

# Why are Most Temples Located in Faraway Places?

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Most temples represent God or the spirit or the deity located in the temple or mandir situated in an area at the outskirts of the city. A spiritual atmosphere is one that is devoid of pollution and which promotes rajasik or tamasik behavior. The silence of the spiritual atmosphere reduces the internal noise and helps us onward in our inner journey. The inner journey of being in touch with one's consciousness requires detachment from worldly pleasures and the withdrawal of the five senses of the body.

To be in touch with one's consciousness, one needs to bypass the disturbed state of consciousness controlled by emotion, memories and desires, through mind, intellect and ego. This usually requires a prolonged period of persistence and undertaking the inward journey devoid of external stimuli. The parikrama, which means "the path surrounding something", incorporating many long walks helps to detoxify the mind and thus shifts the consciousness from a disturbed state to an undisturbed, calm state.

A long walk not only offers physical benefits but one also gets the benefits of nature as one's inner stimuli are exposed to the outer stimuli during the parikrama.

The person is often required to walk barefoot on natural ground, inhale pure air and concentrate and listen to the sounds of the nature, birds and trees. This proximity to nature helps in the inward spiritual journey and shifts one from the sympathetic to parasympathetic mode described by lowering of blood pressure and pulse rate. The final happiness invariably comes from within us at the time of final darshan when a person invariably closes his eyes and experiences God within his heart.

Most temples today are being constructed in residential colonies and provide a holy atmosphere to people right at their doorstep. However, they do not have the same spiritual significance and benefits as a temple located at the outskirts of a city.

There is no way a person can go to a temple in the vicinity of his house and detoxify his mind as this can hardly be achieved in minutes unless you are a siddha yogi, and if you are one, you need not go to a temple as the temple is within you.

In Vedic texts, it has been clearly mentioned that to acquire powers and inner happiness, rishi, munis had to do tapasya for months and years together. This tells us that spiritual well-being is acquired over an extended period of time as the process of detoxification is a long drawn process. Cars and other vehicles should not be allowed near temples as the basic motive is to have a pollution-free atmosphere and to give time and space for the mind to detoxify.

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## Back-scratch Test

- Assesses upper body (shoulder) flexibility, important in tasks such as combing one's hair, putting on overhead garments and reaching for a seat belt.
- Method: With one hand reaching over the shoulder and one up the middle of the back, measure the the number of inches (cm) between extended middle fingers (+ or -).
- Result: How closely hands can be brought together behind the back, indicates shoulder flexibility. Men: Minus (-) 4 inches or more, Women: Minus (-) 2 inches or more.