

Purity

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Point of View
Love dissolves hate. Kindness melts cruelty. Compassion calms passion. Cooperation evokes love, and when we bow, others bend.

Monthly Journal of the Brahma Kumaris Hqs. Mount Abu, Rajasthan, India

International Day of Yoga 2017



RED FORT DELHI

LONDON

LUCKNOW

LEBANON

TORONTO, CANADA

MONGOLIA



New York : At International Day of Yoga celebrations at UN are BK Sabita, BK Shashank, Ms. Deinise Scotto, Chair of the International Day of Yoga Committee to the UN, BK Julia, BK Madhavi and Guru Dileep Kumar, President of World Yoga Community.



Moscow, Russia : At International Day of Yoga celebrations are Mr. Sidhartha Shashini, First Secretary and Ms. Shashwati Dey, Second Secretary from the Embassy of India, BK Sister Sudha, Director, Brahma Kumaris Rajyoga Centre and BK Vijay.

Photo Gallery

BK Kim Wainer performing Yogasanas on International Day of Yoga in Sydney, Australia.



New Delhi : Lighting lamps to inaugurate International Day of Yoga Celebrations at Siri Fort Auditorium are Mr Vijay Goel, Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports, Yoga Guru Dr. H.R.Nagendra, President, Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana, Mr Derk Segaar, Director, UNIC-India & Bhutan, BK Brijmohan, Addl. Secretary General, Brahma Kumaris, Dr Lalit Kumar, Chairman (CEPTAM), DRDO, BK Chakaradhari, Chairperson, Women's Wing and Mr. Anshumann Sharma, Dy. Secretary, Ministry of AYUSH.



Fukuyama, Japan : BK Lalita conducting Rajyoga for 100 participants to celebrate International Day of Yoga.



Shantivan, Abu : (Pic. top) Yoga Training for 4000 participants of Children Personality Development Camp at Brahma Kumaris Hqs. (Pic. above & left) Yoga training for the Children and Staff of Govt. Primary School, Abu Road by Brahma Kumaris Radio Madhuban 90.4 FM.



Bali, Indonesia : At International Day of Yoga Celebrations are HE R.O. Sunil Babu, Consul General of India, Mr. Makrand Sukla, Director of JNICC, HE Gerhard L. Nutz, Consul General of Switzerland, HE Hirohisa Chiba, Consul General of Japan, BK Sister Janaki and others.

Living *Clean* in a Dirty World

Cleanliness is next to godliness, is a saying that underscores the importance of making our surroundings and ourselves clean. Cleanliness is also a prerequisite for healthy living. Health and prosperity cannot dwell in a dirty environment.

Human activities have resulted in so much pollution, ecological imbalance, dirt and disease that today it is difficult for most people on earth to have easy access to clean air, clean water and clean food. Cleanliness is the absence of not just rubbish and dirt, but also harmful chemicals and pollutants that are hazardous to the health of humans as well as flora and fauna.

Due to the growing effects of global warming and ecological imbalance, many governments, voluntary organizations and communities have been trying to clean the earth. Numerous projects have been launched and treaties made to ensure that the situation does not deteriorate further, and the damage that has been done is remedied to some extent.

While many cleanliness drives have been launched in India and other countries, the fact remains that our world is becoming dirtier by the day.

Cleanliness or dirtiness is not just about the environment or physical hygiene and health, it is relevant to all aspects of human existence. We hear people say, "He should come clean on this matter", or, "He is clean", or, "He is a dirty fellow". In all the above comments, cleanliness and dirt point to a virtue such as honesty, transparency, or integrity, or a vice such as deceitfulness, lust, dishonesty or immorality, respectively.

Being clean inside makes one trustworthy and respected by all. A clean mind and heart are signs of a pure soul. A person with a clean heart is dear to all. God dwells in a clean heart, that is, such a person is endowed with virtues and wisdom that goes beyond intellectual calibre or acquired worldly knowledge. A clean heart is able to reflect divinity. Such a person becomes a mirror for others to see their own goodness.

In this sense, cleanliness stands for a virtuous, pure and noble character. In fact, it is difficult to find in today's world persons who have a spotlessly clean nature and a lifestyle that upholds physical, social and environmental cleanliness.

On the other hand, an unclean person is someone who has a heart and mind that are filled with negative feelings and vicious tendencies. Lust, anger, greed, ego, jealousy, fear and attachment are vices that create negative feelings and dirty our mind and heart.



President's House, New Delhi: Hon'ble Pranab Mukherjee, President of India, with Rajyogini Dadi Janki, Chief of Brahma Kumaris, BK Asha Didi, Director, Om Shanti Retreat Centre, Gurugram, BK Brij Mohan, Editor, 'Purity' and BK Hansa.



Godly wisdom gifts us with a divine intellect that helps us discern and decide righteously.

These vices pollute our thoughts and feelings and fill our heart with hatred, jealousy and fear.

A mind that has been polluted by vices is deluded, and such a person is not able to think, discern and judge clearly because of the dirt of vices. His actions will reflect negativity and result in

suffering and misery for the self and others. Vices originate from body consciousness. We are souls playing our roles through human bodies. When we identify ourselves with our body, we get attached to a limited sense of 'I' and 'mine'. We develop ego, selfishness and divisive attitudes towards the world. The vices cover the soul with dirt. The actions and habits of a soul that is polluted by vices will be unclean and unhealthy, and will create some kind of imbalance or suffering.

How can one live in a clean way in this world full of dirt? The Supreme Soul, or God, is now giving us the wisdom to rid ourselves and the world of all vices and filth, and to create a fresh, new world where there will be no pollution or dirt of any kind. Godly wisdom directs us to think, speak and act virtuously, and helps us perform clean karma. Meditation, or loveful remembrance of God, helps clean all the sins and

vices accumulated within the soul. Yoga, the connection of the soul with God, is the most powerful cleanser for removing the dirt accumulated over many lifetimes.

When we become spiritually aware, we are mindful of making healthy and clean choices that support cleanliness at the physical, social, environmental and other levels. A spiritually empowered soul is free from all impressions that come from an egocentric, body conscious perspective. Being clean is to carry no prejudices, bias, past impressions and blocks. Godly wisdom gifts us a divine intellect or the third eye of wisdom that helps us discern and decide righteously. Like a swan, we are able to choose that which is beneficial and good even in a negative situation; while living in a vicious, polluted world. Seeing good in everything and having pure feelings for everyone is the best way to keep our hearts clean. A yogi lives like a lotus – in mud yet not soiled by it – detached from all dirt.★ (Purity Features)

In Lighter Vein

- We must remember the past in order to forget it.
- Doctors enjoy poor health.
- If you just sit still, you never have to go out to meet trouble because it will come to you.
- If we learn from our mistakes, then I am getting a fantastic education.
- If you love yourself, at least you will have no rivals.
- Some people can't tell the truth without lying.
- When everything else fails, read the instructions.
- No one is ever too busy to talk about how busy he is.
- The income tax authorities have now produced a new, simple tax form with only two sections:
(a) How much do you earn? (b) Send it.

Pearls of Wisdom

- The ignorant promptly believe what they imagine.
- God brings men into deep waters not to drown them, but to cleanse them.
- Many things are opened by mistake, but none more often than the mouth.
- Every violation of truth is a stab on the health of human society.
- Purity means being honest to your higher self.
- Calmness creates air conditioning in a hot situation.

Rajyoga for Overcoming Depression and Suicidal Tendencies

Rajyoga meditation is now recognized as a powerful and easy-to-use tool for personal empowerment. This simple method of communion with the Supreme enriches the self with inner powers, whereby one regains control over one's thoughts, feelings, words and actions.

Such empowerment not only helps individuals deal effectively with challenging situations and overcome stress, depression and negative ways of thinking, it also alleviates personality disorders and other such conditions that lead to depression and, in extreme cases, suicide.

Globally, more than 300 million people of all ages suffer from depression (WHO Fact Sheet updated in February 2017). According to the World Health Organisation, an estimated 900,000 people die every year by committing suicide. This represents one death every 40 seconds.

As human life has become increasingly complicated, the causes of death, and suicide, have multiplied. Many individuals end their life when they find it too much to cope with the pressures of the modern world. A soured relationship, academic failure, indebtedness, hopelessness, shame or guilt over something one has done, and even bullying over the Internet can push individuals over the edge. And access to drugs, toxic substances, weapons and high-rise buildings now makes it easier to take one's life, what with many websites providing guidance on easy ways to kill oneself.

The US Department of Health and Human Services estimates that at least 90 per cent of all people who commit suicide suffer from one or more mental disorders such as depression, personality disorders, schizophrenia, or alcoholism. Depression, in particular, is believed to play a large role in suicide. The distorted thinking caused by depression makes it difficult for suicidal persons to think of a solution to their suffering, and thus they seek suicide as a way to end their misery.

Depression is now known to activate the genetic factors and vulnerabilities that make certain people more prone to suicidal behaviour.

This jet age can be defined as breakfast in London, lunch in New York, dinner in San Francisco, and baggage in Buenos Aires.



Globally, more than 300 million people of all ages suffer from depression (WHO Fact Sheet updated in February 2017).

Genetic tests on depressed persons who tried to kill themselves have revealed that a gene variant is more common in depressed persons who had attempted suicide than in those who had not, suggesting that it marks out a group of people who are particularly vulnerable, especially if they become depressed.

"People with depression account for most suicides, but most people with depression never make a suicide attempt. There is a vulnerability for suicidal behaviour in some individuals and it is uncovered by the development of depression," say neuroscientists.

This is where Rajyoga comes in. Rajyoga enables one to disconnect from damaging habitual patterns of thought, feeling and reaction, and instead use the positive qualities latent in the soul. This improves the quality of one's attitude, actions and interactions in future situations, including during times of stress.

As a person practising meditation fills up with inner peace and power, their experience of happiness becomes less dependent on external circumstances. As a result, adverse experiences don't affect them as before. They become creative rather than automated in their thinking, respond rather than react, and deal with situations with peace, love and harmony

rather than stress, conflict and chaos. These positive changes can gradually remove depression and the influence of inherited negative traits, including suicidal tendencies.

Hundreds of thousands of people across the world have benefited from Rajyoga, which the Brahma Kumaris have been teaching for the past 80 years. The institution now has about 4,500 branches in more than 130 countries.

The efficacy of Rajyoga in overcoming depression and suicidal tendencies has drawn many people to the Brahma Kumaris. Parents, guardians and families have sent their loved ones who had suicidal thoughts to the Brahma Kumaris, requesting help in getting them out of their lethal state of mind. Some doctors also refer such individuals to the Brahma Kumaris. The individual may, in case of acute depression or suicidal behaviour, require medical treatment, which can take place alongside practice of Rajyoga and a meditative lifestyle.

The majority of such persons have been able to change their suicidal frame of mind for good. This is in no small measure due to the love, care, support and alternative way of looking at life situations that such people learn in the Brahma Kumaris community.

Most people find comfort and support in the Brahma Kumaris centres, where people from all backgrounds gather for spiritual study, meditation and service

activities. The loving acceptance without regard to race, religion, gender or class makes people feel at home in the centres.

This makes a world of difference to those thinking of taking their own life. They find an empathetic, listening ear and know that others care for them. Getting the opportunity to express their feelings provides them relief from loneliness and pent-up negative emotions.

While such support offers immediate relief to a suicidal person, he or she has to make a personal commitment to recovery. Here, Rajyoga plays an important role. It helps a suicidal person develop tolerance, courage, patience and a positive outlook, all of which add up to inner strength. This spiritual empowerment gradually changes their frame of mind and makes them look forward to life instead of seeking an exit from their existence.

The Brahma Kumaris believe that traits such as lack of confidence can be effectively neutralized by creating new, positive traits. Negative traits are the result of wrong deeds done in the past, and can be erased by performing good deeds.

The Brahma Kumaris are working to achieve greater success in prevention of depression and suicide through the twin tools of Rajyoga and spiritual service. Better application of the spiritual knowledge and practices taught by the institution can help prevent more suicides.*

(Purity Bureau)



Sydney, Australia: BK Maureen Chen, BK Ami Trivedi and BK Charles Hogg during a workshop on 'Raja Yoga: Inner Power & Inner Peace' organised at the Indian Culture Centre by the Indian Consulate and Brahma Kumaris.

Decoding the Gita

Not a violent war

The Bhagavad Gita, in essence, teaches that the human soul must conquer vices in order to attain perfection. It depicts the battle against one's inner enemies through the metaphor of a war between the Pandavas and Kauravas. Because of this, many people believe that God, shown in the Gita in the person of Shri Krishna, exhorted Arjuna to slay the Kauravas, and therefore it is right to employ violence for a just cause.

This misinterpretation of the Gita's message is not just a matter of academic interest: it has had grave social repercussions by providing religious, or even divine sanction, to the use of violence. It has led people to believe that any means can be used to achieve what they think is right. The consequences of this are visible in our society.



The Gita is perhaps the most exalted of the Hindu holy texts, and its teachings influence the minds of millions of devout people in this

country. This makes it imperative to clarify and establish the fact that the Gita does not approve of violence.

Violence goes against the



Violence goes against the very nature of the human soul, whose original qualities are purity, peace and love.

very nature of the human soul, whose original qualities are purity, peace and love. Violence robs the soul of peace and also takes away its happiness, contentment and strength.

A key teaching of the Gita is that non-violence is the highest duty of a human being.★

(Purity Bureau)

Time of God's Descent

In perhaps the most famous passage in the Bhagavad Gita, God as represented by Shri Krishna is quoted as saying that He descends on Earth when unrighteousness reaches extreme proportions.

God says that he comes to redeem all souls, destroy evil and re-establish a righteous order. But when in the history of this world does God perform this task? The passage in the Gita contains the words 'sambhavami yuge yuge', which has led people to believe that God's descent take place in each of the four yugas or Ages in the cycle of time, is that the case?

After some reflection it becomes clear that this is not possible. The cycle of time begins with the Golden Age, when both human souls and the elements of nature are in their purest state. Humans at that time have divine virtues and are free of all vices - qualities for which they are worshipped as deities today. They are blessed with health, wealth and happiness and know no sorrow. Evil does not exist in that Age. Souls



It is only at the end of Iron Age that God of Gita descends to bring about world transformation.

live in this blissful state through the Golden and Silver ages, even though they lose some of their shine over time. It is obvious that a no need for God to intervene in the happy state of affairs.

Humans call out to God in times of sorrow and when things deteriorate beyond human tolerance. God, the redeemer, rejuvenator and redeemer of sorrow then comes to

restore peace and happiness in this world, God's descent, thus, is meant to remove human suffering and rejuvenate the world.

In the Golden and Silver Ages all souls are happy and no one calls for God's help. If God were to come at the end of both these Ages then peace, prosperity and joy should continue and there should be no suffering. But pain and sorrow begin in the Copper Age, when humans lose the awareness that they are souls and begin to identify themselves with their bodies, which gives rise to vices such as lust, anger, greed and ego. As humans come increasingly under the influence of vices, their suffering increases. As the Copper Age gives way to the Iron Age, this process of degradation gathers pace - which would not have happened had God come to salvage humanity at the end of the Copper Age.

Finally, seeing that His children are unable to get out of the grip of vices and suffering, God comes to this world to remind them of their true, spiritual identity and their innate virtues. He also tells them

about their relationship with Him and how they can regain their original, pure state by remembering Him. By this remembrances, souls fill themselves with power and virtues, gradually overcoming the influence of vices. Souls that make the effort to get cleaned in this way and also a divine status become worthy of taking birth in the Golden Age that dawns after the Iron Age. All other souls are also liberated from sorrow in this process of change when God brings about the destruction of all evil and paves the way for the dawn of the Golden Age.

In the entire cycle of time it is only at the end of the Iron Age that this massive and positive process of world transformation takes place. It can only be carried out by God. During the rest of the cycle souls undergo a process of degradation - very slow in the beginning and faster as time goes by. It is only at the confluence of the Iron and Golden Ages, when God intervenes, that this process ends and there is a new beginning.★

(Purity Bureau)



New York, USA: BK Sister Mohini, President, Brahma Kumaris in Americas, addressing the audience at Leonard's on 'Yoga - The Ultimate Connection' programme to celebrate International Day of Yoga.

Editorial

Is Nuclear War Avoidable?

The original nature of the human soul is love, but due to the predominance of matter over spirit in our culture, violence has grown to extreme proportions today. On the global level, circumstances that lead to a war-like situation are being created time and again.

It has taken several centuries for us to reach the present scenario. Initially, small weapons such as daggers were made for personal safety. Then came weapons that could hit the target from a distance, such as the spear and the bow and arrow. Later, guns and newer forms of firearms were developed. With advancements in science and technology, the cannon was invented.

Earlier, wars were fought away from areas of human habitation, and the victors would take over the kingdom that lost the war. But as warfare changed, the destruction was extended to cities. Today, the earth is totally fragmented, and there are boundaries even in the sky and the oceans.

The deadliest weapon ever tested on humanity has been the atom bomb. After it was used in the Second World War, it became obvious to all leaders that if development of nuclear weapons continued, it would bring humanity face-to-face with the threat of extinction. Everyone would suffer the same fate if a third world war was fought, and so it had to be avoided at all costs.

It was against this backdrop that the United Nations was formed to defuse political tensions across the world. But despite knowledge of the consequences, more advanced nuclear weapons were made, and peace was hard to maintain. With nuclear proliferation came the fear of a nuclear holocaust. To prevent the arms race from getting out of hand, some countries decided not to be the first to use nuclear weapons in a conflict. They pitch these weapons as means of deterrence that will prevent another world war.

Recently, however, some countries have signalled their desire to bypass previously agreed treaties and use nuclear arms against those they are in conflict with. This change of position has reignited our worst fears, which cannot be dismissed.

The fact is that peace can only be prolonged, but not fully secured in our situation. This is because anything that is created will ultimately fulfil its purpose one day. There is little chance that countries will dismantle their nuclear stockpiles, so while we may rally for global peace, our creations will continue to threaten us with destruction.

So should we look upon the future only with fear? Is there no hope for us? They say that whatever happens, happens for good. There is a silver lining even to this bleak situation. What may appear to be the means of imminent destruction will ultimately serve as one of the biggest cleansing agents on earth, and pave the way for transformation of the world order.

The earth is currently going through its greatest crisis. Its five elements have deteriorated to the point of no return, and the animal kingdom is going through extreme suffering. Though humankind has achieved great material progress, human souls are undernourished. The most common problems affecting people today include depression, anxiety, lack of control over one's mind, and a breakdown in relationships. Values have become a rarity, and violence has reached extreme levels.

When the earth is beyond repair, large-scale destruction will, in a way, bring an end to all the suffering. The cycle of life is eternal, so the destruction can never be total. The impending chaos will finally lead to constant peace; the end will become the new beginning.

Nuclear war may be unavoidable, but it will act as a blessing in disguise for all of humanity, other species, and the planet. Through the act of destruction will be re-established a world order wherein the conduct of all will be based on natural love and benevolence. From a place of sorrow and suffering, the earth will be converted into a place of peace and plenty. *

Gleanings from the press

World's Biggest Plane

Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen unveiled Stratolaunch, the world's largest plane capable of launching satellite-toting rockets into space, in California's Mojave desert. The plane has a wingspan of 385ft — longer than a football field, the *Washington Post* reported. The aircraft is 238 feet from nose to end, and it is 50 feet from the ground to the tip of its vertical tail. Unfuelled, it weighs 500,000 pounds, but it can carry 250,000 pounds of fuel, and its total weight can reach as much as 1.3 million pounds. It also has 28 wheels and six 747 jet engines. The project has been proceeding for about six years and is on track for its first launch demonstration as early as 2019. *(Times of India)*



New software can predict lifespan

Scientists from the University of Adelaide have developed an artificial intelligence system that can predict how long a person will live by scanning through the images of their organs. The system analysed the medical images of 48 patients and was able to predict which of them would die within five years with 69 per cent accuracy. *(PTI)*

Population of world to go up by 1bn by 2030

The world's population will rise by 1 billion by 2030 and to 11.2 billion by 2100 from the current 7.6 billion, latest UN projections suggest. India's population, currently 1.34 billion, is projected to rise to 1.51 billion by 2030, and further to 1.66 billion by 2050. Although China is currently the most populous, both countries will have about 1.44 billion people each in 2024. *(Reuters)*

Coming soon: A cure for allergies

Scientists in Australia claim to have discovered what could be a life-long cure for potentially fatal allergies to peanuts and other food. The researchers said they had been able to "turn off" the allergic response in tests on mice using gene therapy to desensitize the body's immune system, and suggested this could also be used to treat asthma. They predicted human trials could begin in five or six years. *(Times of India)*

Music the solution to our prejudices, study finds

Music may reduce feelings of prejudice between people from different racial backgrounds, say scientists. Researchers recorded a mock news story featuring an Arab and an American actor playing music together, and then showed the video clip to US participants who were not Arab. The team found that when viewing the two cultures collaborating on music, participants were prone to report more positive perceptions — less of a prejudiced view — of Arabs *(News Item)*

Bhoola Bhai

And our friend Bhoola Bhai on Temple Street says: whether black, brown, yellow or white, we are all precious in God's sight.



A Password for Happiness

The secret of happiness has long been sought by many. People have chased wealth, fame and power in order to be happy, but lasting joy has eluded them.

Wealth indeed brings happiness, to an extent, and individuals experience joy when their income grows and they become richer. An abundance of resources frees a person from worry and enables him to pursue activities of his choice while leading a comfortable life.

Prosperity, however, does not guarantee happiness: one can feel miserable even when living in luxury, as many a prince has discovered.

While money is essential to securing the basic necessities of life, once a certain level of income or wealth is reached and certain needs are met, more money does not bring more happiness, and happiness does not increase. Research has shown that average happiness levels do not necessarily increase over time as countries grow wealthier.

A study some years ago portrayed the super-rich as lost individuals weighed down by the fears, worries and family problems caused by having too much money. They were described as a generally dissatisfied lot whose money had contributed to deep anxieties about their relationships, among other things. Some were discontented even with their vast fortunes.

This is what led an Austrian



It is a simple universal law that you get what you give. If you want to experience happiness, start giving it, and it will come back to you.

millionaire to give away all his wealth a few years ago, after he felt that his riches were making him unhappy. He donated the money from the sale of his assets to charities.

What this shows is that happiness does not come from acquiring and accumulating things. It is a simple universal law that you get what you give. If you want to experience happiness, start giving it, and it will come back to you. This is also understood as the law of karma, which says that you reap what you sow. Using contemporary lexicon, one can say that the password to happiness is 'Giving'.

This is one reason the major religions of the world teach generosity, compassion and charity. As the World Happiness Report last year noted, happiness is the overarching good, and other good qualities derive their goodness from the fact that they contribute to happiness.

The Christian commandment to do as you would be done by, and Hindu and Buddhist teachings encouraging the cultivation of an attitude of unconditional benevolence are based on recognition of the fact that in the happiness of others lies our own good.

I may accumulate a fortune,



and also enjoy excellent health, but if I am jealous, angry, resentful or miserly, can I be happy? The venom I am creating in my mind will first poison me, preventing me from feeling happy. On the other hand, if I help others, I will receive assistance in times of need, if I teach others, I won't lack knowledge, and if I spread cheer, I will also bask in its radiance.

When I have good wishes and pure feelings in my heart for everyone, regardless of whether they are friends or foes, I will be infused with the goodness of my thoughts, which will enable me to maintain a state of constant happiness.

Good feelings are like a bouquet of flowers in your heart that spreads its fragrance inside and keeps you happy, no matter how unpleasant the situation outside is. Even if others do not respond in kind to my goodness, I will not be dejected, because my positivity will keep me insulated, the way woollen clothes keep one warm even in bitter cold.

To increase one's stock of happiness, one must distribute it to others. Happiness is wealth that multiplies by giving and brings the giver the added bonus of the good wishes and blessings of others.*

(Purity Bureau)

Happiness

No one can be perfectly happy until all are happy.

—H. Spencer

A happy life consists in tranquillity of mind.

—M.T. Cicero

Supreme happiness consists in self-contentment.

—Rousseau

Silence is the perfectest herald of joy.

—Shakespeare

Humour

My wife asked me to post a letter at the railway station. 'Please don't forget', she said. 'It's important.' But I did forget, and was walking out of the station when a man tapped me on the shoulder. 'Remember the letter,' he said.

As I made my way to the nearest mailbox, another man called after me: 'Don't forget the letter.' But how on earth could these strangers know I was supposed to post a letter? When a third person reminded me, I couldn't help asking: 'How do you know about it? And to set your mind at rest, I've just posted it'.

'In that case', the stranger said, smiling, 'we may safely remove the label pinned to your back'.

'The label read: 'Remind him to post that letter!'

Sales manager to an applicant: 'Have you any previous sales experience?'

'Yes, sir, I sold my house, my car, the piano and almost all my wife's jewellery.'

Teacher: Manish, what is meant by an autobiography?

Manish: The life story of cars, sir.

Teacher: 'I sleep'. Change this sentence into future tense.

Student: I wake up.



Guangzhou, China: BK Sapna giving a talk on 'Healing Power of Meditation' to 1500 participants in an event organised by Spiritual Research & Healing Centre on International Day of Yoga.



Los Angeles, USA : After Interfaith Panel Discussion at Islamic Center are BK Sister Vino with other panelists who represented Zoroastrian, Buddhist, Vedanta, Sikh, Jewish, Christian and Islamic religion.



Raipur, Chattisgarh : BK Kamla Didi conducting Rajyoga Meditation to Yoga Lovers at 'Yogautsav' to celebrate International Day of Yoga.



Colombo, Sri Lanka : BK and other participants at International Day of Yoga Celebrations organized by Indian High Commission.



Little Knowledge is Dangerous



Once upon a time there was a fish. And just because it was a fish, it had lived all its life in the water and knew nothing whatever about anything else but water. And one day as it swam about in the lake where all its days had been spent, it happened to meet a turtle of its acquaintance who had just come back from a little excursion on the land.

"Good day, Mr. Turtle!" said the fish. "I have not seen you for a long time. Where have you been?" "Oh", said the turtle, "I have just been for a trip on dry land."

"On dry land!" exclaimed the fish.

"What do you mean by on dry land? There is no dry land. I had never seen such a thing. Dry land is nothing."

"Well," said the turtle good-naturedly. "If you want to think so, of course you may; there is no one who can hinder you. But that's where I've been, all the same."

"Oh, come," said the fish. "Try to talk sense. Just tell me now what is this land of yours like? Is it all wet?"

"No, it is not wet," said the turtle. "Is it nice and fresh and cool?" asked the fish.

"No, it is not nice and fresh and cool," the turtle replied.

"Is it clear so that light can come through it?"

"No, it is not clear. Light cannot come through it."

"Is it soft and yielding, so that I can move my fins about in it and push my nose through it?"

"No, it is not soft and yielding. You could not swim in it."

"Does it move or flow in streams?"

"No, it neither moves nor flows in streams."

"Does it ever rise up into waves then, with white foams in them?" asked the fish, impatient at this string of Noes.

"No!" replied the turtle, truthfully. "It never rises up into waves that I have seen."

"There now," exclaimed the fish triumphantly. "Didn't I tell you that this land of yours was just nothing? I have just asked, and you have answered me that it is neither wet nor cool, not clear nor soft and that it does not flow in streams nor rise up into waves. And if it isn't a single one of these things what else is it but nothing? Don't tell me."

"Well, well", said the turtle, "If you are determined to think that dry land is nothing, I suppose you must just go on thinking so. But anyone who knows what is water and what is land would say you were just a silly fish, for you think that anything you have never known is nothing just because you have never known it."

And with that the turtle turned away and, leaving the fish behind in its little pond of water, set out on another excursion over the dry land that was nothing.

Just like the fish, humans also limit their knowledge to that which they know. There are many things unknown that are as real and true as the dry land stands true for the turtle.*



Hong Kong : At International Day of Yoga celebrations by Indian Consulate and Asia Society are BK Rohini, BK Susanna, Sister Kathie and others

Chandigarh : At International Day of Yoga celebrations are Mahant Surinder Kaur, Mr. Jai Krishan Nath, Major Karnail Singh from Sri Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib Gurudwara, Maulana Murtaja Qasim, Jama Masjid and BK Ultra Didi.

Yoga as per the Gita

BK Brij Mohan, New Delhi

The Bhagwad Gita has been called 'Sarva Shastra Shiromani', which means the supreme scripture. The Gita is widely acknowledged as a unique treatise on the philosophy of life with universal appeal. It is also one of the most translated scriptures in the world. A number of commentaries have been written on it by eminent personalities.

The Gita is essentially a treatise on yoga, rather, renaissance of yoga, if one goes by the opening verses 1-3

of Chapter 4. It is believed to be a chronicle of the supreme wisdom which came directly from the lotus-mouth of God-incarnate 5,000 years ago. Hence, the word Bhagavanuvacha appears throughout the text of this exposition of yoga narrated in the form of a dialogue. Each of its 18 chapters progressively builds on different aspects of yoga, leading to a composite picture in the end.

It is to be noted that the different aspects of yoga, such as yoga of knowledge, yoga of action, yoga of renunciation, yoga of devotion, yoga of surrender, yoga of realisation and

yoga of liberation described in the Gita, are different components of the same composite yoga. None of them is complete in itself. Some consider them to be different forms or paths of yoga – some easy, some difficult. Accordingly, they recommend yoga of devotion for householders, yoga of knowledge for intellectuals and yoga of renunciation for recluses, for instance. The Gita, however, does not make any such distinction.



'Yoga' as per the Gita means union of the soul with

the Supreme by establishing a mental link of love. Its practice is stated to empower the mind to overcome demoniac traits or vices such as lust, anger and ego, and enable the practitioner to acquire divine traits or virtues like truth, non-violence and compassion. All the essentials for its practice, such as considering the immortal soul as the true self, its eternal relationship with the Supreme Soul, and the disciplines to be observed, are clearly described in the Gita.

Today, we live in different times. Yoga has diversified into hatha yoga, 'sahaj' yoga, and several types of meditation. It includes physical stretches, breathing exercises and techniques to relax or help the mind to concentrate. It is also being projected by some as an experiential state, requiring no ethics, morality, discipline or values. New practices, which have nothing to do with yoga, have also usurped this name. For example, parlours and studios operating in western countries like Canada and the US teach 'ganja yoga', which involves smoking of marijuana, a patently 'un-yogic' and harmful practice.

The United Nations has declared June 21 as the International Day of Yoga at India's suggestion. This is a good opportunity to



Yoga as per the Gita means union of the soul with the Supreme by establishing a mental link of love.

spread awareness about yoga across the world. However, it also throws up a challenge. Which type of yoga should India project to the world to make the celebration meaningful? Unless there is clarity on this, the new aspirant yogis may get confused in the maze of practices that have mushroomed in the name of yoga. Even otherwise, it would be worthwhile to identify the original yoga of India for the benefit of all. The Gita could be considered for this position.

This is a delicate issue. A viable initiative, such as starting a dialogue, would be necessary to arrive at a consensus. It would involve a long-drawn and time-consuming process. Meanwhile, some method can be devised to identify and separate healthy and beneficial forms of yoga from the prevalent mixed practices that tend to confuse us. It may be communicated to the United Nations to notify the member nations. This would caution new aspirant yogis about unhealthy and harmful practices during the course of initiating celebrations of The International Day of Yoga.★

(Editorial by the author in The Speaking Tree [Times of India] on 31 January 2015)



Strange Paradox

On the one hand people invoke God's mercy when it comes to their own follies, and on the other they make wars, calling them God's wrath against wicked people.

On the one hand people say that Shri Krishna was born in a prison cell as the demon king Kansa had imprisoned his mother Devaki, and on the other they say that baby Krishna arrived on a peepul leaf floating in the ocean.



USA: BK Dr. Hansa Raval (top photo) conducting a Raja Yoga meditation session during International Day of Yoga celebrations in San Antonio, organised by the Consulate General of India in Houston.

It's not money but *virtues* that make you rich and respected

Happiness is normally associated with possession of wealth, which is why people all over the world toil and employ various means to earn and enhance their income.

The poor often spend their lives in sorrow or bitterness over their lack of material wealth, or resign themselves to their fate. It need not be so. Money can certainly make life more comfortable and widen the range of opportunities available to a person for education, job training and employment, but it cannot buy happiness.

The World Happiness Report, commissioned for the United Nations Conference on Happiness, notes that good mental and physical health, someone to count on, job security and stable families are key factors in determining the well-being of individuals. At the community level, political freedom, strong social networks and absence of corruption are together more important than income for happiness.

Partly reflecting the fact that happiness ultimately is in the mind – how we adapt and respond to external circumstances – the report says mental health is the biggest single factor affecting happiness in any country.

The poor usually despair over their fate when they focus on what they don't have and compare themselves with those better off than themselves.

But often there are many things that enrich the lives of the poor and provide them comfort and happiness without their recognizing it.

The poor mostly lead simple lives, and that means they don't face the worries and complexities that the rich with their resource-intensive lifestyles have to contend with.



The poor usually despair over their fate when they focus on what they don't have and compare their lot with those better off than themselves.

Fewer possessions means having that much less to care for. And the lesser one is tied up with material things the more time and attention one can devote to things that have greater value – relationships, rest and recreation, quiet time with oneself and much more.

Having limited means also saves one from unnecessary desires and wasteful spending, not to speak of evil habits that many with disposable

incomes fall into.

These are all blessings that come to the poor in humble garb but are no less valuable for it.

Appreciating what one has, a sense of humour, and the ability to enjoy life's simple pleasures also helps one to remain light and happy in spite of poverty.

And while they may have little by way of money, the poor can enrich themselves with spiritual treasures that add real value to life and can elevate a human being to divine status. These treasures are spiritual knowledge, virtues and powers.

When qualities such as humility, tolerance, a sweet temperament, courage, generosity and kindness enter one's life, one becomes a source of comfort and strength for others. No one calls such a person poor. On the other hand, such persons earn the trust, respect and cooperation of others.

There are numerous figures in history who rose from humble circumstances by virtue of their spiritual powers to become social and religious leaders. Some of them went on to found religions and are now revered like deities by their followers.

In the present times, nuns, monks and the full-time Brahma Kumaris volunteers are examples of individuals who have little to call their own by way of possessions, but who are treasure troves of spiritual wisdom, love and strength. Such individuals are today a source of inspiration and guidance even for men and women who have everything – money, power and fame. They are living proof that it is virtues and powers that make one rich, not money.★

(Purity Features)

You Ask... We Reply

Send your questions to purity@bkivv.org

Chanderkant Dave, Baroda

■ How can one forgive unconditionally?

■ Letting go of anger and bitterness can work wonders to both your attitude and health, along with your relationships. We usually say that we easily forgive people, but is that forgiveness unconditional or do we create numerous conditions in order to let go of the past? Someone has really hurt you, and you find yourself feeling so sad, angry or bitter that you can barely concentrate. Any time you see that person – or any time you close your eyes – all you can do is replay what happened and flounder in all of your sad feelings. If you want to move on with your life and learn to move past the pain, then you have to make a choice to forgive and forget. One should understand that forgiveness is not just meant for others: we should forgive people for our happiness. Hanging on to negative feelings about a person will only plague your personal life and will make it hard for you to find happiness. Hence, whenever you condition forgiving someone, such as saying, 'I forgive you because of this or that...', remember that you do not forgive the person for his benefit, but you forgive him for your contentment and happiness. If we think that it is for our benefit, it will help us forgive the other person unconditionally. Forgiving unconditionally will gratify you more than the other person. Moreover, forgiving someone after imposing conditions will not make him realize his mistake. However, your merciful

behaviour and unconditional forgiveness will actually help him realise his fault.

Rakesh Jindal, Kanpur

■ How can the world become happy if I become happy?

■ There is a famous quotation that 'charity begins at home'. Similarly, happiness also begins with the self. If I am not happy, I cannot make others happy, and if even a single individual is unsatisfied or unhappy, we cannot say that the world is happy. This shows that the world's happiness is influenced by individual happiness. Hence, the happiness of each individual is valuable. Another fact is that a happy person can make others happy. We can only donate what we have: we cannot borrow something for donation. Similarly, if we are happy inside, we have plenty of happiness with us, which we can give to others. If we ourselves have to borrow happiness, we will wish to retain it instead of giving it to others. What is the

source of happiness? The connection of the soul with God is what brings true happiness. Hence, we can make the world happy only when we help other souls get connected with God. ★

Self-confidence

Self confidence is visible in the eyes of those who walk the path of truth.



News in Photos



Om Shanti Retreat Centre, Gurugram : Practicing Rajyoga Meditation to celebrate International Day of Yoga with BK Bharat Bhushan Jain, Yoga Master and Ms. Divya Tiwari from TV channel News 24 (Front row first and second from left).

Hyderabad : Mr. Janardhan Reddy, Commissioner of Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation speaking at Mass Yoga programme at Indira Park. Also in pic. are BK Santosh Didi, Zonal Head, BK Kuldeep Didi & Senior BK Teachers of Hyderabad, Secunderabad and Telangana.



Mehsana, Gujarat : Lighting candles to inaugurate International Day of Yoga celebrations are BK Sarla didi, Zonal Head, BK Chandrika Didi, BK Sarla didi, BK Raju from Mount Abu and others.



Varanasi : Standing in silence at International Day of Yoga programme are Mr. Manoj Sinha, Union MoS for Railways and Communications, Mr. Ravindra Jaiswal, MLA, BK Surendra Didi, BK Dipendra and others.



Kolkata : Lighting candles to inaugurate International Day of Yoga Celebrations at Westin Hotel are Mr. S K Gajmer, IGP, Dr. H P Kanoria, Chairman, SREI Foundation Ven-Pahulaa Thero, Bhikhu Incharge, Mahabodhi Society of India, Mr. Vinod Kumar Yadav, Addl. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests. Hon'ble Justice Subrata Talukdar, Judge, Kolkata High Court, BK Kanan Didi, and others.



Gulbarga : BK Vijaya Didi speaking at International Day of Yoga celebrations at Nutan Vidyalaya Grounds. Also in pic. BK Brother Prem and other dignitaries.



Ranchi, Jharkhand : BK Nirmala Didi conducting Meditation to students of RTC Inter College on International Yoga Day. Also in pic Ms. Honey Sinha, Co-ordinator, Nehru Yuva Kendra.



DELHI RED FORT



Red Fort, Delhi : A view of over thirty thousand BKs of Delhi Zone performing Yogasanas to celebrate International Day of Yoga. (Pic. top) Rajyogini Dadi Janki, Chief of Brahma Kumaris addressing the gathering being clapped by interfaith leaders on dias.



Delhi : The Nodal Officers of Ministry of AYUSH Mr. Anshumann Sharma, Dy. Secretary, Dr. Ishwara Acharya, Director, CCRYN, Mr. Pawan Yadav and others at Red Fort Yoga Day celebrations. (Pic. left) BK Sapna with life-size mascot 'Yogiraj' launched by AYUSH Ministry to boost awareness of IDY 2017.



Zanskar Valley Ladakh

Mr. Wise

Mr. Wise?

Yes.

A worried king is like a beggar?

Yes. And a worriless beggar is like a king.

Worry takes away all our peace and happiness?

And yet we don't stop worrying, why?

I cannot say.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

And Mr. Wise?

Yes.

Worry tires the brain?

And consequently, blurs the power to judge.

Yet no one seems to worry about worrying, why?

I cannot say.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

Lastly...

Yes.

Worry is like a pyre?

A pyre burns the corpse, but worry burns you alive.

Shouldn't we say goodbye to worry right now and here?

Perhaps you are right.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦



Tailpiece

One fine day, a bus driver went to the bus garage, started his bus, and drove off along the route. No problems for the first few stops – a few people got on, a few got off, and things went generally well. At the next stop, however, a big hulk of a Pathan got on the bus: six-feet-four, built like a wrestler, arms hanging down to the ground. He glared at the conductor and said, "Pathan doesn't pay", and sat down at the back. The conductor didn't argue with the Pathan, but he wasn't happy about it. The next day the same thing happened – the Pathan again made a show of refusing to pay, and sat down. And the next day, and the next.

This grated on the bus driver, who started losing sleep over the way the Pathan was taking advantage of the poor conductor. Finally, he could stand it no longer. He signed up for a bodybuilding course, karate, judo, and all that stuff. By the end of the summer, he had become quite strong; what's more, he felt really good about himself. So, the next Monday, when the Pathan once again got on the bus and said, "Pathan doesn't pay!" The driver stood up, glared back at him, and screamed, "And why not?"

With a surprised look on his face, the Pathan replied, "Pathan has a bus pass."

Lesson: Be sure there is a problem before working hard to solve it.

