

## LOOK WITHIN

## FINDING PEACE



B.K. SHEILU

How do we feel when we think about a conflict we are having with someone? We remember all the things the other person has said, and the way we responded. We brood over their rude, selfish, or obnoxious nature, and how they have wronged us. We feel self-righteous, indignant, or plain angry about the whole thing.

What is the state of the mind, and the body at that time? The heart rate, blood pressure and respiration increase, the adrenal glands

release stress hormones, the body temperature rises, and the skin perspires. We are far removed from peace and relaxation, and are certainly not comfortable or happy in that state. It is not a natural condition for the human soul to be in, that is why we feel distressed and restless. Once this condition abates, there is a feeling of exhaustion, because considerable amounts of mental and physical energy have been expended.

It does not take a personal dispute to bring about such an experience. Political, economic, and social issues can similarly agitate us if we choose to identify with any of the parties involved, and are no longer detached observers who can see the whole picture and think dispassionately about it. This is why people in one part of the world get into a fight over something happening in another corner of the globe.

Who creates such ex-



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periences? Is it the other person/s, who we may blame? Who decided to think about the matter, and who created the thoughts that we had? It is our mind, so we are responsible for what goes on inside it. If I think that something or someone

is irritating, I will feel irritated, because I am creating the mental stimulus for that feeling. Similarly, if I think that something is nice, I will feel that way about it. As the quality of our thoughts, so is our state of mind, and state of being.

If we want to experience peace, we have to create the conditions for peace within our mind. If I often fight mental battles with my neighbour, the local politician, or the dictator repressing his countrymen in some corner of the world, is it a

surprise that I complain of lacking peace?

Just as we need to switch on the lights to be in the light, or turn on the heater to feel warm, we have to create peace in order to experience it. Creating does not mean fabricating something that

does not exist - It is about choosing what to think. It is like having a buffet meal: I can set my mouth on fire with a hot, spicy curry, or savour a cold dessert. The experience will depend entirely on what I choose to eat.

The first step to finding peace is to recognise the fact that it is a quality intrinsic to me, the soul. Peace is not something I have to fetch from outside. It exists within me - I just need to turn my attention inwards and tap into the reservoir of peace inside. I might not find much peace in the beginning if I have been in the habit of filling the mind with other kinds of things. But with patience, and persistence, as I gently remind myself of the peace within me, I will discover more and more of it. I have to choose to see and think of the things that help me remain peaceful. By doing so I can increase my stock of peace, which will not only help me

remain peaceful, but also enable me to share peace with others. Cultivating patience, benevolence, and a sense of humour, all help me see situations and other people in a peaceful way, without any agitation.

The biggest source of peace is the Ocean of Peace, the Supreme Soul - the father of all souls. Remembering Him, with love and genuine acceptance of our spiritual relationship with Him, fills the soul with peace as nothing else can. The love-filled silence and stillness in God's company relaxes, heals, and energises the soul. Feelings of agitation, hurt, and fear gradually subside. Regular practice of such remembrance fills us with so much peace that we are able to go through all of life's vicissitudes peacefully.

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## CONTROLLING THOUGHTS

## WE ARE HUMAN BEINGS, NOT HUMAN DOINGS



CHIRYA RISELEY

We live in the age of 'busy'. Busy people not only do a lot, they also think a lot. Being lost in thought, thinking constantly about things that have to be done, or could have been done, judging what others did wrong, judging the self for what could have been, is not only tiring but also a brilliant way to waste energy.

Our mind, our 'inner factory', creates around 40,000-50,000 thoughts a day. Our

life is a long assembly line of thoughts, patterns of thinking that have the potential to become reality through what we may say or do. As owners of this inner factory, we need to ensure every thought is useful. Just as a farmer checks the quality of seeds before sowing them, we need to first check the seeds of our thoughts before they come into sound and action. In other words, we need to take ownership of our thought factory. It is through the quality of our thoughts that we attain success, and high-quality and positive thoughts lead to a character of integrity, and it is this that brings fulfillment, not the skills and talents we may have acquired along the way, though of course those are useful tools.

Our every thought impacts our emotions; thoughts about our health affect ev-



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ery cell of our body; whatever thoughts we have about our relationships, reach the

person we are thinking about; and the environment is affected by our thought

vibrations that radiate out to nature. We can observe our thoughts for a minute every

hour and classify them into four categories: Positive thoughts -

thoughts of peace, love, happiness, and acceptance.

Negative thoughts - are of ego, hurt, anger, hatred, or jealousy. Anger is a condition in which the tongue works faster than the mind, and it represses our love and tolerance.

Necessary thoughts - relate to daily activities. Thoughts of those things that need to be attended to but without the emotions of worry, irritation, fear, or anxiety.

Waste thoughts - about the past, future or other people subtly reflected in the eyes and smile. Good wishes and pure feelings for others are like ointments that heal wounds, re-establish friendships and relationships, and create peace and prosperity.

ates tomorrow.

To start to 'be' and not just 'do', we need to learn how to slow down the mind and charge the battery of the soul. When we practise meditation, we learn to inculcate new ways of thinking in our subconscious mind. When we study spiritual knowledge, we are able to create pure thoughts. A 'human being' first creates positive, pure thoughts and feelings within the mind that are transmitted through attitude and subtly reflected in the eyes and smile. Good wishes and pure feelings for others are like ointments that heal wounds, re-establish friendships and relationships, and create peace and prosperity.

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## RELATIONSHIPS

## SIMPLE WAYS TO LIVE IN HARMONY



AASHISH PATEL

Although a spiritual journey is one of inner solitude, the influence that relationships have on

that journey cannot be underestimated. Relationships show us how far along we are on our path.

It is in relationships that our biggest challenges come. We can see them as obstacles, or we can see them as real opportunities to look deeply within and see what we need to change. It is only in relationships that we become aware of many habit patterns that need to be transformed. One of the main habits that many have, is that of becoming angry. In the world today, there are so many triggers for anger as everyone's life is under some form of stress or strain, with tensions and misunderstandings, confusion and miscommunication. Meditation helps us to see what hidden anger we are holding



Silent listening in detachment, with love, is the key to harmony.

on to. We may be able to disguise it by being superficially sweet and considerate, but the attitude we hold in our mind, the criticism that is unspoken, the irritation we try to divert, is deeply felt by others, no matter what words we use to the contrary.

Relationships are based on an energetic exchange of thoughts and feelings, and it is when we begin to take responsibility for the energy we are vibrating through our attitude, that our relationships are transformed. There are three main ways that anger is triggered.

1. When someone behaves in a way that does not align with my values.
2. When I hold a negative belief or judgement about someone because I remember their past.
3. When I over-focus on someone's weakness.

All of the above causes pain to ourselves and others. If we can hold a pure intention of never wanting to hurt anyone else on our spiritual journey, we can water this seed of pure intention in three simple ways.

1. Express our appreciation of a specific quality and sin-

cerely point that out. When we do this, we begin to see the value in another and have a more balanced perspective than when we only see their weaknesses.

2. Take very great care not to gossip. When we are finding a relationship difficult, we have the urge to tell someone how badly the other behaved, often sharing our judgement of them. This does a great deal of damage and reinforces our thoughts about the person, and we carry an even heavier burden towards the next meeting with them, as our irrita-

tion amplifies to hostility. If we must gossip, gossip of specialities and qualities.

3. Strengthen our daily routine to develop the power to accommodate and tolerate what we need to in our relationships. Be in silence in the early morning, cultivate powerful, elevated, spiritual thoughts and feelings, and spend some time after that studying spiritual knowledge. It is after meditation that we can absorb understanding and these powers.

The next most important aspect is to take responsibility for the way we feel. It is

never about the other person, it is always, without exception, about us. There are five levels of response to the triggers that we may face in our relationships.

1. I do not know what I feel - I just react with no control, and cause pain.

2. I do know what I feel but choose to respond with violent words, actions, or thoughts.

3. I do know what I feel but choose to walk away, because I do not wish to cause harm and I am aware of the consequences.

4. I know what I feel and choose to respond with an observation and honest, non-violent expression of my feelings, without evaluation or judgement.

5. I choose to respond with stability, calm and love. This is the highest response, and in that, I am free of influence and can even influence others and the environment for the good.

The ability to respond in the last way is born in silence, in detached observation filled with loving feelings. Silent listening in detachment, with love, is the key to harmony.

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## A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

Anger burns relationships. When awakened, old habits of irritation, impatience and anger burn me inside. With moments of reflection and meditation I can learn to calm this old habit. By using acceptance, love, and the coolness of peace, I can regain perspective. Then with firm determination I can move beyond anger. Today let me be cool.