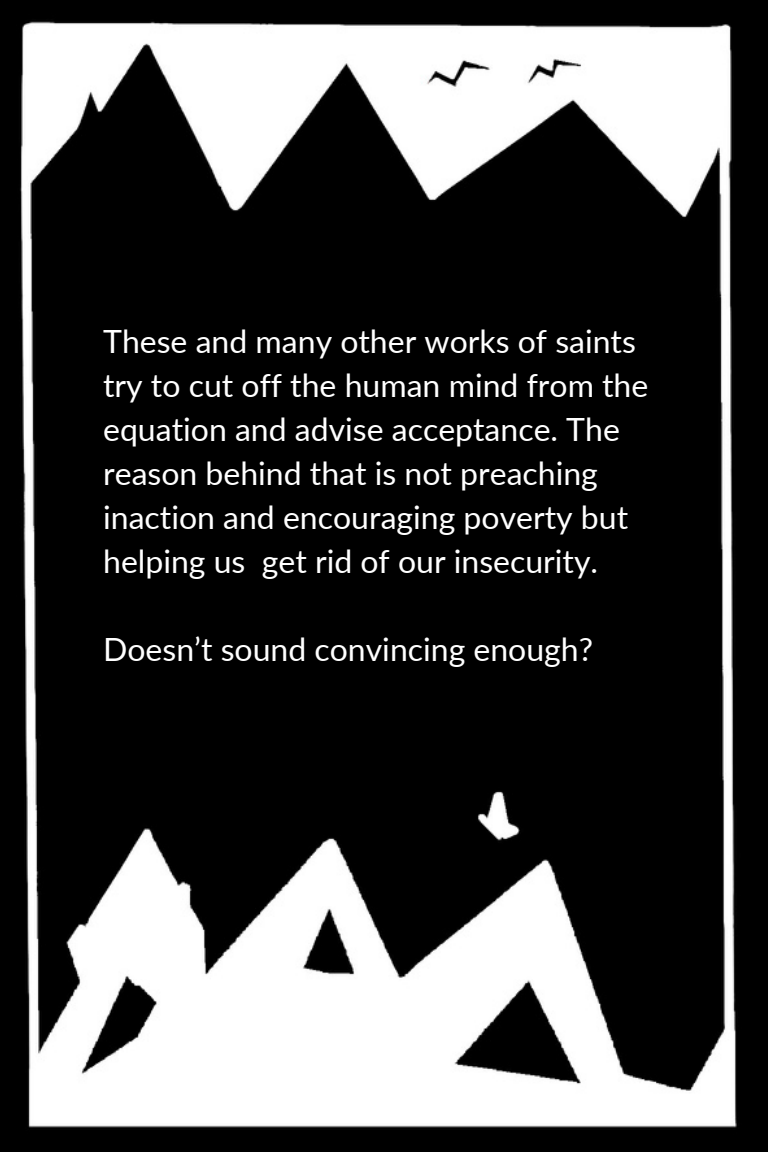
**ठेविले अनंते तैसेचि रहावे ।  
चित्ती असो घावे समाधान ॥**

*With total acceptance and contentedness,  
remain just like he has kept you.*

Or in one of his Bhajans, Kabir says,

**कहे कबीरा जो बिनसिर खेवै  
सो यह सुमति बखाने ।**

*The one who rows the boat of life without using  
his 'mind' can truly reflect the eternal wisdom.*



These and many other works of saints try to cut off the human mind from the equation and advise acceptance. The reason behind that is not preaching inaction and encouraging poverty but helping us get rid of our insecurity.

Doesn't sound convincing enough?

## *Transcend and Include*

**साहब सो सब होत है बंदे से कछु नाहिं ।  
राई सो परबत करै परबत राई माहिं ॥**

*I am incapable of doing anything; it's my master who accomplishes every task. He can transform a mustard seed into a mountain and can fit an entire mountain in a mustard seed.*

Whenever we perform and explain the meaning of this doha of Kabir, we see some disagreeing faces in the audience.

Many of our rational and entrepreneur friends think that we are promoting inaction and blind belief by talking elaborately about these couplets. It is quite common to blame Indians for their belief in destiny which is a breeding ground for inaction. Words of saints like Kabir and others should not be translated out of context and perceived at a superficial level.

Also, we should not isolate the words of saints from their actions. While Kabir's lips were saying everything is done by the almighty, his hands were weaving fabric. In fact, he preached not sitting in a cave but by actually sitting in the marketplace. Why this gap between walking and talking? Actually, the gap appears because of our lack of knowledge about how things evolve.

In his integral theory, Ken Wilber, a theorist and writer on transpersonal psychology points out that evolution happens through including and transcending and not through rejecting and accepting.

For instance, our brain has evolved over thousands of years but we still have our reptilian brain. Development of the cognitive brain did not replace the reptilian brain. It has been transcended and included.

Similarly, the stage of 'trust' includes and transcends the stage of 'work'; it does not eliminate or reject it.

That's why an ace industrialist like J.R.D. Tata has said, "When you work, work as if everything depends on you. When you pray, pray as if everything depends on God."

Prayer does not replace work. It transcends the work which is still included in our lives. In a similar manner, enoughness is not about replacing action. Enoughness transcends and includes action. You still act; but not out of insecurity and desperation but towards a more evolved collective goal.



## ***'I' is not the only actor!***

Consider the example of fasting - Not eating when you are hungry seems unnatural. Feels like anti-life. Yet, fasting has tremendous benefits. When the simple act of eating takes the centre stage, other actors like your immune system are deprived of the time and energy they need to do their job.

In any ecosystem, there are multiple actors, all of whom should act in the right proportion. When one actor becomes dominant, others are deprived of time, energy and attention and as a result, everyone suffers - including the prime actor.

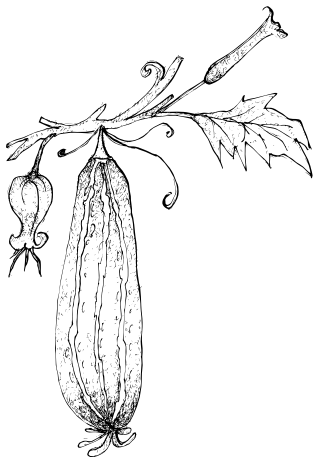


Kabir says,

धीरे-धीरे रे मना  
धीरे सब कुछ होय ।  
माली सींचे सौ घड़ा  
ऋतु आए फल होय ॥

*Even if the gardener pours a hundred pots of water, the plant will flower only when the right season arrives.*



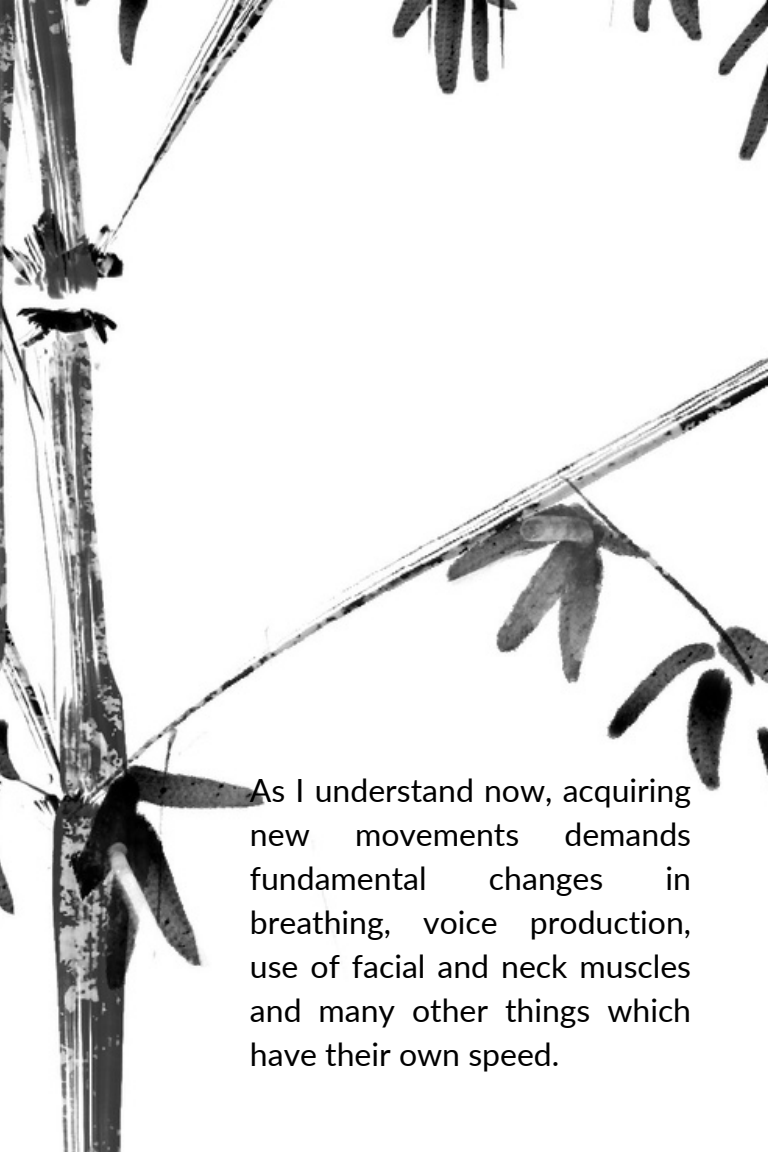


A good gardener knows that she is not the only actor. The plant has an internal pace of growth. The flowering of the plant is governed by forces larger than the plant and the gardener.

External factors can only support that growth and accelerate it to a certain extent beyond which, additional efforts become detrimental or even fatal.

I would always witness the qualities of a good gardener when I was being trained by my earlier Guru, Pt. Vijay Sardeshmukh.

“Just keep doing it. It will come after a few years; not before that. But don't stop doing it or overdo it.” He would always say this after teaching some phrase in a Raga which demanded a particular way of moving the voice.



As I understand now, acquiring new movements demands fundamental changes in breathing, voice production, use of facial and neck muscles and many other things which have their own speed.

He would often say '*enough for today*' when I felt I should try more. A true Master knows when it is enough. A true master is well aware of the fact that a seeker is always caught between two opposite impulses - an impulse of giving up things altogether and an impulse of overdoing things in a hazardous manner.

Avoiding these two impulses and walking the path slowly and steadily needs courage and that's why, in Sanskrit, the words **धीर-वीर** (patient and courageous) are always used together, always as a pair. The one who is patient is courageous.

'Enough' falls in a delicate category and can easily slip into the territory that breeds inaction, laziness, escapism and avoidance.



Only a truly courageous person can answer the question -

***what is enough?***



# PUNE KABIR FESTIVAL

This is a peoples' festival that celebrates the work of Indian saints. Enabled by volunteers and hosted in the city of Pune, PKF invites us all to experience the magic of saint poetry.

Every year it is an attempt at asking deeper and eternal questions and allowing them to take centre stage.

## **Concept and Design:**

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BAITHAK





The idea of a theme booklet grew from the discussions with volunteers and supporters of the Pune Kabir Festival who felt the need to re-visit the same questions even after the festival.

The need for something to encourage enquiry, a collection of works of saints that speaks about our annual themes felt like an essential.

Generously supported by:

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This booklet is an invitation to all to delve deeper into the theme of the festival aided by insights, reflections, illustrations and music.