

SPIRITUAL PATH

Calm mind, clean heart help us face any challenge



B.K. JUDY RODGERS

In an 'age of surprises', how can we be 'ever-ready'—poised, even—to meet whatever comes with equanimity?

Much depends on spiritual readiness. With this beautiful quality as the foundation of my life, I can trust myself to respond appropriately with good wishes and pure feelings no matter what happens. Far from being fragile and reactive, I know I will bring my best qualities forward as well as all the powers I need.

For this to happen, my mind should be at peace and aligned with my inner self, and my heart should be clean.

It is easy to form the habit of following the mind rather than mastering it, allowing it to be hooked by external events, work or other commitments, the lives of others, or my mobile phone. I may dwell on the past and feel regret, or speculate about the future and worry. Or perhaps the physical body and the ageing process pull my attention.

As a result, my mind fluctuates. I am reactive, distracted, and restless, lacking discernment and the capacity to make wise choices.

But supposing I unhook the mind from the world and slow my thoughts down. If I sit in peace and silence, and turn within, I can focus on one quality at a time—perhaps gratitude or peace—training the mind to reflect deeply on it and gradually



ally come into alignment with it.

With time and practice I undo habits of thought, even those that are deeply ingrained. And the more I meditate, the more likely I will be to create new ways of thinking as I wake up and take possession of a mind that had gone astray.

Developing spiritual readiness also means unburdening my heart.

Life experiences give rise to feelings, some positive and others

negative. Deeply rooted suffering may originate in childhood, and carries the seemingly indelible mark of both the feelings I experienced and the conclusions I drew at the time. When repeated, such experiences create thought patterns that affect my personality, relationships and how I meet the world.

To be 'ever-ready', I need to identify and clean out negative feelings and the related thought patterns, such

as anger, fear and sadness, and replace them with their opposites.

I do this during meditation, through a gentle, gradual process of identifying what is troubling me, one issue at a time, and inviting it to leave. I should be sure to let it go, perhaps by envisioning it tied to a helium balloon that I release into the air, and to replace it with a positive feeling such as love, trust or happiness. I must also be careful not to pull the old thought

pattern back into my heart, out of habit.

A peaceful mind and a clean heart are the cornerstones of spiritual readiness, giving me strength and stability to respond appropriately to whatever challenges this 'age of surprises' may bring.

Judy Rodgers lives in Peace Village, the Brahma Kumaris retreat centre in New York, and serves on a number of global initiatives for the Brahma Kumaris.

DISCOURSE

PURE VIBRATIONS SUBTLY SERVE THE WORLD



DADI JANKI

Your pure vibrations are a subtle form of service. Love, peace, joy, wisdom—these are pure vibrations. They are carried out into the world through your thoughts and actions wherever these are filled with the Divine.

So, make your every moment pure. Understand the difference between

the ordinary and the Divine. Then put the Divine alone into practice.

Remember that you are a master of both—your mind and body. Then give them your commands and keep them in order. As you learn how to tell your mind what to do, old ways of thinking and doing will change.

As the master of your body and mind, you will see things not as they appear, but as they truly are. You react less, respond more. Your very presence becomes an invitation to truth. Your vibrations reach out, bringing coolness and peace—words would not be even half as effective.

The help is extended through your state of mind and everyone is benefited, not just those around you, but all your brothers and sisters, the whole world over.

SOUL POWER

BENEVOLENCE BRINGS THE POWER OF TOLERANCE



GOPI PATEL

Tolerance is the ability to remain unaffected when things do not go our way. It is the ability to accept differences and stay open and accepting. It is the ability to be able to approach an enemy with feelings of mercy and good wishes in our heart, devoid of blame or accusations. It is the ability to resolve any inner conflict with correct understanding—in short, the ability to stay loving, no matter what.

If we think we are using the power of tolerance because we are putting up with someone's personality traits, we are mistaken. That is not tolerance. They

have already affected our attitude and state of mind. Tolerance is an act of love and acceptance, not of 'putting up with' someone or something.

There is a very beautiful symbol of tolerance in our world. It is that of the mother. What will a mother not tolerate for her child? This power, of the mother, to tolerate, is born from a deep inner space of love. A mother does not think of her own needs, she will do whatever she can to keep the child safe, protected and well. The more you are filled with love, the more the power of tolerance is at your disposal.

There are three qualities which help to keep this kind of love, or rather, the ability to be loving, alive: Being benevolent, patient and content. If the first thoughts of the morning as we waken are of love and good wishes for the world and not of worry and anxiety, then this sets the direction of our day, and



gives us a greater chance of having tolerance for whatever comes along in the day to come.

To have benevolent feelings is like the petrol for the power of tolerance. With a state of mind and attitude of bringing benefit and having

good wishes we can learn how to make big things small. To know if a decision is a right one or not, we need only check, will this decision bring benefit? If there is benefit, then it will be possible to use the power of tolerance. Things that are not beneficial

are to be let go of.

Patience is required when using the power of tolerance. Speed is not always a good thing. If we lose the power to slow down, we lose objectivity. We need to remain content and deeply understand the world of differences. See

further than the outward cover of a person. Each one is a world unto themselves. Find ways to accept others as they are and take an interest in their story, then we can appreciate the uniqueness of each one and the value of the role they play. It is important to use what comes into our lives as teachers. They have come to teach us the power of tolerance and the power to face.

The power of tolerance can be kept alive each day with good wishes and loving feelings.

Then we can become like an immense and mighty tree; no matter what is directed at it, stones of anger or hatred and ignorance, the tree just keeps showering fruit and blessings and offering shade to all.

Gopi Patel is a spiritual educator and senior Rajyogi meditator with the Brahma Kumaris, specialising in spiritual pragmatism in all areas of life.

GOOD LIFE

Boundless generosity is a mark of greatness



B.K. ATAM PRAKASH

When we work on ourselves to become a better person, it is very fulfilling to achieve a fair measure of success. However, that brings some people to a halt, as the sense of fulfilment turns into self-satisfaction.

Others, with higher goals, strive for continuous self-improvement. That is commendable in itself, but in order to bring truly remarkable results, such effort needs to be accompanied by generosity, and not remain a self-centred pursuit of superiority.

Do we just want to be better than others, or do we wish to be of service to the community and the wider world? I may be a great scholar, but if I disdain to speak to others, my knowledge will be of no use to anyone.

Generosity of spirit brings with it a sense of responsibility and concern for helping others—offering guidance, giving courage and hope, or simply inspiring people by the example of our life.

One who has this awareness will use all their resources—including time, talents, and wealth—unselfishly. This brings them abundant goodwill and the blessings of others.

Buoyed by the energy of the blessings, such individuals serve tirelessly. They don't just serve according to a given timetable, but are



ever-ready to assist those in need.

No matter what defects others may have: perhaps they are stubborn, they have

little intelligence or wisdom, or they are always criticising others, generous souls would be loving and tactful with such persons.

But it so happens that instead of mercy we begin to have doubts about others, so much so that we condemn them, thinking, "This one

can never change! They will always remain like this!" Such thoughts finish all charitable feelings. Secondly, we develop arro-

gance: "I am more educated. This one does not know much. I can do everything better than them." This kind of arrogance stops us from being merciful.

We may believe that we are asserting our value by thinking in this way, but we are actually limiting the radius of our service, and our worthiness, by refusing to be benevolent to all.

Boundless generosity is a mark of greatness. Those who have this quality do not look at the faults of others—they are forgiving and magnanimous. Even when they see defects in someone, their kindly feelings do not change. Instead, they remind the other person of their virtues and, in doing so, give them the courage to improve. It is because of this quality that such souls are revered.

Due to their benevolence

and lack of arrogance, such souls are able to uplift others and change their life.

A doctor treats his patients and makes them well again; he does not rebuke them for their illness and leave them to their fate. Similarly, great souls have good wishes for all. Even when they need to correct someone, they first point out to the other person their specialities, and then draw their attention to their weakness in such a way that the other recognises what they need to do to remove the flaw.

Those who can relate to others with such sensitivity and understanding can serve anywhere, and they are valued wherever they go.

B.K. Atam Prakash is a senior Rajyoga teacher at the Brahma Kumaris headquarters in Mount Abu, Rajasthan.