

WISDOM

BEING AN EMBODIMENT OF KNOWLEDGE



GEOFF MARLOW

"Just to listen to knowledge does not mean to know it. To know it means to accept it and to move along according to it."

On our spiritual journey, the biggest challenge we have is that we have a superficial understanding of what it is to know something. We can understand information but that does not necessarily mean we have acquired wisdom.

There are four levels of 'knowing':

The first is the mode of 'thinking', that is 'knowing

that'. For example, Paris is the capital of France. In other words, we build a belief on knowing information. In the west, this level of thinking is so dominant that once knowledge is acquired at this level, then we feel it is 'job done', we now know. But when that knowledge or information is of a spiritual nature, that is not 'job done' – it is not knowing at the level of 'walking the talk'.

The second level is the mode of 'doing', that is, knowing through doing, 'knowing how'. E.g., to catch a ball, to cook, to drive a car. In other words, acquiring skills.

The third is the mode of 'seeing', that is, 'knowing the situation'. E.g., to travel by plane, to eat too much, to be criticised. In other words, the realm of experience.

The fourth is the mode of 'being', that is knowing *the self*. In other words, knowing who I really am. Coming



It is through deeply experiencing the awareness of being a soul that our inner world will change.

into full awareness of being a spiritual being.

For spiritual progress/understanding, we may believe we are souls, because we have been given that information, and we may know

how to behave as if we were the soul and not the body, we may even experience this from time to time, but the journey is to arrive at the full awareness of being the living, conscient, light, energy driving the body.

True knowledge is completely filled with love. It is this level of awareness that brings deep transformation and change.

'Smrti', that is our awareness, is like the foot of the in-

tellect. It is where we stand in our experience of reality. The state of mind is based on recollections of the past. My state of being is fundamentally anchored in the memories I have of myself through time. That is where our attention is connected. So, this depends on who we 'think' we are in the world. 'Smrti' is the anchor. Our awareness affects the 'vritti', our attitude or instincts, our disposition. So, our awareness affects the attitude we have as to how we face the world, and those around us. This in turn affects our 'drshiti' – our vision, or how we look at the world and others. We do not see things as they are but as we are. Depending on how we see what is around us, what follows is 'krti', our actions, the work we do, the deeds we perform. All of this is dependent on our 'smrti', our fundamental awareness and the result of that is 'sr-

shti' the world, our nature, our own particular universe, within and manifest without.

When we change, the world changes. It is through deeply experiencing the awareness of being a soul, a spiritual being, occupying a physical body and through which we find expression, that not only our own inner world will change, but also the whole of the world will change. We cultivate this by paying attention to what is going on inside the self. Sorrow comes directly from the wrong awareness – that of being only a body, a role, the false awareness of who I am. Happiness comes from introversion. If we *always* look within, we will *always* be happy.

Geoff Marlow is an organisational consultant and Rajyoga practitioner based in Cambridge, UK.

PERSPECTIVE

CHANGE YOUR VISION, CHANGE YOUR WORLD



JIM RYAN

"With our thoughts we create our world" - Buddha

Can we be sure that we are seeing things as they really are? When we look at anything, or anyone, we tend to see them through the veil of all we have experienced until that moment. All that we have been taught as children, all that we have learnt to accept as 'reality' or truth. It is a complex network of cultural, parental, and personal experiences that give us a set of programmed responses to what we see. So, perhaps it is more that we are not seeing things as they are, but seeing things as I am.

Are we able to refocus our vision, our perceptions and create a new system of response? Can we reorient our thinking and change our emotional attitude, and there-



When the doors of perception are wide open, we see things as they are.

fore change the way we respond?

William Blake, the English poet and painter, said:

"If the doors of perception were cleansed, everything would appear to man as it is, infinite. For man has closed himself up till he sees things through chinks of his

enclosed cavern."

We are seeing as if through dirty or dusty spectacles and therefore have only partial (in)-sight. We need to be able to step back, weigh the issues, reflect on the circumstances, see the bigger picture – the continuum in which people

and events are flowing. We need to stop reacting to a snapshot moment.

Easy to say, but life is moving fast, and we need to make instant responses sometimes. There is a process whereby all these complex facets can be pulled together. It is by

connecting to our soul centre of spiritual awareness and strength. It is this centre of awareness that has become obscured, and it is this that needs cleansing.

Meditation is the cleanser. It reanimates and restores spiritual vision. When we visual-

ise the self as light, a point of light in the centre of the forehead, we can connect with that light and draw it into the self and release it to flow throughout the whole body. When we do that repeatedly in meditation, we unblock all the debris that we have accumulated as the light flows through us. As we internally verbalise this, we converse with our subconscious and re-educate our awareness. Meditation brings out all the hidden and obscured natural virtues of compassion, good wishes, acceptance, forgiveness, and mercy. We begin to work with solutions and see the specialities of others, who too are spiritual beings. All things become clearer and more beautiful; our relationships, the people we meet, situations we find ourselves in, and cooperation based on this vision, become easy and fruitful.

When we change our vision, we change our world.

"The real voyage of discovery lies not in seeking new landscapes but in seeing with new eyes." – Marcel Proust

Jim Ryan has a background in education. He is an author and a Brahma Kumaris Rajyoga teacher, based at the Global Retreat Centre, Oxford, UK.

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

An umbrella protects me from getting wet in the rain. It does not stop the rain from falling. In the same way, my karma protects me. I will get back what I have given. If I have taken care of others, if I have done my best, I will get the return. It does not mean that rain will not fall and that it may even touch my head, but it does mean that I will feel protected. Protection comes in the form of inner power, tolerance, determination, and support from others. Today let me protect myself by creating an umbrella of good karma.

MIND THE MIND

HEALTHY MIND FOR A HEALTHY BODY



B.K. GEETA

Health is defined as a state of physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

Our times are not conducive to healthy living. Air and water, the lifelines of our existence, are polluted by toxic emissions, fertilizers, and insecticides. Whatever nutritional value is left in food is further reduced by adulteration, processing,

and refrigeration.

How has all this come to pass? As our wants and our greed increased, consumerism boomed, and natural resources bore the brunt. It is not difficult to understand how mental pollution is the root cause of environmental pollution. Vices, such as ego, greed, anger, and lust, pollute the mind. On the other hand, virtues such as humility, mercy, compassion, and purity cleanse the mind. When we know the cause of a problem, we can find the remedy. The only way to remain healthy in an unhealthy environment is to keep the mind healthy.

Ordinarily we are concerned about our physical health. We choose organic, fresh, and nutritious food and watch our calorie intake. Health-conscious individuals engage in daily physical



We can aim to achieve holistic health by focusing not merely on the body, but also the mind.

activity and exercise and try to maintain the best hygiene.

However, it is most essential to have a sound mind in a sound body. Each thought created in the mind affects us. It has been found that more than 85 per cent of all

diseases are psychosomatic – they are caused by stress and worry, rather than by a physical problem such as an infection. High blood pressure, depression, insomnia, diabetes, and heart disease have their roots in the mind.

What exactly is the mind? It is the thinking faculty of the soul. Thought is the energy of the mind. It is this energy which potentially leads to action through the body.

Do we spend the same amount of time and energy

taking care of our mind as we do for our body? Do we give our mind the nutrition of positive thoughts? Are we careful about keeping our mind clean and clear?

The health of the mind can be ascertained by the volume of our thoughts. The more thoughts we create, the weaker they will be, and the fewer their number, the greater their power.

Primarily there are four types of thoughts – necessary thoughts, waste thoughts, negative thoughts, and positive thoughts. Necessary or mundane thoughts are neutral and factual. They are mostly concerned with everyday, routine tasks. Waste thoughts arise from unnecessary thinking, such as worrying, living in the past, or dreaming about the future. They end up wasting our time and energy. Posi-

tive thoughts are generated when we are inspired by the qualities of our true, spiritual identity – love, bliss, power, purity and strength. Positive thoughts are slow in speed and make the mind calm and stable. Negative thoughts result from being unaware of our spiritual self and are based on our physical sense of the self. Thinking of the self and others solely in physical terms can lead to comparisons, jealousy, dislike, attachment, and worse. The ultimate result is loss of peace, and suffering.

Our body is a chemical laboratory that produces hormones and other substances based on the quality of our thoughts. For example, when we are angry, the blood pressure rises and the pulse rate increases.

The mind affects not only our physical health but also

our emotional and social health. Moodiness, pessimism, optimism, enthusiasm, happy relationships – all depend on our state of mind.

If we are keen on living a truly healthy life, we can aim to achieve holistic health by focusing not merely on the body, but also the mind, which is a part of the soul, the sentient spiritual energy that makes the body function by giving it directions through thoughts generated in the mind.

The best way to keep the mind healthy is to keep it busy in worthwhile activity, give it adequate rest and a daily diet of positive and elevated thoughts, and exercise it in meditation.

B.K. Geeta is a Rajyoga teacher at the Brahma Kumaris headquarters in Abu Road, Rajasthan.