



How many figures are there in this painting?

Age Gracefully

There is nothing more inevitable than the graying of hair and the crinkling of skin. Resisting it is like trying to hold back the tide of the ocean. Accepting it is the way into a graceful life and the possibility of true Leisure! Our lives are mostly without leisure as we succumb to the marketing men and their determination to convince us that the tide can be beaten back, at the very least, kept at bay. As a consequence we count the grays and measure the length and depth of the wrinkles. We spend our time and attention on the surface of our forms, and create the habits of anxiety and worry as they inevitably deteriorate. But when we truly know ourselves as spirit within the form, all those subtle tensions are dissolved. We never age, never grow old, and never die - only our bodies do. Knowing ourselves as we truly are, is the doorway to freedom and to the graceful acceptance that we are destined to inhabit and play many roles in many bodies. Is that not both a liberating and a relaxing insight? If you play with it, explore it for truth, meditate on it, seriously give it 'house room' in your head, you may actually experience yourself as a free spirit. And when you do you will know true relaxation.

relax7

Balance

To be balanced means not to be caught up with extremities. When there is balance, there is the ability to get the best of every situation and move forward with stability. Situations provide a means of learning and growth. So, the one who is balanced is safe from negativity. When I have balance, I enrich myself even with extreme negative situations. I experience constant progress and am also able to provide an environment for others' growth. This earns me the blessings and good wishes from all. I thus find myself moving with lightness.

Role Induced Stress - Part 1

A very common form of stress which has raised its head in recent years is stress induced due to one's role. There was once a famous movie actor, well known as one of the best of all time and he was obviously very much aware of the same. One day as he was shooting for his new film; his director, a very prominent figure in the film-making arena, mentioned to him that there was a general perception spreading in the film industry as well as in the film going audiences that the actor was getting older with time and his performance was dropping and he needed to spruce up his performances if he had to compete with the younger actors. As soon as he heard this, he started taking his acting role and everything related to it over seriously and lost his happiness completely because he had been used to listening only to praises regarding his performances and reputation all his life. He also forgot all that the world had given him all his life, all the love, respect and adulation and became angry, bitter and resentful towards everyone he met, believing that they were no longer held those feelings for him as much as before. Also a general sense of fear and nervousness started developed inside him regarding his next performance.

One piece of information had changed him altogether. What had gripped him - **Role Induced Stress**. His emotion of stress was made of three sub emotions - sorrow, anger and fear (or worry). What was the cause - he over identified with his role. He believed he was an extremely famous hero actor. But was hero actor what he was? It's what he did. But he learned to believe it is what he is. **Even we need to remind ourself that we get to play various roles on the world stage of action and that if we over-identify with any of the roles, which a lot of us do, then just like the actor, our creativity, spontaneity and lightness is reduced and we start to take things far too seriously, more than necessary, and as a result get stressed.**

(To be continued tomorrow ...)

Soul Sustenance

Filling Myself and Others with Invisible Treasures (Part 2)

In yesterday's message, we had explained how soul consciousness provides us access to the ocean of the qualities of peace, love and joy that lie hidden inside our consciousness. An important point worth noting in this regard is that along with quenching my thirst, **I must also have a big heart, and pass on to others the qualities that I am receiving from my inner ocean.** Otherwise, over a period of time my spirituality reaches a standstill and although I am making an effort to fill myself I do not feel as content and fulfilled as before. This is because; the vessel with which I fill from the ocean can't be refilled unless I am also prepared to keep emptying it. That doesn't mean I have to drain myself spiritually.

It is just that each time I give or donate a quality from my inner ocean with a positive intention to someone; it flows from inside me and then gets transmitted to the other. Before the person experiences and benefits from the quality, I experience getting filled with it myself. Also, each time the person benefits from or even remembers the benefit in the future, he or she sends me positive energy, which, according to the Law of Karma fills me with the quality that I had donated, further. Sometimes a person might benefit or remember the benefit after 10-15 years or even more than that. Even after such a long time has elapsed, I keep receiving a return from the pure donation I have made, and keep getting filled, even if I am not specifically or consciously aware of the same.

Message for the day

To look closely at one's own behaviour is to bring about a positive change.

Expression: While it is easy to talk about what other people should do to change themselves and their behaviour, it is also important to see what one can do to bring about a change in oneself. When there is the ability to look in this way, effort is put in continuously to change old unwanted patterns of behaviour and replace with more desirable ones.

Experience: When I am able to take a closer look at myself, I am able to see which trait in my personality is getting in the way of my progress. This knowledge helps me accept myself with my shortcomings and yet have the courage to bring about a change easily. So I have the satisfaction of working on myself.