

LIFE MANTRA

To earn respect, one must start giving it



B.K. ASHA

Giving others respect is an easy way to grow spiritually. It is the law of karma that you reap what you sow. Those who respect others become worthy of receiving respect from everyone.

God respects each and every one of His children; He knows everything about them, but He chooses to see their virtues. Because of His unconditional love and respect for the children, He is worshipped. This is something we can learn from, and check if we respect others in similar manner.

How much regard

do we have for the Supreme, for ourselves, and for others, whoever they are?

Having regard for the Supreme means knowing Him and living by the highest principles, so that our life reflects the virtues that He embodies. Our own ideas and the opinions of others should not come in the way. Do we think and behave in a manner that inspires others? Do we do so all the time, or according to our whims or circumstances?

If we aspire to lofty goals but are unwilling, or afraid, to take the high road, what will we achieve? If we have questions such as, "How can this be possible...", "it is the truth, but...", it means we have forgotten where the truth is coming from. It is one thing to ask questions for clarification, and quite another to ask out of doubt.

To have regard for the self is to maintain a high level of self-respect, with



an awareness of one's virtues. We all have shortcomings, but when we pay attention to our good qualities and work on developing them, the defects are eventually removed.

When we have regard for the self, we keep an elevated consciousness while interacting with others. "I am weak! I lack courage! I would like to be much better, but I cannot do it. Maybe

I am destined to be like this. Let me be happy with the way I am." Feeling hopeless in this manner is to disrespect yourself.

Having respect for others means to have goodwill for them. Do we wish to uplift others, help them become better persons, and have good feelings for everyone? We can have regard for others when we look at their virtues and speci-

alities, instead of noting their defects. To give regard means to cooperate with others on the basis of pure feelings.

Do we accept people as they are and help them overcome their weaknesses, instead of gossiping about them? When we see someone's flaws, do we make a mountain out of a molehill or do the opposite? Do we give them the courage, strength, and

enthusiasm to become better, or are we influenced by them and lose our way?

Giving respect brings us respect multiplied several times over. Along with the respect come love, cooperation, and blessings, which make our own progress quick and easy.

B.K. Asha is the director of the Brahma Kumaris' Om Shanti Retreat Centre in Gurugram, Haryana.

DISCOURSE

FOCUS ON YOUR ROLE IN THE DRAMA OF LIFE



DADI JANKI

Every passing moment is like a passing act in a play. Each of us are the actors playing our parts very well. An actor is never focused on an-

other's part, continually criticising it. He just gets on with his own part, playing it as best he can.

This drama of life is eternal, predestined and accurate. Whatever anybody else says and does is their role, not mine. My task is to play my part right.

Right thoughts restore rightness to the whole play. Practise detaching yourself from your role and experiencing the truth behind the role, and you will find yourself loving every instant of your role and the drama too.

And the question, 'why has this happened?' will be answered.



MIND MATTERS

USE YOUR POWER OF THOUGHTS



B.K. SURYA

When we look back over the past century, we find that humans have achieved tremendous economic and scientific progress, but our inner powers have declined over the same period of time. That is evident from how easily people become upset, worried, or angry nowadays. These are symptoms of a weak mind.

Just as a cellphone battery retains its charge according to how the phone is used, the way we think determines how strong, or weak, our mind becomes. If we think unnecessarily, we waste mental energy, and negative thoughts deplete the mind even faster.

For success and happiness in life, it is essential to create positive and powerful thoughts, which strengthen and stabilise the mind. An even more effective way to engage the mind is the practice of



meditation. Connecting mentally with the Divine is like plugging your mind into a power station — it fills the mind with His powers.

What are problems? They are the creation of weak minds. Just as weak and negative thoughts distort our perception and we begin to see situations as problems, powerful thoughts do the oppo-

site: they change our point of view in such a way that the problems cease to exist.

How do our thoughts change our life?

Each thought we create carries some energy with it. Positive thoughts carry positive energy and negative thoughts have negative energy. When we think, this

energy radiates from us to the atmosphere.

The energy, which spreads in the form of vibrations, influences matter all around us and subtly shapes the world according to how we think. Have you ever noticed the difference between the vibes inside a temple and those in a hotel? That is the result of the kind of thoughts and feelings people have in those two places.

Instead of brooding over matters that trouble us, if we think confidently, with full conviction, of living the kind of life we want, that reality will start taking shape. This is not wishful thinking. Countless people have experimented with purposeful, positive and powerful thoughts and achieved remarkable results. They have cured themselves of decades-old ailments, many have come out of poverty, or got the job they wanted, while others have mended long-broken relationships.

All it takes is conscious effort to think in the right way. We all have the power of thoughts with us. It is up to us to use it.

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

SPIRITUAL PATH

PRINCIPLES GUIDE US TO RIGHT ACTIONS



B.K. USHA

Two key aspects of our life are our principles and our actions. If we lose sight of our principles when we act, our efforts may not yield the desired results.

Our actions reflect our principles. In a spiritual life, the first principle is that I am a soul, a sentient being of light, and the body is a costume, wearing which I play my role in the world. If we keep this awareness, we will be clear about what we should do.

Our awareness, based on the principles we hold dear, determines the quality of our actions. If we believe that we are beings of peace, happiness and bliss, our actions will reflect these qualities. On the other hand, if



we consider ourselves to be ordinary folks, we will neither aim high nor strive to be better, and it will show in our behaviour.

On the spiritual path, there are three stages of awareness: one is to know one's true identity, the second is to accept that, and the third is to live according to that.

We can check which stage we are in, and to what degree. If we think that we live by our principles, how often do we do that — sometimes, most of the time, or always?

Greatness comes from doing something great. We may

have lofty ideas and speak impressive words, but if our actions do not match what we say, we will be judged accordingly. The key is to remember our principles when we act.

When principles and actions are in alignment, the actions become noteworthy. If we let go of one of them, it is like trying to play on a swing with one rope broken. What will be the result? We will fall.

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

SOUL POWER

A CLEAN INTELLECT ALLOWS ACCURATE DISCERNMENT



GOPI PATEL

One of the most frequent questions I am asked is, "How do I know if I am making the right decisions in life?" I do not believe there is any such thing as a 'right' decision. To make a decision I need to be right inside; clean and clear, and this requires having access to my conscience. By doing so I develop the extremely important power to discern or discriminate between truth and falsehood,

right and wrong, that which is benevolent and that which is not.

The trained eye of the jeweller can spot an imitation jewel from one that is authentic. In the same way, I can develop the ability to detect the virtue and truth in a situation, or within a person, and know instinctively what is needed; what word should be said, what action taken, without projecting my own desires and wants onto the moment. It requires being able to read signals.

Signals are in front of us all the time in life. We only need to attend to the signals of the moment. Just as if I drive a car from one city to another, the signs of how to get there are not given to me all at the same time, as I leave my front



door. No, I am shown the way every few kilometres, and so am able to navigate my way in peace and clarity.

To cultivate this power of discernment, I need to find time to contemplate, meditate, to clean the mind and intellect of waste thoughts. Then, I need to acquire knowledge, of human laws and spiritual laws. For example, if I deeply understand the

and we completely lose focus. They cloud the intellect and mind, and I cannot recognise myself anymore.

I need to learn to be able to put a full stop to these inconsequential thinking patterns. The sign of having too many waste thoughts is a loss of balance. We become irritated, angry, frustrated and lose the ability to retain a neutral, balanced perspective — we become emotional.

Daily meditation creates an elevated vibration within and keeps the intellect clean. We can start the day with moments of silent meditation. Before we start something, we can have some moments of silence that give us perspective and clarity. When we finish the task, we can take a few more moments to clean

away any debris of thoughts and feelings, and thereby avoid carrying baggage from that activity to the next.

There is a well-known and beautiful analogy of the swan and its divinity. A swan picks the pearls from the pebbles, the jewels from the stones. Let me recognise the virtue in everything and everyone. When situations become complicated and difficult, let me ask what virtue is this situation or this person asking of me? When I recognise that, I will be 'right' inside and will be able to trust the decisions I make.

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

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

You can't make old friends. Old friends grow with you. They watch you make mistakes and celebrate your successes. They mature alongside you. Old friends are companions on life's journey. They are cultivated, nourished and grown. Today let me recognize the special gift of old friends.