

SOUL'S ETERNAL

Lightness of disposition is a gift for all



B.K. BRIJMOHAN

Lightness is not to be taken lightly. It is an invaluable quality in many respects. A light and cheerful disposition saves a person from many troubles, both real and imaginary. The latter usually afflict the nervous types.

Someone with a cheery nature looks at the bright side of situations and people's character, taking untoward incidents in their stride. For example, if someone accidentally bumps against them, they brush it aside with a smile, whereas a grumpy fellow might erupt, showering epithets such as 'blind' and 'foolish' on the other person.

A happy turn of mind

is also an antidote to fear. In most cases fear is the result of pessimistic thoughts. Gripped by fear, we are paralysed and unable to act decisively, our judgment becomes skewed, and persistent fear holds us back from progressing in life.

Fear vanishes when we change the quality and direction of our thinking. Those with a sunny temperament look at the positive aspect of things and tend to be optimistic, so they are rarely frightened. Ever noticed how young children play with small creatures that make many adults jump out of their skin?

Lightness enables us to face difficulties easily, and when we remain light, those around us respond likewise. Someone who broke a leg joked that only the leg was broken, the soul was still intact.

A little wit and sense of humour helps to easily tide us over the troubles of life. No one likes to fall ill and end up in a hospi-



tal; the very thought of it unnerves many people. But some see it as an opportunity to relax — after all you just have to rest while others attend to your needs, and for a change people will ask after you, they say! Having such an attitude eases anxiety and creates hope.

Our physical health also improves. A happy temperament triggers healthy changes in the body, strengthening the immune system, relaxing muscles, and reduc-

ing stress hormones. Remaining happy stimulates the release of endorphins, the body's natural feel-good chemicals which promote a sense of well-being. Those with a strong sense of humour have been found to live longer. It is not without reason that laughter is called the best medicine.

One of the biggest benefits of being jovial is that it makes our relationships easy. If we dwell on people's shortcomings, our feelings towards

them sour, leading to unpleasant relations and loss of mutual respect. A light nature, on the other hand, helps us laugh off others' faults and bad behaviour. A quarrel between a couple ended in mirth when the wife called one of her in-laws a "crocodile", to which the husband dryly replied, "Saltwater or freshwater?"

Everyone has some good qualities, and if we choose to focus on them, our relations remain healthy, and we can

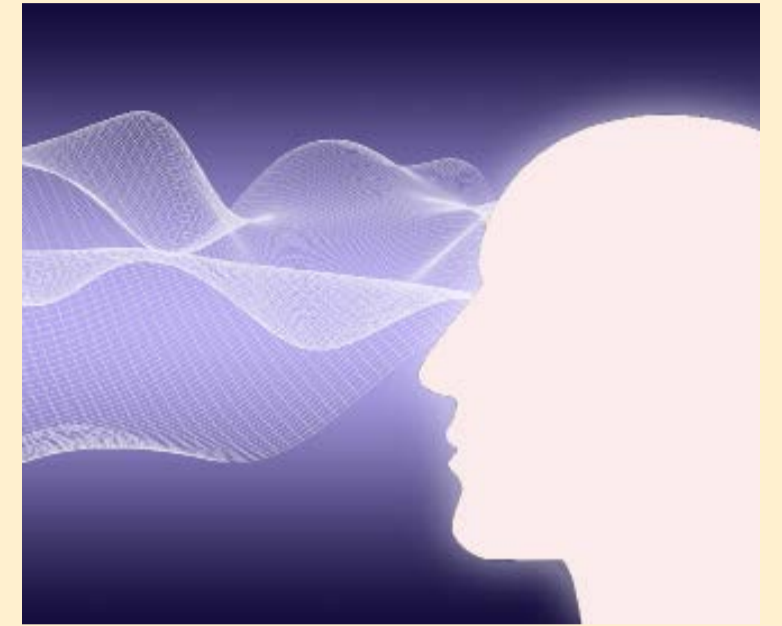
work with them comfortably. Looking at the funny side puts problems into perspective and enables us to move on from confrontations without bitterness or resentment. For example, many workers fear, or are annoyed by an angry boss, but others find his short temper amusing. Their varying perspectives make a huge difference to their relationship with the boss.

Ultimately, lightness makes the soul strong. Happiness is the best nourishment for the soul. One with a merry heart has a continual feast, says the Bible. That is because the quality of our thinking determines our state of mind, and a cheery character naturally produces light thoughts which keep us in good spirits. The aura of lightness around such a person spreads joy wherever they go, earning them blessings effortlessly.

B.K. Brijmohan is Additional Secretary General of the Brahma Kumaris.

DISCOURSE

KEEP THE INTELLECT CLEAN AND FULL



The intellect is the vessel which holds the knowledge of God. It is different from the mind. A clean intellect is like the mind's filter, sorting out thoughts of value from those of

waste, enabling me to put into action only that which is of value. So much energy is saved in this way, enabling me to do more, better and in less time.

In India, in the olden days, each household kept a special vessel for water. The first thing done, in the early morning hours of every day, was to empty the vessel and put in fresh water. As the spiritual child of God, the least I can do, is clean the vessel of my intellect in the early morning hours of every day and fill it with spiritual truths. Only when my intellect is clean and full will I then have something of value to offer others.

COURSE CORRECTION

HEALING MOTHER NATURE, PEACEFULLY



GAYATRI NARAINAINE

One of the areas of our world which is causing anger, confusion, and argument, is not a war zone or an area of physical conflict, but has its roots in the searing question, what on earth can we do about the way that climate change is affecting Mother Nature, our physical world, the only home we all share?

People are getting angry not because they can see things getting worse, affecting their lifestyle, their health and sustainable development, but because everyone can see the obvious needs of the situation, all the facts are out there,

and yet the ones who are in a position, and have the power, to do something about it, are consistently making excuses for not doing what they know they have to do. This makes the situation very complex.

What can be done? Do we keep talking, advocating, lobbying, hoping that someone will eventually listen — even if we die in the process? Or do we just pull back and simply accept the inevitability of the destruction of all that we currently have and experience?

The paradox is that many involved in the climate change arena are now moving towards more spiritual ways of dealing with the issue. They are moving towards having peace in the mind, through prayer, contemplation and meditation — re-establishing the fundamental relationship that the human soul has with the environment.

If I have peace in my mind, I can find and resonate with the peace in matter and re-



establish respect for and harmony with Mother Nature. Closeness to the earth does not just happen. We have to live by peaceful principles, spend time in the outdoors, respect the rhythms of the

natural world, our world, and leave aside the artificial. We have to look for and connect with those who are working from the inner domain. We are talking about the environment, which is an entity in its

own right, and is working and changing according to its own nature, despite what human beings do or do not do. There is a saying which states that if the religion of the self is non-violent, then there will

be peace.

The Brahma Kumaris have been experimenting with yogic agriculture in the Gujarat region of India. The farmers spend time in deep meditation in the fields before fertilising the earth only with organic matter, and the results, tracked scientifically by universities, have found the yield of fruit and vegetables to be greater in quantity and quality.

If mother earth has a heart, it has been broken into many pieces, as that of human beings. We need to put the pieces of the heart back together peacefully, piece by piece. This will then give rise to intrinsic pure feelings of the heart, which will give us the will to do what we have to do. Then we will know exactly what we have to do and do it now.

Gayatri Naraine represents the Brahma Kumaris at the United Nations in New York.

SEEKING ANSWERS

ANALYSING THE POWER OF TRUTH



DR PRASHANT KAKODAY

Vivekananda famously said, 'Dare seek truth, even through hell'. Yet it is certainly an extraordinary challenge for anyone to grapple with the subject of truth, and so it will come as no surprise that this has been a popular exploration among philosophers and prophets.

For the purpose of this discussion, we can apply a

simple principle of nature to start the process. The principle is, 'when one is in a wrong posture, the individual experiences pain. When the posture is corrected, the pain subsides'. When we live a life in falsehood, pain will follow, but when we live a life in truth, there would be no pain and no sorrow of any kind. This can be a simple guiding principle that we can use for our exploration.

Truth is essential for peace and happiness. The central message of truth is that we are souls. We are indestructible, incorporeal beings — nothing at all can ever harm us. In this awareness, we can see the entire physical existence as a movie; the soul is watching the movie. The story of the movie can-



not harm the soul, not even slightly. This awareness creates the experience of silent bliss and connects the soul to the richness of the heart

— the experience of silent contentment and fullness. In our ordinary awareness, the soul is not conscious, and, in that inner

darkness, ego rules our lives. Unfortunately, the ego has an inherent mentality of a 'victim' and a 'beggar'. When the ego looks at life,

the 'victim' will be looking for dangers, and the beggar will be looking for 'coins'. All human misery has its roots in this ego perspective. This shows us clearly that the right posture, or truth, is soul consciousness and the wrong posture is ego consciousness.

We, of course, expect spirituality to be based on truth. Yet, even after knowing the truth, we inadvertently get tripped up in our efforts to change our lives and follow that path of truth. The truth remains as if in a locker of the intellect. It remains 'known' but it is not used. Why would someone keep something so precious locked away and not use it to its full advantage?

When we begin our spiritual efforts, the soul is not

conscious. Therefore, it can only be the ego that makes spiritual effort. If the soul was conscious, no effort would be required. It is this effort-making ego that prevents us from living the truth. The ego knows that if we live our lives in truth, and become soul conscious, it will die. In this world, no one wants to die, so also ego. The ego has no problem making great plans for spiritual efforts. It will discuss, read, write books, go on pilgrimages, but has no intention of living the truth. The ego will not take that final step. The ego, in essence, is determined to sabotage our sincere efforts because, for the ego, it is a question of life or death.

We only get results when we take that final step and

actually come into soul consciousness. If we go by the process of ego-driven analysis, it will probably never happen. So, the clever step for us is to 'just do it'; just move into the truth and see from the perspective of the invisible traveller, now! This spiritual journey is a journey of one second.

In soul consciousness our attitude and vision have a great deal of power. The silent language of the conscious soul reaches other souls. This is the power of truth and it is the answer, to freedom from all pain and sorrow, for the self and for the world.

Dr Prashant Kakoday coordinates the Centre for Integral Health and the activities of the Brahma Kumaris Inner Space, in Cambridge, UK.