

KARMIC TIES

RESPECT IS KEY TO GOOD GENDER RELATIONS



B.K. JAYANTI

The qualities of the human soul are expressed through actions and relationships. The soul itself has masculine and feminine qualities and according to the karmic situation occupies a male or female body. The spiritual understanding of the Brahma Kumaris is that the human being comprises a soul and a body, functioning together as a living being. The soul carries in itself the imprints of past actions and these tendencies lead to actions in the present and the future. The word karma means action, but within the experience of human life it also means the exchange of action in terms of giving and taking, of accounts to be settled and new accounts to

be opened (both positive and negative).

The relationship between two humans is governed by the qualities found in each soul and also the exchange of give and take through thoughts, words and actions. In particular, the key to good relations between genders is the quality of respect. Spirituality enables the individual to maintain the awareness of the eternal identity of the self as a child of God and to see others also as the same. In this awareness, there is inherent dignity and stability in a state of self-respect that allows the soul to be free. Without this, one always needs to be supported by receiving respect from the other and this creates a state of dependency and attachment which inevitably leads to pain. In the awareness of the eternal self, the freedom of self-respect allows the individual to give respect to others without dependency. In terms of the relationship between genders, spirituality allows each one to express the highest in the self and see the highest in the other so the relationship of respect, trust and pure love can develop.



When we see others as souls, there is inherent dignity and stability in the relationship.

PAIN IN RELATIONSHIPS

When the vision becomes a materialistic, physical vi-

sion, then instead of seeing a being of light, the soul, one simply sees the body and this, I believe, is the cause of the pain we experience

in terms of relationships between men and women. A reason for many frustrations and unfulfilled desires is that we have unrealistic

expectations of what a relationship is. Seeing each other as bodies means having feelings of lust, attachment, violence and jealousy,

which lead to anger and discontentment. When expectations are unrequited, we have the ingredients for causing pain to explode and

create great suffering.

A VISION OF THE FUTURE

As human beings develop spirituality to the highest state of divine being, the relationship between men and women will truly be filled with dignity, love, respect, honesty, truth and freedom and an ability to simply give and share. Every glance is filled with profound communication. Every movement is a dance and every word is like music. There will be the communication of total truth and in such a world of beauty, not only will men and women be in complete harmony but they will also be in harmony with animals and all of nature. The soul is clean and pure, and so the human body is filled with the fragrance of purity; the elements of nature are also pure and cooperate on all levels with human beings. All it takes is a change of vision.

B.K. Jayanti is Additional Administrative Head of the Brahma Kumaris.

SEAMLESS MUSINGS

SPIRITUAL PRACTICES BRING PURITY, PEACE



CHIRYA YVONNE RISELY

The world is a terrifying place right now. It seems that every day, something new pops up with the potential to increase our anxiety, rendering us more burnt out, powerless, tired or sad. The weight of this may be taking a toll on us and many others are feeling exactly the same. It is important to protect our mental health.

How we begin the day has great impact on how we spend the rest of the day. The first few minutes offer a chance

to sow the positive seeds of enthusiasm, freshness and happiness. Upon waking, we can become detached from everything, and focus on our eternal identity, that of being a peaceful soul. As a being of light, we can connect with the loving light of the Supreme source of peace, and experience and enjoy God's spiritual richness and power.

It is no secret that stress is one of the biggest health hazards we face in modern times. Stress can be greatly alleviated if we *create* routines that help us relax and decompress. In Costa Rica, they have a word for this daily practice, which is *"down shifting"*; whether it is taking a simple power nap, going for a relaxing stroll in nature, spending quality time with the people we love, or best of all, pausing several times during the day to check the quality of our thoughts and count



Life-affirming practices, such as meditation and yoga, strengthen the mind.

our blessings.

Play the game of transforming useless thoughts into powerful thoughts. When

we engage in positive life-affirming practices, such as meditation and yoga, and we instantly notice how strong

our minds become. Thoughts affect our entire energy field, creating either wellness or illness. Consuming negative

news and misinformation is like eating rubbish. Staying lightly informed and not going into details helps us to limit the number of thoughts we expend. Too many thoughts, thinking too fast and in the wrong way, makes us heavy. Everything is energy. Where thoughts go, energy flows. Even if the world situation is not improving, we can just keep the aim for ourselves to 'improve' each day and be better than we were before.

Leading a spiritual life makes the intellect full of inner cleanliness and simplicity. There is no waste; not of money, or of mental energy, or of time and thoughts. Experiencing God's power, we become peaceful inside, and when we are at peace, we contribute to the healing of the world.

Chirya Yvonne Risely is a Rajyoga meditation teacher, based at the Brahma Kumaris Peace Village Retreat Center, USA.

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

Two indicators of spiritual transformation are: worry reduces and one becomes more light-hearted and joyful. Also, a person begins to see more meaningful coincidences and moments of synchronicity in life. To what extent do I see these indicators in my spiritual growth? What other indicators do I see? Today let me notice the signs of my own transformation.

ACT MORE

Time management begins in the mind



B.K. DR. SAVITA

Time management is a valuable skill. Effectively planning how to divide one's time between different activities enables us to get things done more quickly. Failing to manage time, on the other hand, reduces our effectiveness and can cause stress.

All of us have the same 24 hours in a day, but some people achieve much more with their time than others. Spending the day in a frenzy of activity often achieves less, because we are divid-

ing our attention between too many tasks.

So how can we save time and also get more done in the available time? Is it possible to control the flow of time?

Managing time begins with managing our thoughts. The fewer thoughts we have, we will find that the more time we have to actually do things. We spend a lot of our time, often without realising it, in unnecessary and even harmful thinking. Dwelling on the past, worrying about the future, obsessing about something - all these can consume a lot of our time, leaving little for actual work.

To utilise our time most efficiently, we need to develop control over the mind, so that we think only what is required, at the right time, and no more. To be able to do this, the mind must be free of any kind of influence.

If I am prone to anger, I am likely to spend a lot of my time grumbling, criticising

or blaming others, mentally or verbally. And if I am attached to people or things, I will be thinking, maybe for hours, about them. Such thinking is unproductive, consumes our time and drains our energy.

Vices of any kind trigger negative and waste thoughts that directly or indirectly consume our time. While wasteful thinking may only lead to loss of time for the duration of the waste thoughts, negative thinking may have unwanted consequences, dealing with which will eat up more of our time.

If my life is full of problems, big or small, and a large part of my time is spent resolving them, it is the karmic fruit of seeds I have sown in the past. If I spend a lot of my time doing things that I dislike but which circumstances require me to do, I am responsible for it, because I have done something in the past

that has produced the present circumstances.

If my behaviour is not very nice, and as a consequence nobody wants to cooperate with me, I will end up spending a considerable amount of time on work that could have been done much more quickly with help from others.

In this way our thoughts, words, and actions have consequences we cannot immediately imagine. If I want to have time on my side, I need to ensure that I use my time in the most worthwhile way. If my thoughts are benevolent and creative, the results will be positive. I will find that things go my way, others respond positively to me, and my mind is not caught up in a jumble of thoughts about why people and things are the way they are.

B.K. Dr. Savita is a Rajyoga teacher at the Brahma Kumaris headquarters in Abu Road.

UPHOLD SERENITY

What is peace?



JUDY JOHNSON

Peace is a state of mind that is stable, harmonious, accepting and powerful. It is experienced by others as calmness or tranquillity.

Some think peace is impossible, that they are not wired for peace; that their minds are too busy to be peaceful. Some think peace means being weak or meek.

A truly peaceful person is undisturbed by external forces. It takes great strength to remain composed and unshaken when faced with controversy, conflict or injustice. The capacity to be truly peaceful is in each person and is the strongest innermost



When a person stays peaceful in a stressful environment, they can create a sense of calm that is helpful to others.

quality - a deep reservoir of stable, energy waiting to be illuminated.

Can peace create change? Through collective engagement and cooperation, peace can create sustainable change when it is sincere and intentional.

In a world of differences, people sometimes think change can only occur when forced or through violence. However, sustainable change cannot be created through force. Any change involving fear is not sustainable, because people will resist the change or push to change it back when pressure is removed. Change is most sustainable at a societal and

personal level when there is collective engagement and cooperation.

Peace is active, not passive. Change that is motivated by peace, overrides fear and force and is infused with the energy of cooperation.

How does my peace affect others?

When I focus my mind on peace, the silence is calming and contagious. Peace is contagious. Pause. Stop. Have a determined thought to remain peaceful and peace will grow and influence others.

When a person stays peaceful and does not react to the stress and bustle around them, they can create a sense of calm which is helpful to

others. This can rekindle the peace in someone else or create space for others to check themselves and notice the lack of peace within themselves.

How do I stay peaceful when I see sad or disturbing events in the world?

By acknowledging events with love and good energy we provide an antidote to difficult situations.

It is hard to witness the suffering of others. It can make us feel helpless and afraid. As a caring human being, I want to do something. I can always give good energy.

When I hear a siren or read a terrible headline, I can immediately send thoughts of power and peace to the people involved. With this action, I am reaching out with love, I am doing something by sending good vibrations. When I give love and peace, I also protect myself from absorbing the suffering and fear around me.

Judy Johnson coordinates the activities of the Brahma Kumaris in Atlantic Canada.