

IMPORTANCE OF HUMILITY

# Balance is key to harmonious relationships



DADI JANKI

Two intelligent people always fight. There will always be conflict between them because each thinks he is better than the other. However, if there is one wise person and one intelligent person, there will be no conflict because a wise person understands the importance of humility and is prepared to bow before others, honouring the other person's virtues.

This is why we are told in Rajyoga that if there are two

masters in a home, there will always be quarrelling. What is the solution? If one person becomes the master, the other has to become a child. If there is a master and a child in a home, one will give the orders and the other will obey them. If both people are giving orders, who is there to obey them? That leads to problems. Two heads will quarrel with each other because both want their opinion to be accepted. Wisdom means surrendering for the sake of creating unity. This is not surrendering out of weakness but out of honour.

Sometimes family members want to discuss something. Each member gives an opinion, and each one seems to be strong in opinion. So how do you decide which opinion to adopt? While giving an opinion, you are a master. Fine – you do not need to suppress



Respecting everyone's opinion and accepting the majority decision helps us get along with others.

your opinions. We should never suppress our thinking. If you have an opinion or suggestion, speak out. Suppressing our intellect is a kind of spiritual suicide.

If I suppress thoughts that come to my mind, I will not grow spiritually. So, I do not need to suppress my thinking, but I also do not need to emphasise what I think should happen. When we offer our opinions, what do we do? We do not only give our opinions; we also want our opinions to be acted on. This is because we express them using the ego of the intellect, which thinks, "I am the best."

If I am a wise person, I give my opinion when asked, and then when the majority decides, cooperate for the sake of the majority. This is common sense. If there are ten people involved, each person's opinion cannot be

acted upon. When we are wise, we find the balance between being a master and a child. When this balance is maintained, you will not have any problems because then you will get along with anyone without creating conflict. The wise person is able to interact with everyone without losing her own identity.

Having wisdom means to have both humility and also the authority of truth, 'naram' and 'garam'. Only when I have both, can I be flexible. If I am only 'garam' I become too stiff, if I am only 'naram', then I become too fragile. I have both of these qualities within myself. God has given me this beautiful balance, to use in all my relationships with others.

*The late Dadi Janki was Administrative Head of the Brahma Kumaris.*

SPIRITUAL EMPOWERMENT

## LIVING IN THE NOW



B.K. USHA

Time, it is said, is money. Unlike money, however, lost time cannot be recovered, and in this respect, it is more valuable than money. However, a lot of people forget this and waste their time dwelling on the past or dreaming of the future.

While they are doing this, they are disconnected from the present, unaware of the passage of time and even of the things that are happening around them. This experience can leave us tired, depressed or angry if we have been thinking about something that caused a lot of hurt or was otherwise emotionally intense.

We suffer the same loss of time and energy when we

worry or dream about the future. It is one thing to make plans, whereby we think of the steps we need to take to accomplish a task or cope with likely developments. But worrying, which usually involves thinking about how things might go wrong, does not help. Fear and doubt cause worry, and the result is anxiety and a feeling of helplessness, both created by imaginary situations we have dreamed up.

At the other end of the spectrum, we might fly high, riding dreams of imagined successes, until sobering reality brings us back to the present.

In all these cases precious time is lost in the present.

The past cannot be changed, and we cannot undo our misfortunes by repeatedly thinking about them. The best we can do is to identify any mistakes that were made and learn from them so that they are not repeated.

Similarly, planning is worthwhile only if the plans are acted upon. If I plan to have enough savings to buy a house, and work out all the details



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about how it will be painted, furnished and decorated, but never start saving money, then owning a house will remain a dream for me.

The present is the vantage point from where I can see the past and visualise the future. But my life will not move forward if I just stand there watching. I need to start acting while keeping in mind both, lessons from the past and my future goals.

There are several ways in which we can loosen the hold of the past on the mind. Whatever past event we focus on, we may need to express the feelings associated with the event, whether good or bad, before we can move on. Releasing pent up emotions can help us let go of the past and focus on the present. For this we can talk to a friend, family member or counsellor. Alternatively, we can try writing down our

feelings about the past.

Even if we are dwelling on good memories, it can cause us to lose connection with the present. We may be romanticizing the past or longing for things to be the way they were, instead of focusing on how to improve our present life.

If expressing our feelings about the past does not help, we can focus on happy things. Since we cannot change the past, and it is pointless to worry about the future, it is better not to dwell on them. Instead, we can think about happy things happening in the present.

Another useful approach is to forgive and forget. Blaming others for past hurts can spoil the present. Instead of dwelling on who has caused us pain, we need to forgive them, focus on present events and leave behind any blame or hurt we feel. Festering in the pain does not change the person who hurt us and it will cause us to stay in the past.

One of the most powerful tools for remaining focused on the positive and the present is meditation. Spending time in

quiet reflection and silence, away from the hustle and bustle of daily life, enables us to come back to a centred place of being. With the pace of modern life growing ever faster, we are losing touch with our true inner peace and power. When we no longer feel grounded, we can experience ourselves pushed and pulled in different directions.

Meditation is a state of being in that place just beyond everyday consciousness, which is where spiritual empowerment begins. Spiritual awareness gives us the power to choose good and positive thoughts over those that are negative and wasteful. We start to recognise harmful patterns of thinking and behaviour and begin to avoid them, and develop the ability to steer our mind and focus it where we want. All of this gradually frees us from bondage to the past and fear of what lies ahead, enabling us to make the best use of the present to create a happy future.

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## A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

There is something uniquely mesmerizing about the line that marks the meeting between sea and sky. The vastness of each entity stirs the spirit and awakens an awe for nature's majesty. I am reminded of the vast potential stored within me. Today let me greet my unlimited potential.

ZEAL AND ENTHUSIASM

## SPIRITUAL MOUNTAINEERING



JANE KAY

When we begin to answer the call for spiritual growth, we may search for a long time, looking for the path that resonates with us. Once we have found what we are looking for, the real journey begins.

It is like climbing a mountain. Not daunted in any way, but with delight, enthusiasm, excitement and courage. We often take along a lot more than we really need

for the journey. Backpacks filled with attachments, old memories and ideas, and too much equipment that we think we might need. We start at the gentle slopes of the mountain, exhilarated, but carrying too much from the past. However, the spring in our step sends us onwards.

As we move slowly upwards, we appreciate how little we really need, and many of the items in the backpack are happily discarded and we begin to move more freely and with confidence. There is even time to look around and notice the other mountaineers. One mistake at this point is to start comparing our ascent with that of others. Spiritual mountaineers are not climbing the



During a spiritual ascent, the most important thing is to never look back or look down.

same mountain. Each one is climbing their own mountain. Each mountain is part of an immense and

beautiful mountain range. Some mountains are higher than others, but to each mountaineer – the summit

is the summit. The beauty of that is that climbers on other mountains can look over to us and wave

encouragement, or signal something up ahead. This is because they have a different viewpoint, and if they have moved further upwards on their own mountain, they can see what lies ahead on ours. We can also do the same for others, but only I can climb my mountain. Climbing mountains is not for the fainthearted. As we get higher, the atmosphere changes, weather conditions are often unstable, and sometimes there are storms that may turn out to be too strong for us. If that should happen, and we hurt ourselves, then we need to rest, find some kind of shelter to deal with any injuries, and regain our strength. We cannot fall off the mountain – it is ours, but we may delay the rise to the summit. However,

once rested and with our goal in mind, we can set off again with even more zeal and enthusiasm, yet now with much more wisdom. The most important thing then is to never look back or look down. That part of the ascent is gone, so now, onwards and upwards! We will know when we are getting close to the summit. The air is so pure and the breeze so refreshing. The storms are way below, and the view is spectacular. There is still need for wisdom and caution because we are not there yet, but only close to the top of the mountain will we find a deep sustaining silence and power, which brings lightness and a kind of bliss. There is only one guide on this expedition. The ascent is spiritual, so the Guide

must also be spiritual. The Guide is full of love and understanding and all I need to do is keep Him in mind at each step. He is always with me, but He has no need to climb. If I consult Him daily and listen to his advice and most importantly, follow it, I will reach the summit safely. I will need to spend time in silence and contemplation during each day's climb to understand the advice and call upon Him at times of challenge. What a wonderful way to spend a lifetime: reaching the height of all I can be with the companionship of the One Divine Being. Once I reach those heights, I will feel like, and be, the king of my mountain.

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