

Purity

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Point of View
Happiness touches the heart
and creativity — the ability to
do something new and different,
emerges from within.

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

The Ultimate Happiness

The United States Declaration of Independence says that it is a self-evident truth that the pursuit of happiness is one of the inalienable rights of humans.

Happiness is of many kinds, such as that experienced when someone praises you, or when you achieve something you wanted, or when you eat good food, listen to your favourite music or see something beautiful. Such experiences may surely make one happy, but for how long? The taste of good food lingers for a while after the meal, and the joy of being appreciated may vanish the moment one hears a critical remark about oneself.

Such experiences are short-lived and, therefore, cannot be the basis of a constant feeling of happiness, which is more stable and lasting than exuberance or an emotional high.

Lasting happiness is a state of being in which the person feels secure, content and in harmony with the self, others and nature. A person in such a state is also more likely than not to help others achieve happiness, in whatever way he can.

This state can also be described as bliss, which dictionaries define as perfect happiness, or as a state of spiritual blessedness.

How can one achieve this state? There are people who lead blissful lives and describe themselves as very happy. Their material circumstances may be very ordinary, but they are content with what they have and enjoy life. Such people are usually active and have loving and supportive relationships in their family or community, and they live by certain values. One characteristic most commonly seen in such people is a positive attitude, which enables them to remain optimistic and take problems in their stride.



Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi: Inaugurating a seminar on 'Traditional Organic Farming' are Mr. Radha Mohan Singh, Hon'ble Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Mr. Sudarshan Bhagat, Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, BK Brij Mohan, BK Sarla, BK Raju, Dr. Sunita Pandey, BK Rajkumari and BK Sapna.

Experts have found that happiness depends on individual factors such as personality, income, health, and the freedom to make important life choices. They say it also depends on social determinants such as the degree of trust in the community, and on political factors such as rule of law. But these elements are sometimes in competition: for example, pursuit of wealth may lead to loss of health, or involve limits on freedom. The factors mentioned above are no doubt important, but they are good only to the degree that they contribute to one's happiness.

Empirical evidence suggests that the key constituents of happiness, which enable a person to remain happy even in the absence of other factors, may be character, values and the right attitude. Where these

elements are present, the person is likely to make the right choices and act in ways that ensure his or her own well-being and that of others.

Conversely, in the absence of these ingredients one may act selfishly to achieve individual happiness at the cost of others. In the process one may alienate people, lose friends and even make enemies. Someone seen as selfish also receives little goodwill or cooperation from others. If one creates an unsympathetic environment around oneself in this way, one is not likely to remain happy for long, no matter how many personal goals one manages to achieve.

The greatest happiness of the greatest number is said to be the measure of right and wrong. But, while following this noble principle, one should be able to strike a

balance between personal good and the good of all; if one is needlessly or unjustly called upon to sacrifice one's happiness to please others, one is not going to feel great about it.

To be able to discern what is best for everyone, including myself, in a given situation, the mind needs to be free from the influence of ego and desires. Then the decisions taken will ensure everyone's happiness. Such decisions may not please everyone immediately, but they will prove themselves right over time.

Performing the balancing act of ensuring individual and collective happiness is the way to earn the good wishes, or blessings, of others, which, besides being a reward in itself, enriches one's feeling of contentment and enables one to experience bliss, the ultimate happiness.★

(Purity Features)



New Delhi: Inaugurating the launching of All-India Jurists Campaign, 'Spirituality for peace and happy living', are Mr. P.P. Choudhary, Union MoS for Law & Justice, Justice Kurien Joseph, judge, Supreme Court, Justice Suresh Kumar, judge, Delhi High Court, BK Brij Mohan, Justice V. Esvariah, BK Shivani, Bro. B.L. Maheshwari and BK Pushpa.

NGO OF UNITED NATIONS IN CONSULTATIVE STATUS WITH ECOSOC & UNICEF. OVER 8700 ASSOCIATE CENTRES IN 137 COUNTRIES.



Muzaffarpur, Bihar: Mrs. Mridula Sinha, Hon'ble Governor of Goa, lighting candles along with BK Rani didi and others to inaugurate a public event.



Ooty, Tamil Nadu: Lighting a lamp to inaugurate a conference on 'Holistic Sports' are Dr. A.M. Moorthy, Vice Chancellor, Tamil Nadu Physical Education & Sports University, Dr. N. Sundara Devan, former Addl. Chief Secretary, BK Basavaraj, Chairperson, Sports Wing, BK Swaminathan and BK Beena, Zonal Coordinator.



Kolkata, West Bengal: Lighting candles at Durga pandal are Ms. Santosh Bhatler, BK Kanan didi, Mr. Virendra, IPS, Director of Security, Mr. S.K. Gazmer, IPS, IGP and others.



Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh: Inaugurating a 'Life Skills Education Camp' are Brig. M.L. Aswal, G.C. NCC, Mr. A.K. Saraogi, RD, Nehru Yuva Kendra, Mr. N. Pandey, Architect, BK Avdhesh didi, BK sisters Rani & Rekha.



Birgunj, Nepal: Opening the event, 'God's Wisdom for World Transformation', are Ms. Sita Devi Yadav, Hon'ble Minister of Nepal, BK Raj didi, Director, BK Mruthyunjaya from Mt. Abu, BK Urmil, BK Kiran, BK Tilak Bahadur Shah, BK Ram Singh and others.

Photo Gallery

Life is the first gift, love is the second, and understanding, the third.



Boston, USA: Group photo during "The future of power" dialogue held at the Fairmont Copley Plaza, in which 48 international leaders participated, including Mr. Nizar Juma, host & coordinator, Dr. Kala Iyengar, Director, Peace Village Retreat Centre, Ms. Judy Rodgers, Founding Director, Images & Voices of Hope, Mr. James Orleans, musician, Mr. John Westman, Executive Vice President, Novellus Inc., Boston, Mr. Jerry Cicciu, President, Counter Pulsation Inc., Boston and others.

Traveller or Wanderer?

Life is a journey. This is a cliché we have heard many times. But few people realise the import of the journey called life. All humans are travellers who have come to this world on a long journey that continues from one life to another. At the outset, this continuum of birth, death and rebirth seems to be an unending journey that goes on and on without any particular destination in view.

The strange thing about the journey of life is that not only are most travellers unaware of the destination, they also practically confuse the journey with the destination. Rather than being travellers, they are wanderers. They think they have arrived and all that they have to do in the world is eat and drink, and with this idea they keep wandering throughout their life from one point to another.

Yet stranger or weirder is the fact that almost all the travellers are confused about the vehicle they are riding in. They believe that they are the vehicle – the physical body, which is in fact a vehicle for the real being, the soul. The traveller is the spiritual being or soul, which is eternal and immortal, and the vehicle is the body that is mortal and perishable.

Because we human souls have become body-conscious, we look at life in a very limited way. We think of life as lasting only until death, hence we are afraid of dying. Instead of living life with a purpose that transcends our physical existence and its accompanying needs, desires, attachments and fears, we are so entangled in the transitory pleasures and pains of life that instead of travelling we are wandering life after life. A wanderer has no aim or destination for his journey.

So what is the destination of this journey called life? It can only be understood when we realise the truth about who we really are. We are not the physical body in which we reside and

What is the purpose of the journey of life? Where do souls come from? What are the original qualities of the soul?

play our roles. We are souls that enter and leave physical bodies according to our karma and role. The soul is immortal and imperishable. The body is subject to decay, damage and death. Due to illness, old age or an accident, a body can perish. But the soul moves on and takes a new body. This journey goes on life after life. Death is not the end of this journey. It is like a junction where the traveller changes trains or other vehicles to move on.

The only things a soul carries with it are its karmic record and the 'sanskars' formed in past lives. The journey is very much influenced by the choice of karma the soul makes during its various lives. Good karma, or actions performed with pure intentions, a selfless attitude and righteous means will empower the soul and help him to move on to a better path. Deeds done under the influence of vices such as anger, greed, ego and lust will lead the soul to a worse path.

To understand the purpose of the journey of life we must begin at the beginning. Souls come from the soul world as pure beings full of peace, joy, bliss and love. These are the original qualities of every soul. But after repeated rebirth and living in bodies, we slowly forget our original identity and virtues. We become body-conscious and

role-conscious, which makes us a slave of sensual pleasures, material comforts and ego-driven roles and activities. We run after name, fame, wealth and transitory pleasures. We keep wandering from one transient thing to another, craving for true peace, joy and love. This aimless and spiritually blind wandering has led human souls to more indulgence in body-conscious pursuits.

Finally, when humans realise the futility of such pursuits and the resulting deceptive satisfaction, they begin searching for the real thing, the truth about the self, life and God. Our search for true happiness and peace is rewarded when God Himself comes and reveals the truth about the whole creation and the meaning of the journey of life. At present we are in the Confluence Age, when we have the opportunity to make this journey meaningful and aim to reach the destination of regaining our original purity and liberate ourselves from the bondage of vices and bad karma.

The destination of this earthly journey is to become divine from human and to re-establish the Golden Age on earth. This can be done by following the spiritual directions of Incorporeal God Shiva imparted through the physical medium of Prajapita Brahma.★

(Purity Features)

This is the list of those freedom fighters who were born after independence.



Being an Angel

A fairy or angel is shown with wings. This symbolizes the soul's flying stage. This means always remaining light. The soul in its original, natural state is a pure, sentient point of light and might.

To attain the angelic stage, stabilize the mind in soul-consciousness before you think, speak and act. This means using the body's organs as and when you require, just like you use your clothes.

Performing your role in a detached state will keep you ever fresh and light and you will never feel tense or tired.

Even a mountain-like task will become easy, like a molehill.

Just as scientists can send and receive messages from outer space through signals, a person established in the angelic stage can get most tasks accomplished through sign language and thought power.

The power of silence works like magic and can do wonders.★



Shantivan, Abu Road: Inaugurating the three-day celebrations of the silver jubilee of Global Hospital & Research Centre are Dadi Janki, Chief of Brahma Kumaris, Dadi Hirdaya Mohini, Adl. Chief of Brahma Kumaris, Mr. Rajendra Singh Rathore, Hon'ble Rajasthan Health Minister, BK Nirwair, Maharaj Daivat Singh of Sirohi, Dr. Pratap Midha, BK Mohini from New York, BK Laxmi and other senior BK brothers and sisters from India and abroad.

Art of Giving

Did you ever serve water to someone so thirsty that it quenched something inside you? Did you ever help others make sense of their life and found your own answers midway? Did you ever let go of someone's past mistakes and felt a burden lift from your heart? Yes, we all have, at different times, tasted the bliss of giving and realised that when we volunteer for others, we are being kind to ourselves.

Everything around us is designed to give, and this process is effortless and automatic. The sun doesn't attempt to give anything, but its mere presence is the source of life on earth. Trees never eat their own fruit and bend for us when they are full. Rivers nourish everything on their way so silently as though unaware of their own benevolence. It is this selfless giving and ongoing quiet exchange in nature that makes everything self-sustained.

Selfless giving leads us to a win-win situation where the giver loses nothing while others gain something invaluable. A rose, for example, does not lose its fragrance while charming everyone with it. So everything around us is contributing something to life without seeking anything in return. Even manmade objects have their utility. The fan on the ceiling and the chair we sit on are made for comfort.

In our private space, however, we have set an altogether different equation. Here, in our limited world, giving is synonymous with loss and taking with gain. We shy away from passing on to others the knowledge we possess because we are scared to see them grow. We worry that they might leave us behind. We don't even want to invest in a conversation with someone who 'does not matter'. In our race to accumulate more in life, we have forgotten the moments of personal satisfaction that our acts of generosity once brought us. We rely too much on the obvious profits because we are unaware of the way the universe operates.

The law of cause and effect is in constant operation in all dimensions. It ensures that whatever we give

comes back to us. This return is often cumulative, as actions create a ripple effect. This means the law takes care that the giver is compensated with full interest. This is the secret of why the hand that lends never borrows, why the chef does not lust for his own preparation, and why mothers are content to eat the leftovers after heartily serving their families. The manifold returns of a giver's goodness always keep him full.

A giver gains not only in future when his action bounces back to him, but even while performing the noble act. Whatever a person expresses flows through him. So it first becomes his experience and then reaches the outside world. A bit of fragrance always lingers on the hands that give flowers. Other returns are sure to follow later.

In case our investment does not yield the desired result, we should rest assured that it is accumulating greater interest. Unsaid 'thank you's' often turn into blessings with time. In case our good is met with bad, we must not be disheartened but feel unburdened by thinking that a pending karmic debt was paid off. This is the method of using the understanding of karma to our benefit and of keeping the giver in us going.

Despite knowing that we receive in the end, our focus should always be on the act of giving. This is because an action performed while eyeing its fruit becomes heavy with expectation, its intent gets adulterated and the outcome is diluted. The Bhagavat Gita teaches us to perform karma without worrying about its fruit not because we should let go of our share, but because our share is certain. However, the time of return is not fixed. So if we are impatient for the result, we miss out on the opportunity to give our best in the present – when our destiny is being made.

Today the act of giving has become a disguise for taking back. When shops announce 'free' goodies with each purchase on festive occasions, they have already adjusted the amount in the price and have calculated their returns well in advance. We too, like

shrewd businessmen, make all the calculations before we interact with others. We are ready to 'give' in a relationship only when our returns – whether material or emotional – look certain. The moment our returns are threatened, the relationship becomes one of push and pull.

So let's switch to a new course of action. Let's design a new life by creating a culture of giving. However dependent, small or invisible we may seem, we all have something to contribute. Even a child brightens our day simply by being himself. If we do not have a gift for someone, we can always send him good wishes; if we can't pave the way for others, we can at least encourage them to find their own; if we are not the one entertaining the crowds, we can surely applaud those performing; if nothing else, we can simply participate in others' happiness, just smile, nod, cooperate,

It is in giving that we nourish ourselves and others. Let's design a new life by creating a culture of giving.

suggest something good or simply be there in a mood of willingness. We are never without a gift in any situation; even the receiver of a present can give back through gratitude.

Giving always puts us in a position of advantage. In life, be a large-hearted host who pampers his guests, and not a guest who shyly accepts what is offered to him and feels obliged to do something in return. It is in giving that we nourish ourselves and others. A person who only adds to others' lives and multiplies their joys is welcome everywhere.★

(Purity Bureau)

Pride

Pride and weakness are Siamese twins.

- Lowell

The infinitely little have a pride infinitely great.

- Voltaire

The proud hate pride, in others.

- Franklin, Poor Richard's Almanac

They are proud in humility, proud in that they are not proud.

- Burton, Anatomy of Melancholy

There are two types of people: Those who come into a room and say, "Well, here I am", and those who say, "Ah, there you are".

- Frederick L. Collins

You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you.

- Dale Carnegie

Pride ruined the angels.

- Emerson, The Sphinx

The ring always believes that the finger lives for it.

- Malcolm de Chazal

Of all the causes which conspire to blind Man's erring judgement, and misguide the mind, What the weak head with strongest bias rules, Is Pride, the never-failing vice of fools.

- Pope, Essay on Criticism



Ahmedabad, Gujarat: The winning Indian team of the 2016 Kabaddi World Cup with Brahma Kumaris mind trainers BKs Jagbir, Shashi Behn and Nandini behn, invited by coach and Dronacharya Awardee, Mr. Balwan Singh (2nd R).

Ethics for Inner Strength

Once, a tailor was at work. He took a piece of cloth and with a pair of shiny, costly scissors, he cut the cloth into several bits. Then he put the pair of scissors at his feet. He took a small needle and thread and started to sew the bits of cloth into a fine shirt. When the spell of sewing was over, he stuck the needle into his turban.

The tailor's son, who was watching, asked: "Father, the scissors are costly and look so beautiful, but you threw them down on the floor. This needle is worth almost nothing; you can get a dozen for one rupee. Yet you place it carefully on your head. Is there any reason for this illogical behaviour?"

"Yes, my son. The scissors have their function, no doubt; but they only cut the cloth into bits. The needle, on the contrary, unites the bits and enhances the value of the cloth. Therefore, the needle to me is more precious and valuable," said the tailor.

The value of everything depends on its character and utility, not on its price or appearance. It is said that while building a house, every brick counts and while building a character, every thought, word and action counts. And exactly what in one's thoughts, words and actions counts is the quality. If we go by the definition of ethics, we understand that one's behaviour is governed by one's ethics.

Let us ask ourselves: By pursuing what I am doing, will I be



An identity crisis transforms our awareness from that of a 'human being' to a 'human doing'.

violating any civil or organisational law? Or are my actions fair to all concerned in the short term as well as the long term? Will it make me feel proud?

All religions talk about ethics in life. Nobody can be ethical in one place and unethical in another. Just like a drop of poison in a glass of water turns the whole water into poison, a trace of unethical behaviour can ruin the ethical side of an individual. Authenticity as a whole needs to be established and practiced.

When a child is born to a family, all family members and relatives gather to celebrate the auspicious day and shower their blessings on the child. The parents wish to bring up their child in the best possible manner and aim to bestow the best upon him/her. As the child grows up, he is sent to a school for formal education, where the teachers wish the same for the child and try to give him the best of knowledge and skills so as to help him succeed in life. Education is believed to develop wisdom about what is good and bad and the sense to judge our actions in each situation accordingly. Thus, at every step, a conscious effort is made to influence the mind of an individual such that goodness builds up and prevails in his life. But then, the burning question is why are we still, in this age and century, struggling to set things straight? Why are we talking about

misconduct all around? Why is ethical behaviour an urgent need of the society? What is this buzz about ethics all about, and even after everyone's conscious effort to develop goodness and ethics, where are things going wrong?

In the present scenario, pressures, uncertainties and upheavals are increasing day by day in magnitude and wearing us out. People and their minds are tired. There is a dire need for some power that can enable the mind to remain stable in all situations. Where can one find such power? From childhood we are trained so well to get things from people or the outside world to fulfil our requirements, so the habit or inclination to go within is underdeveloped. On the one hand man has succeeded in going beyond several light years to explore other planets in the universe. On the other hand, man is still struggling to go a step within to explore and experience this real power. In such a situation, when we are unaware of our true self, how can we be fully conscious of our ethics and follow them all the time?

Thus the root of unethical behaviour at various levels of society is lack of self-awareness, which has locked up the key to the imperishable treasures of peace, love, humanity, integrity, respect, contentment and power. As a result of this lack of self-awareness, when we are unable to locate this key to the treasures within, we start looking outside for triggers that can stimulate responses similar to these feelings, in order to help us experience them, even if for a short while. This increases our dependency on external factors and we tend to get influenced by materialism. This is short-term, and we are compelled to re-initiate the hunt for the next roller-coaster of emotions and feelings. Soon this dependency takes a toll over us and becomes an addiction to materialism. After that it doesn't take much time for our human values to get corrupted and material values to become dominant.

The first influence of materialism is it impacts our identity. We as human beings are the most intellectual beings on earth. And it is the power of our intellect that allows us to establish new connections and play with them. Our intellect justifies the meaning perceived by our mind and makes us experience the fruits of the connection with things that we own or roles that we play. Hence, losing sight of our inner conscience over time, we attach ourselves to the materials we possess or the roles that we

play. When we forget the 'being' part of 'human', we get entangled in the 'doing' part to derive a meaning out of our existence. This transforms our consciousness from that of a 'human being' to one of a 'human doing', as we start to shift our identity from our innate, ethical self to the quality of our possessions and the quality of our work. The ethical system of the self thus crashes and we are left at the mercy of situations and the external environment, which reinforces the unethical behaviour sparked by the identity crisis (thus individuals start struggling for survival of the fittest) and aggravated by attachment, insecurity and fear.

Just as the deficiency of any vitamin in the body is treated by the intake of ingredients which are rich in that particular vitamin, the deficiency of ethics in the self can be treated by first creating thoughts aligned with ethics, followed by words which reflect our true and pure intention, free from the sting of duality and, finally, practicing ethical actions. The more we practice ethical means to lead life, the more life rewards us with true inner peace, lightness, contentment, sense of self-worth and achievement, encompassing us in a loop of ethical behaviour. Just as a single negativity opens the doors to others, building a negative character, initiation of ethical behaviour builds up an ethical character.

It is through knowledge of this truth and a little practice that we can resurface these ethics – originally and intrinsically programmed within the soul. At the outset, one needs conviction to follow or practise ethics. Going against the odds does create some friction due to resistance from those who are still in the consciousness of 'human doing'. Nevertheless, the strength to flow against the river can be gained when we refine our intellect and use it to make sense of our own actions.

The virtues of introversion and foresightedness developed through spirituality help the intellect to be free from the limitations of prejudices of past experiences or the influence of negativity, which is considered 'normal' otherwise.

A pure or refined and 'free' intellect is more intuitive, can catch the signals from the external environment, exercise better self-control and take better decisions. This not only enables us to mobilize our inner positivity and strength but also fills the craters in our relationships with others and enhances our working efficiency.★

(Purity Bureau)



Gurugram, Haryana: Ms. Deepa Malik, the first Indian woman to win a silver medal in shot-put in the Paralympic Games 2016 held in Rio, with a bouquet of 1,111 roses presented on her birthday by BK sisters Sandhya and Sonika, & Dr. Deepak. This bouquet has been included in the Wonder Book of Records International, London.

Editorial

Sad plight of women today

The criminal assault and murder of an Indian celebrity perfumer in Goa last month by a former security guard of her building is shocking. The fact that the accused came from a humble background and was a little more than half her age shows how emboldened criminals have become.

It is clear that no matter what their age, educational background, social status or location, women are unsafe everywhere in our country. The incident calls upon us to collectively work towards bringing an end to this by all means possible.

In a similar case a few years ago, a young lawyer living in Mumbai was murdered mercilessly by the security guard of her building. When she was attacked, the victim rang the doorbells of her neighbours in desperation, but no one responded. The accused was later found guilty by a court. But despite having planned the crime and stabbed the victim 16 times, molesting her before killing her, he was not given the death penalty. He was sentenced to life in prison, but managed to escape a few months ago when he was granted parole.

Even in the infamous Nirbhaya case, which evoked unprecedented national outrage, justice is yet to be done. It is not uncommon to see court cases drag on for years. Delays in our legal system, especially in cases of sexual violence, send out the message that if justice is so hard to get even in such well-known cases, it's better to suffer in silence. The perpetrators feel secure in the knowledge that despite all the noise, nothing will eventually change. They feel supported by our social environment, where the victims receive hardly any help.

As a consequence of many such factors, only a minor fraction of women come forward to file official complaints, and even in those cases the chances of conviction are abysmally low.

The reservation that the victims have about reporting such crimes stems not just from social stigma but the way they are treated at the hospital, police station and the court room if they show the rare courage to seek justice. If we could put in place a system where the victims are not shamed but protected and empathised with once they take refuge in law, it would encourage many to speak out. A step that could possibly make their journey less painful would be to introduce all-women courts for gender violence cases.

The fear of law has to be seen and felt. The call of the time is to give such prompt and exemplary punishment to those guilty of heinous crimes against women that it demonstrates our society's zero tolerance for such acts. The death penalty must be considered keeping in mind its deterrent effect.

In the past few years, cases of sexual offences involving juveniles have increased manifold. Juveniles are protected by law against regular punishment. It is thus important that we revisit our laws. These days loss of innocence occurs at a much younger age than before, and it would make sense to lower the age limit for granting protection to juveniles to 14 years from the current 18 years. Many countries have already taken steps in this direction.

It also calls for collectively creating a social mould in which women are respected as a norm. In doing so, all of us have to join in, whatever field we may be in. Lawmakers, bureaucrats, lawyers and judges, and those working in the fields of policing, administration and education have a special responsibility to build our social environment.

The media, entertainment industry and the advertising world have a big influence on our lives today, especially on young persons. The crying need of the times is to use the media to inspire people to make our society safer for women. Let us not make money by selling women's bodies. Let us not say that the media is meant to show what people want to see. It is we who choose what to show. ★

Gleanings from the press

Calcium supplements may damage your heart

Taking calcium in the form of supplements may increase the risk of plaque build-up in arteries and heart damage, although a diet high in calcium-rich foods appears to be protective, researchers at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in the US have found. Previous studies have shown that "ingested calcium supplements — particularly in older people — do not make it to the skeleton or get completely excreted in the urine, so they must be accumulating in the body's soft tissues". (PTI)

Eating more citrus food good for heart, liver

Higher intake of citrus fruits such as oranges and lemons may help prevent heart disease, liver disease and diabetes in obese people, a new study in Brazil has claimed. Oranges and other citrus fruits contain plenty of vitamins and substances such as antioxidants that can help keep you healthy, researchers said. (PTI)

Artificial sweetener not linked to cancer

Sucralose, an artificial no-calorie sweetener, does not cause cancer and is safe to ingest, new research has claimed. A comprehensive review of studies testing the safety and carcinogenicity of sucralose has confirmed that the artificial sweetener does not cause cancer and is safe to ingest. The research appears in the journal Nutrition and Cancer. (Times of India)

Physical strain, stress can trigger heart attack

Intense physical exertion or extreme emotional upset can both trigger a heart attack, and the risk may be highest if the two are combined, a new study at McMaster University in Ontario, Canada has claimed. (Times of India)

New dental fillings repair tooth decay

Researchers claim to have developed new dental fillings that can repair tooth decay, prolong the life of composite fillings and reduce the need for mercury-based amalgams. The new bioactive glass composites release fluoride as well as significant quantities of calcium and phosphate that are needed to form tooth mineral, according to researchers from Queen Mary University of London. (PTI)

A smartphone laboratory to detect cancer

In a step towards faster and convenient delivery of medical tests, Washington State University researchers have developed a low-cost, portable laboratory on a smartphone that can analyse several samples at once to catch a cancer bio-maker, producing lab-quality results. The device would be especially useful in clinics and hospitals with a large number of samples and without on-site labs, or for doctors in remote areas. (IANS)

Bhoola Bhai

And our friend Bhoola Bhai on Temple Street wonders how come all the following places of worship have six alphabets:
Temple
Mosque
Church.



Save the Family!

A calf is up on all its fours minutes after birth. Not so with a human infant. It's very precious and needs the mother's loving care for much longer. One day the same infant will pay back this debt by caring for the elderly parents. Nature wants it that way. Nothing could be more cruel than to deny the elderly their due of care and affection. Let the young not forget that they too will be old one day. It's a sin to leave the elderly in the lurch to fend for themselves in this mad, bad world. Your conscience will never forgive you if you do that.

The family is the oldest natural institution, exclusive to homo sapiens, divined for the sustenance, security and stability of the human race.

Alas! This very bedrock of human society — the family — is being torn asunder today. The phenomenon is global. In some of the so-called 'advanced' countries, one out of every three marriages is ending up in divorce. The female partner and the offspring of such broken marriages are the worst sufferers.

In the modern society, intolerance and strained relations in families have become the order of the day. Infidelity and extra-marital relationships are on the increase. Even those who occupy the highest positions are tarnishing their honour and majesty with alleged sex-scandals instead of leading exemplary lives to serve as worthy role models. The number of premature pregnancies and out-of-wedlock children is growing, and nuclear families are replacing traditional family units. The number of street children and old age homes is growing. Live-in relationships and homosexuality are no longer matters of shame or social stigma. But such

In the modern society, intolerance and strained relations in families have become the order of the day.

relationships are unnatural. The ultimate result is shattered lives, abnormal behaviour and social pollution.

It's time to realize that the family, not the individual, is the basic unit of society. The family provides the natural framework for the emotional, financial and material support essential to the growth and development of all its members, particularly infants and children, and for the care of other dependents, including the elderly, disabled and infirm. The family is a vital means of preserving and transmitting cultural values, particularly to the children and the young.

Some of the basic measures to strengthen the family are enabling it to meet its own needs, intervention, legal support and counseling to assist in the prevention of all forms of exploitation of family members, both within the family and outside, like child abuse, child labour and discrimination against women etc.

The utility of these measures would depend upon the extent of their practical implementation. Increasing economic burdens placed by governments on families have far-reaching effects, particularly on



lower and middle-income families, and result in weakening the fabric of the family unit. Varying effects on the family have been attributed to such diverse factors as war, population growth, poverty, exploitation, agrarian change, migration and urbanization, education and job opportunities, conflicts and riots, crime and violence etc.

The moral aspect of life is of vital dimension. If material prosperity alone could strengthen the family, the rich would have had families more united and happy than others. That is not the case. On the contrary, an increase in a person's love of material possessions drastically alters his evaluation of family love and the virtues of sharing and caring.

Perhaps the greatest challenge to the family structure comes from the modern media. This mighty tool of mass communication has been taken over by people who, for the sake of making a quick buck, are throwing all moral values to the winds. Greed for money and crass commercialism is goading them to produce movies

and TV programmes which distort the role of the woman and depict her as a sex object. A lot of glamour and gloss are employed to penetrate traditional defenses provided by the family unit. The rise of modernism is used to show vulgarity in the name of entertainment. The clear distinction between pure family love between life partners and criminal assault for sensual gratification is getting blurred by a wrongful portrayal of the woman's role.

This fast-spreading virus of vice is eating into the vitals of the family system. Unless effective steps are taken by the government and the community to stem this rot, the threat to the family is likely to assume menacing proportions.

Opinion leaders, social and educational institutions and pressure groups should prevail upon governments, media managers and movie barons to stop attacking moral values. The media should provide clean entertainment and serve as a useful tool for moral elevation. ★

(Purity Bureau)



Imphal, Manipur: During the foundation laying of a new building, present are Dr. Ratan Kumar Singh, Hon'ble Minister of Education & Transport, Mrs. O. Landhoni, MLA, Mrs. W. Brajabidhu, MLA, BK Sheela, BK Nilima and others.

Pearls of Wisdom

The mind is not a vessel to be filled, but a fire to be kindled.

- Plutarch

Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can.

- Arthur Ashe

Life is 10 per cent what happens to you and 90 per cent how you react to it.

- Charles R. Swindoll

Don't watch the clock; do what it does. Keep going.

- Sam Lovenson

The scars of others should teach us caution.

- St. Jerome

There is nothing permanent except change.

- Heraclitus



Kathua, J&K: Inaugurating a spiritual exhibition is Mr. Bharat Bhushan, Addl. Dy. Commissioner, Mr. Ravinder Singh Salathia, leader, National Conference, and Mr. Arun Sharma, DSP.



Pathankot, Punjab: S. Sukhjinder Singh, Dy. Commissioner, along with Mr. S.K. Punj, Chancellor, Palampur University, and Mr. Manmohan Gorkha, businessman, being presented a Godly gift by BK Satya and BK Pratap.



Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala: BK Minni, Mr. Madan Challate, President, Mr. Chandrasekhar, Working President of Sports & Art Academy, along with others inaugurating a national seminar of the All Washerman Community.



Powai, Mumbai: BK Godavari didi presenting Godly gift to Mr. Raimani, Secretary, AICC.



Nabarangpur, Odisha: Ms. S. Shyni, IPS, DIG of Police, SW Range, Korapet, being presented a picture of Shri Krishna by BK Swarna.



Phillaur, Punjab: Mr. Gurdev Singh, Mr Ravi Pal Singh, Mr. Akbar Khan, judges, being presented 'Purity' magazine by BK Rajkumari. Also in the picture is BK Vipin, Manager, State Bank of India.

Look Up



If you put a buzzard in a pen that is six feet by eight feet but that is entirely open at the top, the bird, in spite of its ability to fly, will be an absolute prisoner. The reason is that a buzzard always begins a flight from the ground with a run of 10 to 12 feet. Without space to run, as is its habit, it will not even attempt to fly, but will remain a prisoner for life in a small jail with no top.

The ordinary bat that flies around at night, a remarkably nimble creature in the air, cannot take off from a level place. If it is placed on the floor or flat ground, all it can do is shuffle about helplessly and, no doubt, painfully, until it reaches some slight elevation from which it can throw itself into the air. Then, at once, it takes off like a flash.

A bumblebee, if dropped into an open tumbler, will be there until it dies, unless it is taken out. It never sees the means of escape at the top, but persists in trying to find some way out through the sides near the bottom. It will seek a way where none exists, until it completely destroys itself.

In many ways, we are like the buzzard, the bat and the bumblebee. We struggle about with all our problems and frustrations, never realising that all we have to do is look up and be free! That's the answer, the escape route and the solution to any problem! Just look up. Look up to your unlimited faith, look up to your unlimited potential, and look up to God who is always guiding us to fly.

Sorrow looks back, worry looks around, but faith looks up! ★

Jalpaiguri, West Bengal: Ms. Mukta Arya, District Magistrate, receiving 'Purity' magazine from BK Priti.



Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh: BK Bhavna, in charge of Brahma Kumaris centre, Napier Town, speaking at 'Life Skills Educational Camp'. Seated on stage are Mr. Pawan Pandey, journalist, BK Dr. Pushpa Pandey, Mr. Anurag Soni, motivator, Mr. Surender Singh, Ms. Raksha Soni and Mr. Sahdev Singh Marvani, Jt. Director, Education.



You have got to get up every morning with determination if you are going to go to bed with satisfaction.

How Food affects Mind and Mind affects Food

As well as observing the general principles of nutrition, of appeal and enjoyment, food also has a spiritual component. The spiritual aspect of diet incorporates the purchase, preparation, acceptance and eating of food. Food that is selected with care, prepared with love, accepted with gratitude and eaten with purity becomes a tonic for both the soul and the body. The underlying ingredient is consciousness. Where the consciousness is clean, filled with love and detachment, the food is purified, and this also purifies the body. As a result, the mind is cleaned to become free from desires and engrossment in the sense organs.

If you study the diet of the ancient yogis of India, you will notice that their approach to eating was very refined. There were only certain types of food that they accepted, and the yogi did not over-indulge, nor allowed himself or herself to be influenced by the senses of sight, smell and taste. A yogi will often fix certain times for eating and drinking and maintain that discipline. A spiritual path means to be attentive to what one eats. Abstinence from meat, egg, and fish (as well as the by-products of slaughtered animals such as gelatin and rennet), from alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and too much tea and coffee, is a part of the way of life of spirituality. For spiritual reasons, many people also avoid onion, garlic and heavy spices which act as stimulants in the endocrine system and thus destabilize emotions. The diet of a yogi thus incorporates two main principles:

- Not to cause suffering to another living being
 - not to overstimulate the physiological system (digestive, nervous and endocrine systems).
- A basic equation that many of us are familiar with is, "As you eat, so is

'As you eat, so is your mind' is a fundamental spiritual tenet.

your mind". This is a fundamental spiritual tenet. The type and quality of food and the manner of eating affects the state of mind. Food that has been implicated in the slaughter of animals carries a karmic debt and that becomes a burden on the human soul. Food or drink that has a stimulating effect on the body also carries a toxic load that gradually sets in motion the disease process (e.g. cancer, arterial plaque, diabetes, gallstones etc.). Food that is eaten in a state of tension, anxiety, depression, anger or fear will carry those thought patterns and vibrations and hence affect digestion. The hormones stimulated by those vibrations in turn create further negative vibrations and hormones, and the cycle continues.

A spiritual approach to diet includes preparing food in a meditative state with feelings of love and detachment. When one feels desireless, yet cooks with love either for the self, family and friends in the memory of God, this will carry a subtle power that energises the soul and the body. Within the parameters of an accurate spiritual diet however, it's good to accept food with gratitude and not become too focused on "I can't eat this or I can't eat that" unless there are specific health needs. Some people have developed the art of combining foods and these days organic foods are more popular since the effects of pesticides, fertilizers



and antibiotics (which also affect milk, yoghurt, butter and cheese) on contamination of food have become more well known. Macrobiotics is becoming more popular but does not necessarily equate with spirituality.

Any of these diets are good for health, the environment and awareness, but if the person following a strict regime becomes too fanatical and creates stress as a result, then many of the positive benefits will automatically be lost.

Spirituality also includes sharing. There is nothing more wonderful than to share a beautifully cooked meal

with others. By sharing, we lose our sense of attachment to food and the body and overcome greed. The natural sustenance of food is enhanced by the power of pure vibrations and this also brings benefit on a spiritual level. One method to bring harmony and unity in any gathering, whether it be a family, a company or amongst friends is to eat together. Food cooked with love will help to generate those feelings. Mothers know the power of food in settling the feelings of children and bringing a sense of contentment..*

(Purity Bureau)

Humour

A travelling salesman was held up by a bad storm in the Hawaiian Islands. He sent an e-mail to his corporate headquarters advising them that he was stranded for a few days and requested instructions. The reply came back shortly: "Begin vacation as of yesterday."

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

The driving instructor was giving lessons to an extremely nervous student who panicked whenever another car approached on a particular two-lane road. One day, however, they got to the same stretch of road and the student remained completely calm. "This time you are doing fine," exclaimed the instructor. "Yes," the novice driver agreed. "Now when I see another car coming, I shut my eyes."



Philippines: A public programme titled 'God's Love and Protection' was held at the Brahma Kumaris Lotus Center in Quezon City, culminating in week-long evening meditation on 'Being With the One'. Seated in the middle row are BK Nirmala didi, BK Rajani and BK Praveena.

Inspirations from Dadi Janki

Chief of Brahma Kumaris

Take this one blessing from God: I will not take sorrow from anyone

Some have called the world at this time the Land of Sorrow. There are many situations and people that cause sorrow. God has many titles. Two that are helpful at this time are “the Remover of Sorrow, and the Bestower of Peace.”

Make a commitment, “I should never experience any kind of sorrow.” Many people and situations give sorrow, but I should not take sorrow. Some weak souls say that they don’t give sorrow, but they take sorrow. If you keep sorrow inside you will become sick, or you will become scared, and you won’t know what to say. Take this one blessing from God: I will not take sorrow from anyone.

There could be many causes for taking sorrow, but a mature child of God will say: “it’s okay, my karmic accounts are being cleared at this time, but I will not give sorrow in return

or even think about it.” To think about it brings sorrow. Even if someone gives sorrow ten times over, you should not accumulate it. If there is an accumulation of sorrow, you will not be able to remember God. Consider the Father to be yours and you will not experience sorrow. Then you will be able to take virtues and power from God and give to others.

Sweetness and Truth

Sometimes we think of service as the meetings and planning that we do “out there” in the worlds of our organizations, but the simple and powerful methods by which we serve are based on our inner stage of sweetness and truth.

The children who are sweet and truthful are loved by God. In fact the ones who are sweet are loved by everyone. If you become bitter, then you give sorrow to many. So our words should be sweet, and our eyes should



reflect spirituality. In our actions and tasks there should be truthfulness. There needs to be a great deal of humility in our relationships. Be humble and all virtues will emerge and your weaknesses will end. These are the simple but powerful methods by which we serve at this time.

Peace is our religion

Om shanti. It seems that in our times we have come to value a busy and absorbed intellect. But this will not bring us peace. At this time, if I am to be of service to the world, I must keep my intellect free. If the slate is clean, you can write on it. Finish off the past. Finish whatever karmic account is there. I have to become clean and peaceful.

Who becomes peaceless? The one who does not remember the Father or the Home of souls becomes peaceless. My Father is the Ocean of Peace, and my Home is the ocean of peace, so if I become peaceless, I should pull my own ears. Some people hear something and become peaceless. Do not listen to or speak wasteful things. Keep your intellect free and your thoughts elevated. Then you will have so much power that whether others stay far or close, they will become peaceful. Peace is our religion. ★

True Love

God’s pure love does not discriminate nor reject, but is an all-embracing, powerful love that transforms and purifies.

“Love makes the world go round”.. Without love, our lives seem dry and empty; without love, we cannot see the beauty in creation, we cannot find our inner beauty, we do not know how to catch and connect with the hearts of others. Love is what we are all about. Although we live in this material world which is filled with natural beauty and we have created the wonders of science, without love, we cannot experience the benefit of these creations. Our intellect can understand the secrets of nature; but without love, we destroy her.

When a child is born, the mother automatically loves the child. The baby is innocent, pure and helpless. Nature provides us with instinctive love so that we protect and nurture that child. A new child becomes the focus of the family and its bonding begins on the basis of love. It is this bonding that is essential for it to develop its own personality, to relate to the very big world around it, to feel secure and to be able to express itself. A child who is loved will have no fear. A child who is brought up in the arms of love will be able to venture outside the family. It is love that gives it a sense of safety, the foundation for its explorations and challenges.

The Nucleus

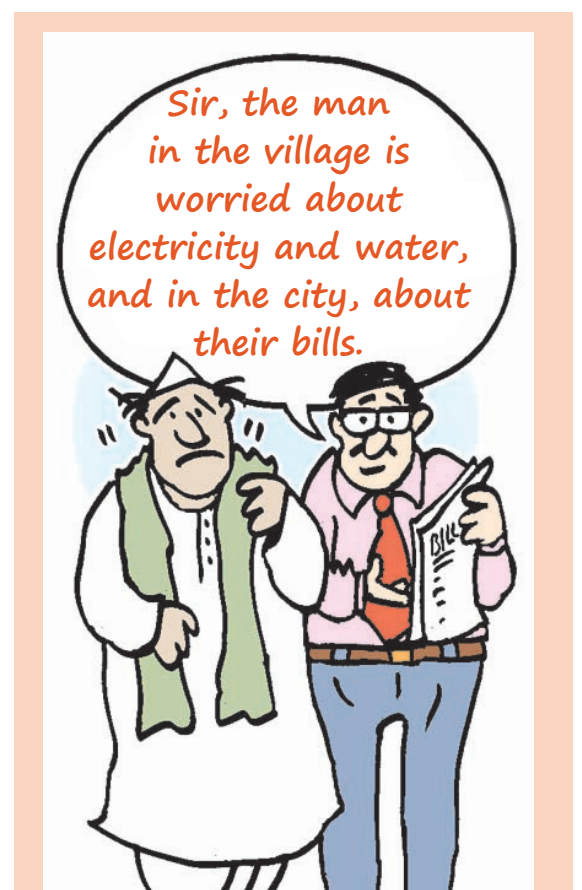
Even as we mature, the basis of our life is the love of the family. Without the loving family, we are unable to integrate our experiences properly. Nothing appears beautiful in total isolation, it is only when it is seen in the context of its surroundings that it becomes beautiful. When a child grows up and becomes an ‘independent’ human being, it brings home its experiences and learning from the world outside. Friends and family are the nucleus of our existence.

When we are alone, we can feel lonely, but not if the soul has developed the consciousness of unlimited love. When we learn to connect with our inner nature of love, that becomes an imperishable treasure that remains with us wherever we go. This unlimited love means that I have a connection with every loving being and I also spread the rays of love to the five elements of nature. With this love, I begin to understand the interdependence of all things. I am not alone, but I am a part of the world drama plan and it is love that makes this plan work. It is the appreciation of myself and all others through the divine eye of love that allows me to see things as they really are. When I am influenced by my own nature, my own thoughts and experiences, sometimes there can be misunderstanding, limited understanding or wrong understanding and that won’t enable me to have that love to the same extent.

All-Embracing

When I have the understanding that all beings are God’s children and that He also is the one that purifies nature, then I also become one of His unlimited family and the custodian of nature. With this attitude, I am not able to see anyone or think about anyone without the feelings of love, of acceptance and of belonging. It is the Supreme Love that is completely unconditional that endears us to Him. God’s pure love makes no judgment, it does not discriminate nor reject, but is an all-embracing, all accepting, powerful love that transforms and purifies God’s love gently removes the traces of fear, loneliness, sorrow and grief and mends the heart of the soul. God’s love gives us a lease of life that is filled with power and happiness. This love makes our life magical and beautiful. ★

(Purity Bureau)





Om Shanti Retreat Centre, Gurugram: Lighting lamps to inaugurate the 'Travel for Peace and Development' event are Mr. Ashwin Lohani, CMD, Air India, Mr. Satish Soni, Managing Director, Maharashtra Tourism, BKs Brij Mohan, Meera, Ramnath & Kamlesh.



Tapovan, Abu Road: Cutting a cake to celebrate the 75th birthday of BK Mohini didi, Director, Brahma Kumaris in Americas, are Dadi Janki, BK Nirwair, BK Brij Mohan, BK Charlie, BK Laxmi, BK Shashi and others.



New Delhi: At the National PRE-COP 22 Consultation are HE Mr. Tomasz Kozlowski, Ambassador of European Union to India, Ms. Henriette Faergemann, Counsellor Environment, Energy & Climate Change of European delegation to India and BK Falak.



Dilshad Garden, New Delhi: BK Shivani being welcomed by Dr. Anil Goyal, Dr. Pius Jain, Dr. Sunil Singhal and Dr. Vinay Agarwal of IMA East Delhi Branch at a conference organised in association with Brahma Kumaris.



Photo Gallery

Hari Nagar, New Delhi: Inaugurating 'Good Bye Diabetes' programme are Dr. Shrimant Sahu, Main Speaker, Mr. Shyam Sharma, Mayor, SDMC, Mr. Ratan, General Secretary, BJP, Prof. P.N. Shastry, Vice Chancellor, Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, BK Shukla and others.



Sarapiqui, Costa Rica: A group photo of participants in a BK teachers' retreat facilitated by BK Ken from Brazil (Top, centre).



Milpitas, USA: On stage for 'Brahma Kumaris Silicon Valley Diwali Event - 2016' are Mr Jose Esteves, Mayor of Milpitas, Mr. Rishi Kumar, Council Member, Saratoga, BK Kusum, Ms. Savita Vaidhyathan, Vice Mayor, Cupertino, Ms. Shobha Vora, Past President, Jain Center, Northern California, Ms. Renu Relan, community leader, Ms Chandra Bhandari, community supporter, Ms. Satya Kalra, Founder & President, Path to Anandam, and others. The event was attended by more than 450 people.



Bollywood actor Gracy Singh and group perform during the 25th anniversary celebrations of Global Hospital & Research Centre in Diamond Hall, Shantivan, Abu Road.

Mr. Wise



Mr. Wise?
 Yes.
 India, that is Bharat, was once the land of gods and goddesses?
 Yes. Humans were called deities for their god-like virtues. They were 'sarva gun sampan'.

How did the world forget everything about the values and virtues of that golden era ?
 I cannot say.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

And Mr. Wise?
 Yes.
 The deity world rulers like Shri Laxmi and Shri Narayan had double titles, of highness-cum-holiness? Because they were completely pure and virtuous. People today worship their idols but do not follow in their footsteps, why?
 I cannot say.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

Lastly...
 Yes.
 The honour of female deities was naturally safe in that era of pristine purity, known as paradise or 'swarg'?
 Yes. Because the vice of lust did not exist in the deity era. In contrast, look at the sad plight of women today! Lust has overpowered everything and made Bharat a veritable hell or 'narak'.
 Is that why when someone dies they say 'Swarg sidhar gaya' (left for heavenly abode)?
 Perhaps you are right.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

Tailpiece



Roshan was fifteen minutes late for the class. His teacher demanded an explanation. "Sir, I had a lovely dream. I was visiting countries of Europe and seeing beautiful places. It was only when my plane landed in India that I woke up with a start and discovered I had got late for school." Just then, another boy, Shyam, came in. "And why are you late? Asked the teacher angrily. "Sir," he replied, "I had to go to the airport to receive Roshan."

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

The newspaper obituary operator received a phone call. The elderly woman on the other end asked, "How much do funeral notices cost?" "Rupees hundred per word, ma'am," came the response. "Good, do you have a paper and pencil handy?" "Yes, ma'am."
 "Okay, write this: 'Rohit died.'"
 "I'm sorry, ma'am, I forgot to tell you there's a five-word minimum."
 "Humph," came the reply. "You certainly did forget to tell me that."
 After a moment of silence the woman continued, "Got your pencil and paper?"
 "Yes, ma'am."
 "Okay, print this: 'Rohit died. Car for sale.'"

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

A rich woman and her husband were sitting by the pond when the husband dropped and fell in. A passer-by heard her cries for help, rushed towards the pond and rescued him. The deed done, he looked at the crowd that had collected and asked them, "Can anyone here give this man artificial respiration?" "What do you mean by artificial," questioned the haughty woman. "Why give him that when we can afford the real thing?"

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦