

## Jayanti Ben – 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2020 - Shantivan

### Building resilience to face challenges

This subject is very relevant for today's world as we all need a huge amount of resilience to face it. Today I have been up the mountain (Abu) and there are checks both ways. We noticed there were also very few monkeys, because the tourists are not feeding them, so they have retreated into the hills. I witnessed how Mount Abu has become a bit of a ghost town. I also realised I have been cocooned in our campus in Shantivan for two months. Seeing all of this in Mount Abu, strongly made me aware of what is going on. But although the world is fighting back over Covid 19, what will be after that? It won't be an easy journey back to normality, if ever. I feel something has changed dramatically and we won't be going back. Today I heard the news from a group who returned to London yesterday. They said it was not an easy experience at Delhi airport nor on the repatriation flight. What will the world look like in December 2020 and by May 2021 how many more things will change? However, I cannot change the world story: whether an epidemic or strict government regulations.... But what I can do is build up my own inner capacity. When a wire has a resilience test, weights are put on it and the resilience factor can be gauged from the point when it doesn't bounce back, and then either weights need to be removed or more strengthening of the wire needs to happen.

We have been dealing with life as it comes and maybe I have managed well so far. However today whatever situation I am facing I don't know what is going to happen beyond. How well am I coping with lockdown? Am I able to maintain a positive attitude? Am I taking the opportunity to do things I didn't do before? Am I getting on with a variety of things? Am I moping, moaning and wondering why is it that things are the way they are? I cannot change this but I can change my inner capacity. Resilience means the ability to bounce back.

From an emotional perspective, as well as a spiritual perspective, if a child has an upbringing in which there has been someone who has always been available for them and been able to listen with unconditional love and acceptance, then the child grows up with an inbuilt capacity in which they are strong and resilient and able to deal with the demands of modern living. How many have had this experience? Not many of us will be able to say this. We grew up and became adults and didn't know we were missing the resilience factor. When I am resilient not only do I bounce back and but I can stretch like an elastic band. Or - am I left scarred and stressed by challenges? If you are able to bounce back, wonderful and it shows you have had someone to support you unconditionally. But if you are getting stressed and things seem bigger than you, then best to look inside and turn to God. Why, because God is our eternal Parent. We have had many sets of physical parents and relationships through many rebirths. But in this last rebirth of Kaliyug there were always conditions. If you do this I love you, if you won't I don't. Even if it wasn't stated, the implications were there.

So now is the time to experience love from the Supreme Parent. With the awareness of the inner being, the soul, I am able to make the connection with the Divine and experience that. This One accepts me totally as I am. No limits. No conditions. God says, you are my child. As long as you are soul conscious you will feel that love reaching you. Soul consciousness means turning inside to my eternal identity. In the consciousness of the body, there is false identity and this acts as a barrier between the self and the Divine. God says He loves me, but I don't have the possibility of feeling this because my own block of identity based on the physical, is not allowing me to have that experience. I need to turn back to my inner identity of soul, then connect with the Supreme, and in this connection I will be able to experience God's pure love for me. This applies to every human being. Every human being is a child of God, and part of the spiritual family. Everyone on this planet has a right to this connection. Once I experience God's unconditional love, the value for the self grows, and I have that strength and support coming to me. It is always available, at any time. I am then able to go through situations I didn't know I had the possibility of before. Big things happen but I have the confidence of God's love.

There is also the aspect of accepting myself. God accepts me as I am. He wants me to become pure for my benefit. Apart from God's love giving me the capacity of resilience, what about the love I have for myself? Can I accept myself unconditionally? The negatives and positives? No one knows me better. With others I can always wear a mask. I know who I am, and what are the things I am going through. God knows me and still loves me. But until I get to the point where I know myself deeply, the good and not so good, I won't be able to develop that inner capacity. Once I can do this, I have power. I can tolerate, discern, decide, accommodate, adjust and cooperate. These are some of the practicalities of the powers we gain through silence and meditation. Resilience means that I have this inner capacity, this power and when I have that I can fill myself completely and I'm able to stay full and content and do what I need to at any given moment. If we find it difficult to accept ourselves, we then find it incredibly difficult to have unconditional love for another and accept another. The spiritual law is that whatever is going on inside, will happen outside too. So internally if I don't accept myself I will have problems with others too.

Let me discover a consciousness where I don't have problems with the self or others... starting with myself. As well as accepting, can I love myself? Maybe I need to go a bit deeper into my own inner being. When I go deeper and deeper, what I find there are the beautiful intrinsic qualities within the soul. Peace, love, purity, joy and truth. Am I able to experience these? Maybe not, because I haven't made this journey. So let me go on it, and go deep down inside and connect myself to the experience of these

qualities. Once I have touched this treasure store, I am able to bring up the treasure again and again. Each time I do this, and hold and experience the treasure, it is filling a space within the self that had become empty.

One of the things that people are complaining about is loneliness. Even within the nuclear family or between husband and wife. Seeing the same one for 24/7 without visitors or others things to entertain and amuse. So how do we live with the same person every day for months? Why not, love the self and then we are able to love the other too. This is not narcissistic. Loving the self means being able to see the eternal being, the child of God. In that awareness I can feel the original qualities and realise this is my eternal state of being. Let me connect with this inner light and use it in my day to day behaviour. Then I can see myself sharing my inner experience of love, truth and joy, in all the interactions I have with others, no matter what the circumstance or pressures are.

Here is a story to illustrate what is within will come out: Two people bump into each other on a corridor. One is holding a cup of coffee and it spills on them both. What happens? Whatever was inside the cup came out, coffee. If it had been tea, that would have come out, if it had been water, that would have come out. We cannot expect anything else. Just as when someone comes into friction with me and rubs me up the wrong way, what will I give out? Whatever I have filled myself with! If what I have filled myself with is critical, wasteful, unhappy thinking... the collision is just an excuse and I will come out with whatever I am carrying within. If instead in the collision, I stop and apologise and the other says 'it is ok', with a big smile, there is growth of compassion, love and non-reactivity. This happened not at the time of 'bumping into them', but through a practice they had developed. Through that practice they were able to create the feelings of positivity. This is what happens. Let me fill the self with the feelings of goodness that I am, then my old reactions and responses are the things that go under water, not me. All the bad images and feelings that I am still holding in my space, is what creates a disturbance. Can I come to the point today, when whatever the trigger, maybe an email that is demanding and assuming, can I look at this peacefully and respond that I understand what the other is going through but maybe there can be a change. I then respond with peace, tranquillity and patience, then this boomerangs and it comes back to me and my heart feels it has grown.

Let me experiment by going deep inside and learning to love the self for who I am. Not what I have achieved, but who am I. If I can do this, then I become a model for my family. Resilience means to have a big open heart and to be available for people when they need me. At what point can I condense and compress something, so that it is not taking all my energy and strength. Sometimes we allow things to take over our whole life. If I am doing it in the sense of being surrendered to God, that is great because God is able to accommodate all of us in His heart.

Patience is connected with resilience. Yet sometimes it is not even put on the list of virtues. Because it is not valued in today's world, which is high speed. Covid 19 has taught us to slow down a little, but there is still a long way to go. Patience goes with resilience. Will I be able to withstand the shock of what is coming. Not just because I have developed power, but using patience I won't react. A result of this will be I stay calm and cool. In coolness it is possible there is enough strength to deal with the problem. Patience removes problems. An emotive reaction will create an energy drop. If however I am responding patiently then a long term solution can develop. With patience I am able to gather my inner strength, and see clearly. I am able to reflect and then reply. Covid 19 has taught us plenty of patience. We have learnt how to pause, how to take time. With an instant reaction my vision becomes narrow. When I respond holistically it won't be of irritation or frustration because I have been patient. I am patient because I know that Rome wasn't built in a day and a tree doesn't grow overnight. Results take time. Resilience and patience go together. Resilience also means to understand that my original state is the highest of all. Whatever I am doing today is a faded image of my own inner potential. The potential that I had was in becoming a *devatma*, a deity soul. Can I hold that image of who I am and move towards it? Then even when challenges come my way I am able to glide through, and recognise what I have to do.

When I think about my mother, I remember her qualities, her skills, and how much she wanted to do. I see this amazing picture emerge of someone who believed in herself and God and as a result of both faith and love in the self and God, was able to support a meditation initiative. Souls are touched by God and then put out a lending hand so tasks get done very successfully. Let me find a friend who is willing to take a risk and face public opinion for what is essentially a good product... What can I do to support it, with patience, with friendship with others, faith in myself and what I do. As a result of all these things coming together, I will be able to manage the scenes in front of me today and enhance my own stage of consciousness so I do manifest my own highest potential. Most of us don't and we don't have this confidence or faith in ourselves. Sometimes we have to face a lot of criticism. Maybe I am not managing what I need to. How am I dealing with myself? Let me emerge the goodness and beauty within the self. Spirituality means knowing my highest position in the whole cycle. Resilience means to bounce back into my own highest stage. When I look around and think well so and so hasn't made it... I am not so and so... but who am I? An individual with many talents, skills and qualities. We can support each other and complement each other, but we cannot ignore each other. Can I give a little finger of support and cooperation and show another how to manage things also?

I hope this has been useful for all of you. Asia is the continent of deep and profound wisdom. Wisdom doesn't come from theory. It is when knowledge is applied into practise and through that practise then wisdom is acquired. So practise some of these ideas and you will find your own wisdom grows and you develop greater capacity to deal with all of the trials and tribulations that are to come. Come out of Covid 19 with renewed resilience and then whatever comes after that you will be able to deal with that.

## Q&A

*Q. What is going to happen and when is this going to end and will we be able to go back to our normal life?*

I don't have a crystal ball! Science has told us it has peaked and is now on the downward side. But some are saying that it is not going to end and it will now become part of the virus family and we will develop immunity so strongly that we are not impacted. Viruses have been around since human beings have been around. We have been happy living in harmony with the viruses and world around us. But from the time we started to pollute the water, air and food, everything we have taken into our system has weakened us. We are all impacted by all the many devices around us, sending out radiation. This is why we get affected by viruses and we didn't before. We need to build up our immune system, with rest, food and exercise but also with hope... One of the things that causes immunity to drop is hope and another is fear. These I can take of. I can create an awareness in which I am not afraid and I create hope for the future.

I don't know when this is going to end, the virus, lockdown. But what next? Possible economic chaos. I was thinking of this when seeing Mount Abu with all its closed down hotels. There is going to be an economic problem across the planet. A powerful country like US has now millions of unemployed people and this will create disruption in the economy in a big way. I need God's power and love so that I know that whatever is out there, I will be able to help at a time of need. I need to deepen this power through connection with God.

*Q. Some are asking: Look what has God given us?*

Let me share a story of a 93 year old, in Italy, who recovered from Covid. He received a bill of 500 Euros for the ventilator, when he was checking out of the hospital, and he started to cry. He didn't say it was because he was poor. He said 'I am crying because for 93 years of my life God provided me with air I could breathe and here I needed a ventilator for 24 hours and I get a bill of 500 Euros. Do you understand? God has gives us everything. An intellect with the capacity to think, know and understand, and the treasures within the soul. If I, in my ignorance, forgot about the soul, and locked up my treasures so I couldn't access them... and said instead it is only science that can help me, human beings that can support me, or my addictions to x, y and z that can help... Then God detaches and remains quiet and waits patiently until we change our awareness and understanding of what we need to do. God gave us a beautiful planet, a blue pearl floating in the cosmos and what did we do to it? Look what's happened: the sprawl of the big cities, the dirt in the oceans, the polluted atmosphere. Is He responsible for all this? I don't think so. He gave us a pure mind and heart and we abused it. He gave us a wonderful home with such beauty and we exploited it. This is the result. Rather we should say. I am really, really sorry God, and now I understand, so before I go Home let me experience gratitude.

*Q. We often hear the expression 'be mindful'. Can you explain?*

It means being present. So often my body is here but my mind is somewhere else. What mindfulness is saying is I am here so let me be fully present here with attention. Then in the present my presence is felt. Others can then feel my vibrations of support. I become present and then my presence is a gift to everyone and the atmosphere can change. We can all share good vibrations. People will then be perceptive and catch those vibrations.

*How do we develop emotional independence?*

From a spiritual perspective, there is a very simple answer. Soul consciousness and God consciousness. Why? I the soul came alone and at some point, I am going to have to return Home alone. That is My Home up above not down here. We get too attached to people, places, objects and position and as a result of our attachment we are not able to feel emotionally stable and independent. Sometimes it is not support from human beings it may be a car: I need the latest model to feel secure.. But for how long? I will never be content and emotionally stable by acquiring things externally. My emotional stability depends on my spiritual stability. I am a soul, and what sort of soul am I and am I able to keep the consciousness of who I am? As a child, a student, an instrument of God...as a disciple of God... nothing is too big, nothing is too little. If I am able to maintain this consciousness of who I am, this gives me a deep foundation of stability that will never leave me.

*Q. How do we deal with our expectations when the outcome doesn't match the expectation?*

How often is it that our expectations are actually met? Not often. What is going on and what is wrong? I think it is because at the end of Kaliyug our expectations are way too high for us to match. Think of my husband, if I expect him to be like Lord Rama, am I willing to be like Sita, obedient, faithful, a renunciate... so it is not just my expectations not being met but also the other person's expectations are not being met by me! All of us now have shortcomings and none of us are perfect which is why we are here in this drama with all of that is going on. I cannot expect, when I know I cannot fulfil the expectations of others. We need to learn to be content instead of having a 'high bar' that is difficult to manage for most people. Instead can I say I have all treasures within and I can stay very calm and peaceful, stable without help from outside. If I can learn to do this, then God is going to give me a large amount of love.

*Q.What message at this time would you give to senior citizens who are living alone? How do we keep them positive?*

This is the time for going beyond sound...the time for sharing love with your grandchildren, by engaging with them online, or talking to them on the phone. Keep the connection and don't isolate yourself. There is a whole network of friends and relatives who would love to hear from you. Give happiness to someone for 5 minutes every day. Now we have time for the self, for God and time for others. Go to them, say hello. Don't be shy. There is so much to share. Just imagine how much a person in their 70's has seen. They saw the 20<sup>th</sup> century at its peak. Ask them to share their stories. Be creative and look and see what they can share with you.

*Q.Is this pandemic the point in time of the turning from Kaliyug?*

I think we have a little way to go, and yet it is the start of much upheaval. It is going to intensify and get worse and so we need resilience and capacity from Baba to get stronger and stronger.

*Q.What do we do when others don't follow our advice?*

It is easy to give advice and not so easily to follow our own advice. We give and give but we don't know how to replenish. We need to make time to recharge. Think of the mobile... It will dry up if we don't recharge it. Make time for the self and you will then be able to help others. It is important to have a regular discipline to recharge the self which will carry you through whatever comes your way. A discipline for silence and taking from God and spiritual study, will help you become gradually more and more powerful which will also help others.

*Q.How do I deal with others who cause difficulties in my life?*

We cannot change them but we can change the self. Circumstances come to help us grow. Don't see those people as difficult. Instead look into their eyes and forehead and see the soul shining. This practice will help you deal with what seems to be difficult and help change the perspective. I have to change my thinking and behaviour with them.

*Q.In one family one is a Raja Yogi and another is not, how do we deal with that situation?*

With love and regard. My mother maintained her yogic disciplines throughout her life and it took my father 23 years to change and become a BK and then he was very happy to. When there is mutual love and respect you sit down and talk together, and compromise. So give yourself space for this reality.

Om Shanti