

## MOVING ON



B.K. ATAM PRAKASH

Forgiveness and reconciliation, whether in personal life, relationships, or on a larger scale in politics and conflicts, are important for healing, moving forward, and fostering understanding.

But when and how can we forgive? To be able to forgive someone, we need to first understand their concerns. That calls for empathy. If we

function with the conviction that we are right and the other person is wrong and it is they who need to change, then forgiveness will not be possible.

The golden rule of ethics says, do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Everyone likes to have the best for themselves, and when we make our own self the benchmark for how we treat others, we learn to empathise and respect other people. Putting ourselves in their shoes and trying to see things from their perspective helps us develop some appreciation of the other person's point of view.

However, a critical attitude often comes in the way. We are quick to notice other people's faults and slow to acknowledge their good quali-



Empathy and a little humility help us understand other people's concerns and reconcile with them.

ties. This vitiates our feelings towards them, blocking real understanding and forgiveness. If there are even subtle negative feelings, they act as an invisible barrier that pre-

vents reconciliation. We may smile and say all the right things to the other person, but our vibrations will reveal our true feelings. There is little honesty, trust, or goodwill

in such a relationship, and forgiveness or reconciliation would be impossible.

In addition to empathy, adopting a little humility and reflecting on our own

emotions, biases, and motivations helps us understand our role in the conflict and acknowledge any mistakes or misunderstandings on our part. This kind of self-

awareness is crucial for approaching reconciliation with an open mind.

The most powerful tool for reconciliation is Rajyoga meditation. The first step of Rajyoga is recognition of the fact that we are souls, children of God. It brings us the realisation that all of humanity is one spiritual family. When we start living with the awareness of being a soul, the soul's innate qualities of peace, love, purity, and truth begin to inform our thoughts and behaviour. Then seeing others also as souls helps us connect with them on the basis of these virtues, which are common to all souls. The most important step is to remember God, our Father. This creates a loving mental link through which we can draw

His powers and virtues into ourselves. As the soul fills up with purity, peace, and love, it is healed. Feelings of inadequacy, hurt, sorrow from painful memories, are all dissolved by the sense of self-worth, security, confidence, and the consequent joy created by God's unconditional love.

When the soul becomes whole and fulfilled in this manner, forgiveness and reconciliation come naturally to it, without any intellectual effort or emotional pressure. It recognises the wisdom of leaving the painful past behind and living a new life of peace and happiness.

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## FULFILMENT

## THE SECRET ART OF NOT WANTING



ARUNA LADVA

*"Everything that I want, is right here inside of me."*

If everything I want is right here inside of me, then why are we always looking for something more? We spend time wanting one thing or another, one person or another, one achievement or another, when in fact everything 'out there' will never complete us or fulfil us. We think that our happiness lies in acquiring the physical, when in fact it is the soul within the body, expressing itself through the body, that is wanting fulfilment. The body does need physical sustenance, food and water,

clothing and shelter, and it is right to acquire those things. To ascertain whether what I 'want' is more than a need, we have to ask ourselves the right questions ... what do I want from:

1. People: am I looking for respect, love, kindness, money? When we are in relationship with people, we need to be aware of the spiritual law, that no-one can ever complete us, make us full... only God can do this, because God, the Supreme Soul, is the treasure store and powerhouse and is ever full.

2. Things: what things and why do we 'want' them? The thing that gives me happiness will also become a means to give me sorrow, at some point.

3. Food: food is very important; we need food, but am I taking more than I need from the planet? If I take more than I need then there will not be enough for someone else. This causes a karmic ripple. So, we must be mindful, not too fussy,



When I want something, I am no longer in peace.

not to attached to certain foods – tomorrow they may not be available.

If I can be free from want, I can be the master of myself. Desires, or wants, bring restlessness, and all the emotions connected to the 'vices' of the soul... anger, greed, lust, attachment and ego. When I want something, I am no longer in

peace. When I try to make things happen and push for things to go my way and only my way, it never turns out well. We can go with the flow, in harmony with the flow of the drama unfolding around us. We can try not to control so many things in our lives and watch what comes our way. Going with the flow is like being in the

river of life, but we should be sailing, not rowing. Meditation can help with gaining this freedom from constant want. There are extra ways of helping ourselves too.

1. Pay attention to what is going on around us. Be in tune, and whatever we notice as negative, we can change it to positive by keeping an optimistic awareness. This powerful attitude of positivity accumulates, and just like a snowball as it gathers speed downhill, it grows. If I want only goodness and am deeply contented with and appreciate what I have, then only goodness will accumulate.

2. Take life slowly. When we want something, our patience disappears. A gardener has patience with seeds, with plants, knowing they grow at their own, right time. We can do the same with circumstances and people. Whatever is due to me will come to me. All I need to do is to keep planting seeds of goodness.

3. Be aware that everything happens for a reason: When something we think should happen is not happening then this, in itself, is telling me something. Maybe what I want is not the right thing for me, or not the right thing for me right now.

When feeling the restlessness of wanting: sit with it, analyse a little, not too much, and do not pay the restlessness too much attention. Give attention to what I do have, feel the gratitude of having all I need. Keep life simple and use the energy to explore what is inside, the inner world. In meditation, immerse the self in God's divine qualities and virtues and absorb all the spiritual power possible.

When I spend time in this way, I will feel so fulfilled that there will be no more 'wanting' and all that I need, and more, will become available for me.

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## A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

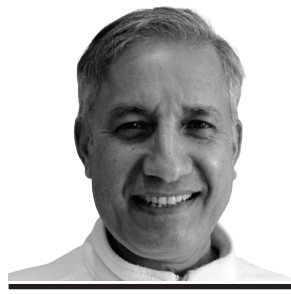
When I am a guest I am usually on holiday, away from my regular routines and responsibilities.

On holiday, I have a lot of energy as I am not drained by the feeling of responsibility or burden. Even mundane activities, like making meals become more fun as a guest.

When I adopt the attitude of being a guest in my life, I begin to enjoy the extra energy that comes from being "on holiday". Today let me experiment with the consciousness of being a guest.

## LOOK WITHIN

## How to heal fractured relationships



PARMJIT BASRA

If we look closely at the relationships we have formed, we will see that in one way or another there is a subtle need or desire that we hope to fulfil through that relationship. Even if we look at the basic relationships we have with our possessions – our car, or mobile phone for example, we will see that we have acquired them to fulfil some perceived need or enhance our image.

When it comes to relationships with others, the basis of them is similar. Relationships are formed on one or two things. One is on appreciation and the other is on expectations. In fact, at the start of a relationship with someone, or something, there is appreciation. Each one accepts the other without any

conditions attached, with no judgement, no criticism. However, as time passes, we begin to impose conditions on the relationship, because we begin to have expectations. These expectations arise because no matter how appreciative we may be of someone or something, they cannot always fulfil our every need, because they themselves have needs. So, from time to time they are not available for us. They also begin to impose conditions because we are not fulfilling their needs. The stronger the conditions are the more dissatisfaction there is. This relationship then feels more like a bondage. This brings a great deal of unhappiness, and we begin to blame the other, criticise, and struggle to see any good in the other. We forget all the wonderful qualities we appreciated in the beginning of the relationship and only see the weaknesses and defects. So what choices are open to us?

We can do one of three things. We can continue in this state of feeling trapped and unhappy, or we can make compromises, and



To heal relationships, we need to start to give and stop taking.

find a middle ground to resolve the situation, or we can walk away.

If we walk away, initially there is a feeling of freedom

because the pain has stopped. We feel happy for a while in this new sense of freedom and look forward to the possibility of something differ-

ent. However, this does not last for long, because we are still empty inside and will look again for a relationship to fill that emptiness. If we

begin a new relationship, we will initially feel appreciation, but we will repeat the same model of behaviour, begin to impose conditions,

begin to see the flaws – because the other is also empty and looking for fulfilment from us, and so the outcome is inevitable.

So, if we wish to heal relationships, the way forward is simple – we need to start to give and stop taking. To do this, I must first look at myself. It is not the other making me unhappy, angry, upset, disappointed or empty. It is I who have forgotten my own value and self-worth, and I need to begin to appreciate all that I am. I need to treat myself with great respect and be fearless and have the courage to really see what I am, without passing judgement. To let go of everything that I have done or said, and focus on the real me, the spiritual me, the soul that is overflowing with virtues, power, attainments, and wisdom. I need to find a way to access that.

The relationship with the self is based on appreciation. There is no need to compare or compete with others, and I can go beyond insult, negative comments, and criticism, because it is not about how others see me, it is about how I see myself. Opening

our inner eye with honesty, we can see the flaws and weaknesses, but we need to concentrate and focus on the strengths and virtues. Otherwise, I will begin imposing conditions, this time on myself, and therefore the relationship with the self will turn sour.

When I begin to accept myself as I am, I can cope with the changes that need to take place. I can take the opportunity to change the way I think, what I do and say, and empower the self, because I can only give what I have inside. If I have love and respect for the self, I will have love and respect for others. Let me just keep giving and stop taking. Appreciate all that I am, all that I have, and all that I am becoming. Each morning, sit and appreciate all this in a quiet time before the day begins, in silent contemplation, and reconnect with the wonder of the self. To heal relationships, first heal the self.

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