



Purity

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

Experiencing Supersensuous Joy

“Joy is the infallible sign of the presence of God.”

— Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

To experience joy is the fundamental human desire. Joy or happiness is the fundamental desire behind all dreams and goals. It is our original nature which makes us feel complete and contented. All human endeavours are aimed at attaining happiness.

What humans understand about happiness is related to their beliefs about being happy. However, the need for happiness has driven human beings to wrong directions.

In this materialistic world, instead of looking for happiness within the ‘self’, people make a lot of efforts to get happiness, and this process goes on endlessly. The most common belief about happiness is that it comes from external conditions such as material assets, favourable situations and good behaviour by others. A lot of people believe that the joy of living comes from having a lot of wealth, being free from health-related or financial problems, and having a comfortable life with a good social standing and professional reputation, and caring family and friends etc.

Pleasure, happiness, joy and bliss – is there any difference among these? Most people today equate happiness or joy with sensual pleasures and comforts of life. The happiness we experience today is derived from sensual pleasures of sight, sound, taste and touch. Eating good food, wearing fine clothes, having a nice house and car – the list is long for what adds up to happiness in today’s world. So there is sensual joy derived from the physical senses. We can feel happy after watching a nice movie or listening to good music. Today there are countless things that titillate our senses and give us a false sense of joy when we indulge in them.

All sensory happiness is transient. How long does the joy of wearing newly bought jewellery or eating a delicious dessert last? Apart from physical pleasures there are numerous other sources that keep humans



Deepawali cake cutting ceremony at the Gyan Sarovar campus of Brahma Kumaris headquarters in Mount Abu. In the picture are Dadi Janki, Chief of Brahma Kumaris, Dadi Ratan Mohini, Jt. Chief of Brahma Kumaris, Dr. Nirmala Didi, BK Nirwair Bhai, BK Lakshmi, BK Rajni, BK Hansa and others.

engaged in satiating their desire for happiness through mental, emotional and intellectual stimulation. Knowledge, relationships, creativity and success boost our self-worth and make us feel happy. Yet such happiness is conditional, limited and temporary.

There is something beyond transient pleasure or joy. There is a state of being or experience that transcends the need to engage or indulge in sensual pleasures. It is not dependent on situations or people’s behaviour towards us. It is much more than happiness – it is known as supersensuous joy (*ati-indriya sukh*).

It is a state of being of all human souls. It is a state of completeness and fullness in which we are so full of all attainments within that we radiate contentment and joy naturally. Happiness is experienced when the soul engages with the senses and the physical world, and when it expresses its creativity or relates to other souls in a meaningful and loving way. Happiness is experienced when a soul comes from a state of being into a state of doing and there is an exchange of energy in the form of thoughts and actions.

Supersensuous joy is a very subtle and pure state of being which does not require us to engage with the senses or even with emotions or thoughts. It is experienced purely through awareness of the true self. When we can truly experience who we are, i.e. when

we experience our innate goodness, our divinity and magnificence, and our eternal belongingness to God and harmony with other human souls, we can be truly blissful.

Awareness of the truth about the self, God and the cycle of time helps us to attain a blissful state. Being a child of God is itself a state of completeness and fullness. A child of God cannot be imperfect or lacking in any of the inner treasures of virtues and powers.

Human beings can experience true joy by knowing and belonging to God. God is the only soul, the Supreme Soul, who is not entangled or influenced by physical senses, time, space and karma. God imparts true wisdom, which liberates us from all bondage. God teaches us how to live in a soul-conscious way and experience a loving communion with Him. Rajyoga – communion with God – opens the doorway to supersensuous joy.

The greatest fortune of human souls is to experience this kind of joy in the companionship of God, who has now descended on earth to guide us back to our original state of purity, peace and bliss. This is only possible at this present time, known as the auspicious Sangamyuga – the confluence of Kaliyuga and Satyuga. God is offering this great gift of supersensuous joy to all human beings now. Once we experience it, we will never chase false and fickle sensual pleasures.*

(Purity Features)

Happiness

- Happiness is the true purpose of life.
- Happiness comes by pure thoughts.
- Happiness is earned by selfless actions.
- Happiness does not carry a price tag.
- God is the source of true happiness.



Guwahati, Asom : Newly elected Hon'ble Governor Prof. Jagdish Mukhi being felicitated by BK Sheela Didi, sub-zone Incharge at Raj Bhawan along with BK Rajani, BK Vinod and BK Vijay.



Bhadohi, Uttar Pradesh : Standing in silence after inaugurating newly constructed Vishwa Shanti Bhawan are Hon'ble Governor Shri Ram Naik, BK Brijmohan, Addl. Secretary General of Brahma Kumaris, BK Surendra Didi, sub-zone incharge and BK Vijaylaxmi, Centre Incharge.



St. Petersburg, Russia : BK Santosh Didi, Director, Brahma Kumaris (inset) explaining the spiritual significance of Deepawali Festival.



Bhandup, Mumbai : Inaugurating public programme 'Satyamev Jayate' are BK Brijmohan Bhai, Dr. Pandit Ajay Pohankar, Classical Singer, Mr. S. Khandekar, Editor, Navshakti, Mr. N. Madhulkar, Creative Head, Film & TV Serial, Mr. Sandeep Rakshe, Film Director and BK Godavari Didi.



Jaipur, Rajasthan : BK Bharat, Chief Engineer, Shantivan receiving Green Building Award from Mrs. Mala Singh, Vice Chairperson, Indian Green Building Residential Society for Manmohini and Anand Sarovar Campus of Brahma Kumaris Hqs. Also in pic. Mr. V.Suresh, Chairman, Indian Green Building Council, Mr. Jaymini Oberoi, Chairman & Mr. Anand Mishra Vice Chairman of SBC.



Om Shanti Retreat Centre, Gurugram: BK Asha Didi, Director ORC, BK Sapna and brothers and sisters from China lighting candles to inaugurate Silence Retreat. Pic. left Sister from China performing during the Retreat.

Khuda Dost — God, The Friend

Friendship is probably the most valued of all relationships because a friend is totally my choice. Parents and relatives are not chosen but given to us, and that has its own inherent value. However, a friend is someone who speaks to our heart, someone to whom we feel a magnetic affinity. When there is a mutual response between two persons who are becoming friends, then a relationship is born that can last a lifetime and even beyond a lifetime!

Friendship is the coming together of equals. Even if there is a difference in abilities, roles or position, there is a vision of equality which does not create any feeling of superiority or inferiority. This equality of vision permits unconditional acceptance of the other. This creates closeness. There is such a respectful closeness that one does not intrude on the personality of the other, nor does one harbour distaste for any weakness seen. Since the vision is unlimited, the true goodness of the other is always kept as the measure of the other's reality; the weaknesses are something foreign, which will make their exit at the appropriate time.

Real friends can never divorce. There is love which not only accommodates any shortcoming, but also actively transforms it with a word of encouragement, smiling patience or an act of kindness. With a friend

A friend is someone who speaks to our heart. Friendship with God permeates all other relationships with Him.

you do not have to prove yourself, for you are loved and accepted for what you are, and what you are is enough. There is no need for spectacular achievements; all that a friend requests is to "be yourself".

A friend is a friend for all time, when there is a need for support or a moment of joy to share. Good times or bad, a friend is ever present, ready to share, to serve, to listen or just to be there.

Friends always have a deep closeness to each other even if they are physically apart. This companionship conquers distance, time or any other type of separation. Their mutual empathy is the basis of their communication. This communication is something more than just speaking, it is the ability to listen to the other's feelings, that is to tune the self to the other's being. Such true communication allows for the

purest interaction because there is a mirror of clarity where nothing can be twisted or misunderstood, or remains obscure.

Friendship means availability. A friend is available at all times, and never says, "I do not have time", "wait", "later", "don't bother me now"; when there is a great need, a friend rushes there to help.

Every confidential word entrusted to a friend is sacred and sealed from the eyes and ears of others. Absolutely nothing would induce him or her to betray the friend's trust. Trust is an alliance between two hearts which have learnt through experience that this alliance can never be broken or betrayed. Trust dispels any fear of being misused or abandoned.

God is the most trustworthy of friends; there is really no comparison. Unfortunately, this experience of God's friendship has been lost. Too often we are presented with a picture of God only as the Father and Judge. This is not a balanced or true picture at all. God is also the Mother, the Beloved, the Teacher, the Guide, but especially he is my personal Friend, and this friendship permeates my other relationships with Him.

With God as a friend you can be open and know that in that openness there is a loyalty and an understanding of everything that is within the heart. Though God is my Father, Mother and Teacher, He is also my Friend at the same time. This simultaneous relationship brings lightness and easiness to all my relationships with God.

It is said that a friend of God is a friend of all. Friendship with God teaches and inspires me to be a good friend to others.

Through friendship there is respect and cooperation, and this creates a unity which is essential for peaceful coexistence; a cooperative friendship enables any task to be carried out successfully.*

(Purity Bureau)



Vashi, Navi Mumbai: Lighting lamps during a National IT Seminar are BK Santosh Didi, Zonal Head, BK Sister Shivani, motivational speaker, Ms. Madhu Dua, Vice President, Reliance Jio, BK Sheela, Dr. Atul Srivastava, Vice President, Reliance Industries, Mr. Prashant Thakur, MLA, Mr. Sudhakar Sonawane, Mayor of Navi Mumbai, and Mr. Sanjiv Nayak, former Member of Parliament.



Om Niwas, Bhubaneswar: Taking part in a seminar on "Ancient Rajyoga for Healthy and Happy Bharat" are BK Brijmohan, Addl. Secretary General, Brahma Kumaris, Mr. Ramachandra Panda, Member of Odisha Planning Board, Mr. Arvind Dhali, former Odisha Minister, Mr. Jagadananda, former Information Commissioner, and BK Geeta.



The values of the heart for happy living

How long can a human being survive without food and drink, and how long can he or she survive without love? There are sad stories about children who died not from lack of nourishment, but from want of love. What has happened to our belief system that we do not value love any longer as a major ingredient for living a real and full life?

People do only what they believe in. If I believe in money, I'll put out all my feelers and use all my energies in order to make money. If I believe in attitude, I'll make sure that my attitude towards myself and others is correct, courteous and pleasant. But why do most people consider only physical love to be love? What about loving the rest of the world? And why are people limiting themselves to loving only a few family members?

The answer is simple. Most of us human beings have forgotten that we are beings in human form. We are totally unaware of the fact that we are souls in bodies who live with millions of other souls in their bodies on earth. When souls forget they are souls, they forget their innate nature at the same time. The whole game is about remembering and forgetting. You remember one thing and forget another. When you forget about you being a soul, you'll remember the next thing, that is you'll have your body in your awareness. As time goes by, you'll base your entire belief system on your awareness of your body. This includes awareness of your relatives, possessions, sense organs and how to satisfy them, etc. At this

We do not value love any longer as a major ingredient for living a real and full life.

time souls are unable to just be, they need to constantly do something, go for something, sense something, be aware of people, places and things, or do things to try to forget people, places and things. Very few are able to be, to radiate love and peace continuously, and to therefore bring the most constructive and creative ingredients into their lives.

Just as a man cannot go without food and drink for long periods of time, he cannot go without love and peace. If he does, due to lack of availability of these spiritual commodities, he'll turn bitter, frustrated, angry and unhappy. In other words, he'll wilt.

It is thus extremely important for everyone to get to know and believe in their original identity. There's nothing more sweet and drastic as truth. Truth says that you are a spiritual being full of love, purity and peace. Falsehood says that you are just a mortal body and nothing else. Truth says that you, the soul, lives forever, so enjoy your eternity, bring out your original awareness, and completely destroy any tendencies of any awareness

of the body and bodily relationships. The feeling of joy and freedom you'll experience is incomparable, and once you understand yourself, there's an automatic change in your values. Money, career, possessions, name and fame will all seem insignificant, relatively. But flying high, experiencing God's light and might, destroying negative and vicious vibrations with one "stroke", helping others to climb up as well, and doing everything possible to accumulate an elevated fortune based on elevated thoughts, words and actions becomes your priority.

The more you deepen your values and beliefs about that which is true, the more it sinks into your conscious awareness, the more you'll improve your life. Truth is nourishment for the soul; the moment it gets deprived, its spiritual system will begin to wear down and start failing. Like grasping the proverbial last straw, the soul then clutches on to its body, others, and the things mentioned above, which will lead that soul only into deeper spiritual bankruptcy, since the nourishment provided by possessions, physical love, etc. is akin to that given by junk food to the body.

Therefore, be careful about what you believe in. Check your belief system and alter it. With the power of knowledge it's as easy as 1,2,3, and you'll emerge a brand new man or woman, ready for the new age which is dawning on the horizon of this dying old world. *

(Purity Features)

Swachh Bharat through Swachh Swamaan

The Government of India launched its Swachh Bharat Mission by highlighting Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi's penchant for cleanliness. Gandhi had actively launched cleanliness campaigns in society. This included not only keeping public toilets and city and village streets clean, it also included cleaning the mind by avoiding seeing, hearing or speaking evil, as depicted by the pictorial maxim of the three wise monkeys.

The Swachh Bharat Mission has external and internal aspects. The external aspect is the removal of dirt from our surroundings. This includes cleaning of rivers and stopping dirty water from polluting our rivers and drainage systems; taking measures to abate air pollution, such as adopting environment-friendly technologies; and choosing a lifestyle that respects nature.

The internal aspect of the Mission is the transformation of our attitude and thinking. Today, Indian society is plagued by corruption for individual benefit as against national welfare, lack of discipline in pursuing goals, including absence of respect for time, use of abusive language towards others, cheating, lying, disrespecting women, and resorting to emotionally charged violent behaviour to express anger and frustration. We even rationalize such an attitude by saying that now it is Kaliyug, and hence it is justified.

The question is, can we have a 'swachh Bharat' without 'swachh swamaan'? Obviously not, because all that we do without any dedication is going to be meaningless in transforming Bharat. Self-transformation

Choosing a lifestyle that respects nature is the need of our times.

alone will lead to the transformation of Bharat. The belief that negative behaviour is acceptable in Kaliyug has to be challenged, because after Kaliyug comes Satyug. For that to happen fast, we need to acquire the qualities of Satyug, such as peace, purity, love, happiness, bliss, knowledge and strength. These are natural qualities of the soul, and they foster truth, compassion, discipline, spiritual power and positive vibrations. They will help us act accurately to transform Bharat.

Mahatma Gandhi rightly stated that the Bhagavad Gita had answers to all the questions in our mind. Mark Twain, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Max Mueller, Romain Rolland and other eminent world citizens held similar views. The Gita clearly brings out the difference between the body and the soul, and it teaches that the transformation of the soul is more important than the transformation of the body because the soul is eternal and it experiences the eternal effects of its thoughts and actions according to the law of karma. Bad karma created by bad actions leads to a sorry future, whereas good karma created by good actions leads to a happy future. This inexorable karmic law is in complete harmony with the values

Rakesh Mehta, former Chief Secretary of Delhi

of the Swachh Bharat Mission and Swachh Swamaan.

As we think, so we become. Thoughts lead to ideas, which lead to a vision of the future, which leads to action that creates the world we envision. If we believe Satyug is to be our future, we need to transform ourselves through good karma, which will create a Satyugi Bharat. This can be achieved by using the instrument of transformation that our spiritual past has given us, that is Rajyoga meditation, which helps us transform our thoughts and inculcate the values of Satyug. These values enrich our world and will be the foundation of a new and transformed Bharat. *

In Lighter Vein

Some definitions:

- Politician: A guy who is ready to sacrifice your life for his country.
- Diplomat: A person who thinks twice before saying nothing.
- Education: Forcing abstract ideas into concrete heads.
- Proverb: A short sentence based on long experience.
- Lock: A device that informs a burglar about the absence of occupant and hence eases burglary.
- Actor: A man who tries to be everything except himself.

Simple Living, High Thinking

Aruna Ladva, Kuwait

“Simplicity is the ultimate form of sophistication”

— Leonardo Da Vinci

Some people may think that living simply means to live a life of renunciation, but if we really understand the motivations behind simplicity, we would realize that it is really beauty in disguise.

Most religious and spiritual faiths advocate self-sacrifice as a means to enlightenment, yet we should not mistake simplicity for poverty. Poverty may not be by choice, but simplicity certainly is a conscious choice made in a state of heightened awareness. A simple mind, like a simple house, means to be uncluttered, clear, light and essenceful. When the rubbish is out of the way, we have room to be creative, inspired and productive.

One of Mahatma Gandhi's greatest strengths was simplicity, which he exemplified till his dying day. His simple loincloth was an indication of a much bigger message. In the face of increasing industrialization which promised wealth, but in fact promoted greed, his message was: “Live simply so that others may simply live”. There has never been a time such as now when that message needs to be heeded.

There is beauty in simplicity. Living a simple life frees up so much of our time, money and energy, which allows us to focus our energy on greater pursuits in life. The joy of buying a pair of Gucci glasses may last for a few moments, yet the happiness of having a simple but joyful peak experience in life will stay with us forever. And if we designate

SEEK YOUR
HAPPINESS IN
HAPPINESS OF ALL.

To be simple in life is to be free from dependencies. Anything that I am attached to will cause me pain when it is ripped away from me.

time to exploring higher states of consciousness, we can certainly taste the higher echelons of being, and gain strength and power from them. These experiences are unique, and touch the soul deeply.

To be simple in life is to be free from addictions and dependencies. If someone or something, such as certain people, or certain foods, clothes or places, are pulling my attention, then I am bound by them or that, and they have me dancing to their tune. In spiritual language, it would be said that I have attachments to these things, and anything that I am attached to will cause me pain when it no longer fulfils my expectations, or when it is ripped away from me. As I begin to shed inessential things from my life, I become lighter and happier as a result.

When we are simple, we take only as much as we want from the planet, and no more. We respect nature and the environment. This in turn creates good karma with the five elements, which brings blessings and good energy into my life.

Confucius said, “Life is really simple, but we insist on making it complicated”, and this is so true of the human world. When we are in our ego-driven ‘body conscious’ state of mind, we

easily complicate things. In ‘soul consciousness’ – our original state of purity, simplicity and innocence, we can begin to enjoy life like a child in a playground. We are pure and innocent, but at the same time very wise, as we are in touch with our higher mind. In body consciousness, the ego generates arrogance; it likes to expand and complicate things, and focus on the negative, bringing with it even more problems for us to solve. As we learn to simplify things in our mind, everything runs smoothly and easily; things just seem to work out in our world.

We need to begin to cultivate a simple mind. Have few, yet powerful thoughts. Avoid being skeptical, mistrusting, or judgmental – give others the benefit of the doubt. Stay positive – when I am positive, fewer but powerful thoughts emerge, such as ‘Yes, I can do it!’ or, ‘It’s going to be OK’. When I am negative, the door is open to endless possibilities.

Have simple relationships. This means letting go of the ones that complicate your life or give you pain and sorrow, or at least withdrawing your negative

attention from them. Have simple conversations in which there are few words, but they are infused with respect.

Have a simple life, want less and do less every day. Look at your to-do list and decide to do only that which is necessary or genuinely productive. Dress with less – don’t spend too much time or money on ‘feeling good’. Make space and time for what you enjoy, and not just for what you have to do each day. Leave enough time between tasks and appointments – this will help you stay calm and relaxed.

There is a story of a tourist who came to visit a venerated sage in India. He was shocked to see the empty residence of the sage. The tourist exclaimed, “Where are all your possessions?” In reply, the sage asked him the same question, “Where are yours?” The tourist replied, “But I am a guest here”. The sage responded, “Well, I am a guest in this world”.

When we unburden ourselves of all attachments, unnecessary desires, time-wasting and negative thinking, we can travel lightly, happily and joyfully in this world.*

PARENTS

Let parents bequeath to their children not riches, but the spirit of reverence. —Plato

At the end of the day, the most overwhelming key to a child’s success is the positive involvement of parents. —Jane D. Hull
Children begin by loving their parents; as they grow older they judge them, sometimes they forgive them. —O.Wilde

There is no friendship, no love, like that of the parent for the child. —H.W. Beecher

There are no illegitimate children—only illegitimate parents.
—Judge Leon R. Yankwich

Incorporeal God Shiva, the being of light, is the parent of all parents — the Supreme parent. —BK Kamlesh



Cuttack, Odisha: BK Brijmohan speaking during Shrimad Bhagavad Gita Mahasammelan, held at Shaheed Bhawan. Other speakers on the dais are Hon'ble Justice V. Eswaraiah, former Acting Chief Justice of Andhra Pradesh High Court, Dr. Pushpa Pandey, Gita scholar and author, Jabalpur; Prof. Alekh Chandra Sarangi, former Vice Chancellor, Shri Jagannath Sanskrit University, Puri, and BK Kamlesh Didi, head of the Brahma Kumaris' Cuttack Sub-Zone.

EDITORIAL

Talking peace and preparing for war

The Nobel Peace Prize for 2017 has been awarded to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), a coalition of 400 NGOs from across the world. The honour has been bestowed on ICAN “for its work to draw attention to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons, and for its groundbreaking efforts to achieve a treaty-based prohibition of such weapons.”

Each year, the prestigious Nobel prizes are awarded to individuals or institutions that have contributed significantly to humanity, and those that have accomplished feats in their respective fields through innovation and determination. The Peace Prize, however, is of a different category. It is given not for establishing peace, but for attempting to do so. In a world of diverse pieces, divided by geographical and ideological boundaries, harmony looks like a distant dream. Pursuing that dream persistently is considered worthy of recognition.

While this year’s Peace Prize supports the campaign against nuclear weapons, it has ironically been awarded at a time when the world is facing the danger of a nuclear war. Recent hostile verbal exchanges between the leaders of the most powerful nation and another country, and declarations by various heads of state about the expansion of their nuclear arsenals, have created an atmosphere of tension. This, many people feel, is a sign of the world heading for Armageddon.

It is difficult to find out the total number of nuclear weapons that exist today. However, rough estimates have been made by several agencies. According to the ICAN website, nine countries together possess about 15,000 nuclear weapons. Around 1,800 such weapons have been put on high alert by two leading powers, the United States and Russia, so that they can be launched within minutes of a warning. When detonated, a single nuclear warhead can kill millions of people, and the after-effects of a nuclear explosion can persist for decades.

The world has already suffered the devastating consequences of the use of two atom bombs. The latest military technology is far more destructive. When atomic bombs were dropped on two Japanese cities during the Second World War, a rationale given by the victorious nations was that such a step was necessary to bring the war to an end. If not for those bombings, the war would have continued for much longer, they argued.

After the war, several countries developed their own nuclear weapons stockpiles, claiming that it was necessary to deter an attack by their enemies. They said the weapons were meant only for deterrence. Several treaties were signed among nuclear states promising no first use of the weapons and no proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. They agreed to work towards nuclear disarmament and global security. Now, however, with a few states hinting at further expansion of their nuclear arsenals, the discourse has shifted from deterrence to defence. It is said that the road to hell is paved with good intentions, and this saying best describes the present scenario.

It is clear that we are not moving any closer to being a nuclear-free world. Little is being done to dismantle nuclear weapons. Rather, nations are refining the technology of destruction, and more countries are joining the nuclear weapons league. So, despite our collective desire for peace, and despite our symbolic recognition of efforts in this direction, the truth remains that we are vigorously pushing humanity to the edge. Once created, the weapons cannot remain unused forever, so all of us likely face a tragic future.

But all is not lost. Spirituality gives us hope even in this bleak scenario. As life is eternal, the world cannot reach a state of total annihilation. If a nuclear holocaust occurs, it will have a cleansing effect, destroying all that is old and rotten. The irresolvable crises facing humankind will meet their end in this colossal cleaning process. And following this phase of rejuvenation will emerge a virgin new reality, a world of peace and joy. In simple words, the destruction we fear will trigger the transformation we all desire. There is surely light at the end of this dark tunnel, and a grand vision beyond, so let us keep the faith and purify our minds to be eligible for the coming golden era.★

Gleanings from the press



Pumpkin weighing 1,072 kg

Joel Holland celebrates after winning 44th World Championship Pumpkin weigh-off in Half Moon Bay, California. His pumpkin weighed 2363 pounds (1072 kg). (*Times of India*)

Reading boosts empathy, brain study shows

Reading stories is a universal experience that may result in people feeling greater empathy for each other regardless of a person’s origin or language, a study has found. Researchers at the University of Southern California found patterns of brain activation when people find meaning in stories. (*Press Trust of India*)

Gamer loses vision after 24-hour binge

A 21-year-old Chinese woman has been rendered partially blind after playing video games on her smartphone for 24 hours, according to media reports. The unnamed gaming addict was reportedly playing the multiplayer online game “Honour of Kings” when she suddenly lost vision in her right eye, the South China Morning Post reported. (*News Item*)

Air pollution affects children’s memory

Exposure to air pollution on the way to school and back home can have damaging effects on children’s cognitive development and reduce their working memory, a study has found. The study published in the journal *Environmental Pollution*, led by researchers from the Barcelona Institute for Global Health (IS Global) in Spain, assessed the impact of fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and black carbon during the walking commute to and from school. (*PTI, London*)

Sugar awakens cancer cells

A nine-year joint research project conducted by VIB, KU Leuven and VUB has established a link between sugar and cancer. For a while, scientists have known about the Warburg effect, a phenomenon in which cancer cells rapidly break down sugars and stimulate tumour growth. However, evidence for this has been elusive until this study, which may have far-reaching impacts on tailor-made diets for cancer patients. (*Nature Communications*)

Exercise may increase self-control

Exercise is known to have considerable psychological effects. It can lift moods, for example, and expand people’s sense of what they are capable of doing. A new study suggests that exercise may increase our willpower and perhaps help us avoid making impulsive choices. (*New York Times*)

Bhoola Bhai

And our friend Bhoola Bhai on Temple Street agrees with J.Chase that money can’t buy love, health, happiness, or what it did last year!



What is consciousness?

There has been an age-old controversy about whether the body and the mind are two separate entities or whether the mind is an epiphenomenon of the body, its nervous system and the brain. In the East, sages pondered over this question deeply and, on various counts, came to the conclusion that there is, in every living body, a sentient being or personality which continues to exist even after the body is cremated. They called it *atma* or Purusha, i.e. the self or the indwelling soul. In the West also, many philosophers have discussed the question threadbare and have given weighty arguments to establish the reality of the existence of a conscious person apart from the body. Since the question of the existence of the metaphysical entity called mind or soul is very important, it would be beneficial to consider it in some detail in the light of modern science.

In the light of modern science

Physiology tells us that bodies are made up of cells which, in turn, are constituted of molecules. It further says that the cells of our bodies are constantly changing so that, in a period of about seven years, the old cells change so enormously that, at the end of that period, one can say that all those cells have been 'replaced' by new ones. There is now not a single cell in one's body which was there seven years ago. Thus the body is not the same as it was seven, fourteen or twenty-one years

Consciousness is an attribute not of the body but of the spiritual entity called soul.



ago. For example, at my physical age of fifty years, my body has undergone at least seven 'renovations'. During this period, there have been enormous changes in my brain cells also. But, as far as my consciousness (implied by the word 'I am') is concerned, I feel like the person I was seven, fourteen or twenty-one years ago. I remember the friends I had when my body was seven years old, and the books I read when the body was fourteen years of age, and this evidently implies that one conscious entity (which I am) has continued to exist throughout this period.

This, therefore, shows that 'consciousness' and 'body' are two different entities, and that while the latter changes, grows and decays with age, the former maintains its identity and continuity. On the other hand, if a person is considered as a mere body (brain included), the fact of his continuous identity and continuous consciousness cannot be explained, for the cells of his body and brain have changed tremendously every seven years.

Two different realities

Furthermore, one can clearly observe that the body and consciousness are two entirely different realities, for, while the body tires, the consciousness does not, though it may get bored. The body may get exhausted of physical energy, whereas the mind or consciousness may feel the spiritual energy grow with the years. While the body ages with years, the mind gets only wiser or more experienced. The heart, which is a part of the body, may grow weaker with age, but the consciousness or mind may grow in its power to love or hate. Thus, the two are different entities; whereas the body is cellular and molecular, i.e. physical, and is subject to the laws of chemistry, physics and physiology, the mind, consciousness or soul is psychic, spiritual or metaphysical. * (Purity Bureau)

What makes you you?

Maureen Goodman, London

The things by which we generally define ourselves - appearance, personality, abilities, work, relationships, etc - can all change. Our sense of self can be influenced by what people say, the situations around us and the problems we face. What is it, then, that defines who we are?

Much of the unhappiness and insecurity in the world is a result of our limited, external perception of ourselves. I believe it is the inner, spiritual identity that people are searching for today. This spiritual identity can give me hope in a situation of despair, show me a solution to any problem and inspire me to change the direction of my life. And it is through

Much of the unhappiness and insecurity in the world is a result of our limited, external perception of ourselves.

recognising and experiencing my spiritual self that I can connect with God and receive the strength and broader vision that I need to contribute positively to this world.

A good way to get to know myself on a deeper level is to start with the question: what do I really value in life? I will probably find that I value qualities such as love, happiness, compassion... the things that make me feel valued and bring inner happiness. I then think about whether or not the way I live my life reflects that - and what is there in my life that matches what I value?

Seeing myself as a spiritual being, I rediscover my natural, inner treasures of peace, love, purity, happiness and wisdom, which I tend to forget. It's like having a beautiful instrument in my cupboard. Well, why not play it? When I experience these qualities within myself,

I become a much happier, more stable person. Understanding my own value, I am able to keep my self-respect, even when someone is trying to bring me down, and so can help others come out of their limited perception.

This is why it is so important to spend time in meditation every day. It helps me understand myself, reflect in this deeper way and become strong in my spiritual identity, so that I maintain my happiness and inner strength - and can influence the world around me in a positive way.*

Humour

Rajan's friend: After talking with you for half an hour, my headache has gone.

Rajan: It has not gone anywhere. It is in my head.

Grandpa: How are you getting on at school, Jimmy?

Jimmy: Jolly fine, Grandpa. I am centre forward in hockey and right back in lessons.

Museum curator: That's a 2000-year-old vase you've just smashed.

Visitor: Thank heaven! Thought it was a new one.





Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh : Mr. Shivraj Singh Chauhan, Hon'ble Chief Minister receiving Godly gift after inaugurating tableau of 'Chaitanya Shiv Shaktis'.



Anubhuti Meditation & Retreat Centre, California, USA : BK Sister Chandru, Director, Mr. Jim Paymar, Journalist, Mr. Manch Nosuchi, Interfaith Leader lighting candles to celebrate Deepawali Festival.



Asia Retreat Centre, Malaysia : BK Asha Didi from Delhi, BK Meera Didi, BK Savitha and others cutting cake to celebrate 25th anniversary of Asian Retreats.



Shantivan, Abu : BK Chandrika behn, National Coordinator Youth Wing showing exhibition in 'Peace Messenger Bus' to BK Nirwair bhai, Secretary General of Brahma Kumaris and Dadi Ratan Mohini, Jt. Chief of Brahma Kumaris Pic. left 'Peace Messenger Bus'



The Fourth Doll

A sage presented a prince with a set of three small dolls. The prince was not amused. "Am I a girl that you give me dolls?" he asked. "This is a gift for a future king," said the man. "If you look carefully, you'll see a hole in the ear of each doll." "So?" The sage handed him a piece of string. "Pass it through each doll," he said.

Intrigued, the prince picked up the first doll and put the string into the ear. It came out from the other ear. "This is one type of person," said the man. "Whatever you tell him comes out from the other ear. He doesn't retain anything."

The prince put the string into the second doll. It came out from the mouth. "This is the second type of person," said the man. "Whatever you tell him, he tells everybody else." The prince picked up the third doll and repeated the process. The string did not reappear from anywhere else. "This is the third type of person," said the man. "Whatever you tell him is locked up within him. It never comes out."

"What is the best type of person?" asked the prince. In answer, the man handed him a fourth doll. When the prince put the string into the doll, it came out from the other ear. "Do it again," said the sage. The prince repeated the process. This time the string came out from the mouth. When he put the string in a third time, it did not come out at all. "This is the best type of person," said the sage. "To be trustworthy, a man must know when not to listen, when to remain silent and when to speak out." *



Mr. Anil Bajjal, Hon'ble Lt. Governor of Delhi being greeted by BK Meera Didi on the occasion of Deepawali.

Ranchi, Jharkhand : Ms. Draupadi Murmu, Hon'ble Governor of Jharkhand being applied tilak by BK Nirmala on the occasion of Deepawali and Durga Puja.



Peace is the only battle worth vaging.

Spiritual Silence — the way to communicate with the Divine

Silence is the bridge of communication between the Divine and the divine in humans. Silence is where I find what is most precious.

Spiritual silence is the positioning of the heart and mind in readiness for communication with the One. It is communication based neither on repetitive words nor on intellectual theories or asking for the fulfilment of limited desires. Sacred communication is the harmonizing of the original self with the Eternal One.

Spiritual silence gives me energy, pure and selfless, from the Creative Source, to burst out of the cocoon of dust and routine, opening up unlimited horizons of new vision. To release the self from negativity, I require silence. Absorbed in its depths, I am renewed. In this renewal the mind clears itself, facilitating a different perception of reality. The deepest perception of all is my own eternity.

The act of silence is as necessary for living as breath is for physical life. Strength for living necessitates finding a point of stillness from which I begin and to which I return every day: an oasis of inner peace. Silence brings my mental and emotional energy to a point of concentration, where I can be still. Without this inner stillness, I become like a puppet pulled here and there by the many different strings of external influences. This inner point of stillness is the seed of autonomy which cuts the strings, then the loss of energy ceases.

Silence heals. Silence is like a mirror. Everything is clear. The mirror does not blame or criticize but helps me to see things as they are, providing a diagnosis to release me from all types of wrong thinking. How does silence do this? Silence emerges from the original peace of the self; a peace that is innate, divine and, when invoked, flows through one's being, harmonizing and healing every imbalance. Silence is full and it fills; gently, powerfully, consistently active.

To create silence, I step within. I connect with my eternal self: the soul. In that place of unblemished tranquility, as if in a timeless womb, the process of renewal and restructuring begins. There, a new pattern of pure energy is woven.

In this introspective space I reflect. I recollect what has been forgotten for a long time. I concentrate slowly and gently, and as I do so, those original spiritual blueprints of love, truth and peace emerge and are experienced as personal and eternal realities. Through these, quality begins to enter life. Quality is a closeness to something purer and

When silence is deep,
when there is complete
concentration on One,
the human soul not only
glimpses God but is
also absorbed in sacred
communication with the
Supreme.

truer in ourselves. Quality is the principle for more enlightened thought and for integrity of action. In that space, silence teaches me how to listen, how to develop an openness to God.

Listening guides me into the right position, opening the channel of receptivity. Receptivity aligns me to the reality of God; a very necessary alignment if I am to truly know and be one with Him. For receptivity I must clear myself of myself. I must stand clean, bare, simple, stripped of artificiality; then genuine communication begins.

As I listen, I receive; as I receive, I feel and reflect, and gradually move into concentration; concentration is when I am completely absorbed in one thought. Where there is love, concentration is natural and steady, like the still candle flame radiating its aura of light. The thought in which one is absorbed becomes one's world. When the human mind is absorbed in the thought of God, the person feels resurrected, the harmony of reconciliation is deeply felt. In this silent link of love, one becomes fully reconciled, not as an intellectual process but as a state of being. I awaken. This wakefulness is where I am fully conscious of Truth. Simultaneously, I become conscious of the illusion in me and around me and of the effort needed to remove it.

The wakefulness enables me to respond and perceive what I would not normally notice, either on the natural or the supernatural level. In wakefulness, in this heightened state of knowing, a person spiritualizes the self; he or she becomes a truer being. Within silence the subtle invisible rays of concentrated thought meet God, this is the power of silence, this is often called "meditation". Sound cannot

achieve this meeting with God. Sound can only praise and glorify, through song or chant, the closeness or union with the divine, but it cannot create it. Only silence creates the practical experience of union.

Concentrated silence is the wordless focus of pure attention on the One. Love for that One makes the focus easy and steady, fulfilling. This closeness of the self with the Supreme inevitably inspires the desire for change in the self; inspiration to better the self, to make the self worthy by realising the original potential and, where one can, sharing the fruits of that realized potential with others. This sharing is not achieved through saying a lot, but rather through the integrity of personal example.

In silence, the deepest orientation of consciousness is the desire to achieve personal perfection. This desire is a result of the divine flow of energy entering the human consciousness and inspiring belief in one's own worth. Personal perfection is accepted as being possible; it's the faith given by God as a gift to the soul. The possibility of perfection is accepted because the soul knows it is not alone in its effort; it constantly has the support of Divine Love to achieve its goal.

In its connection with God, the soul is filled and feels itself complete; it has found what it was looking for. Divine love works especially through silence; the soul is awakened from its sleep of ignorance and given new life, as in the story of Sleeping Beauty. The soul is the Sleeping Beauty, God is the prince and ignorance is the witch who casts her magic spell of slumber upon the princess. God's love for the soul is such that it is not stopped by any darkness or barrier but reaches the soul to awaken it, bringing it back to life, back to reality. Love breaks the iron spell.

It is through Love that I, as a soul, am awakened and acknowledge my eternity. My reality is far more than my material appearance. My eternity is my reality. This is the truth of my existence. In Greek, the word for truth is 'alitheia' which means 'not to forget'. The human being is under a very deep forgetfulness; an amnesia of spirit. I cannot achieve the awakened state, the true state of myself with my own skills of intellect. Attainment of Truth is not a matter of cleverness; I can only awaken when God helps me to remember. To remember is real knowing, it is truth.

To achieve inner change, silence has to be love-filled, not only peace-filled. Many think that it is enough just to experience peace in the silence of meditation in order to achieve transformation of consciousness. Peace stabilizes; peace harmonizes and gently quietens; peace lays the foundation. However, love actively inspires; love is a catalyst for change; love moves the universe. Love moves all things towards their original freedom and happiness.

Both peace and love are needed and both, in their archetypal form, come from God, the universal and immutable Source. It is this God-filled silence that restores a human being and the earth to their original state.

In silence, we realize that it is not only a return to the roots but, even more, it is a return to the seed, to the beginning; it is return to God, a return to myself, a return to right relationship.*

(Purity Bureau)

MACHINE

- Men have become the tool of their tools. —*Thoreau*
- One machine can do the work of fifty ordinary men; no machine can do the work of an extraordinary man. —*E. Hubbard*
- Man is slow, sloppy and a brilliant thinker; the machine is fast, accurate and stupid. —*Anonymous*
- They degrade the labourer to the level of an appendage of a machine and destroy every remnant of charm in his work. —*K. Marx*
- No machine can do original thinking, nor can it have feelings or emotion, nor can it grow from small to big or reproduce like a human being. —*Dadi Ratan Mohini*

Questions & Answers with Dadi Janki

Chief of Brahma Kumaris, Mount Abu

The Healing Mind

I make a point of creating thoughts and feelings of happiness, peace and benevolence, which make me feel better – not worse.”

– Dadi Janki

How can I not worry when my body is unwell?

Our response to pain can cause as much distress as the pain itself – so we need to learn how to use our minds to help, not hinder, our recovery. I have spent many years both as a nurse and a patient, and have seen how silence works alongside science in the healing process.

I can use the power of my mind to step back from what is happening in my body. By observing what is happening, instead of being caught up in it, I free myself from negative thoughts and feelings. I make a point of creating thoughts and feelings of happiness, peace and benevolence, which make me feel better – not worse.

It is important not to suppress what is in my heart, as this can impede healing. Let me listen to my heart with love and honesty. Honesty gives me spiritual power to deal with the situations I have to face. But I must be careful not to take on sorrow, for that weakens me. If I keep having pure, positive thoughts and good wishes for myself and for others, then I will be cared for, I will receive power and my mind will become strong and in this way I will help the body to heal.

Healing Anger

There is a lot of anger and resentment between teachers and young people, which is unproductive – it doesn't help things. How can I deal with this anger better?

I can learn to stay peaceful inside and share that feeling with young people, so that they can free themselves from their own anger. If someone throws something at me, like an insult or an angry comment, I can just let it drop and leave it lying there. By not picking



up another person's anger, I protect myself and at the same time give them the chance to take it back.

To be angry is to be out of control, and so someone who is angry deserves our love and compassion more than ever. By staying in my own peace and patience and keeping my self-respect, I help others to do the same. By seeing people's good qualities, I empower both myself and them. This is true generosity.

When I create sweetness inside, I can share it with others. For this I need to spend time in silence and really get to know and love my true, spiritual self and connect with the Divine. At the Brahma Kumaris, we use the words, 'Om shanti', which mean 'I am a peaceful soul', to remind us of who we really are - no matter what is happening around us. To be peaceful is to be powerful. It is also our natural way of being.*

Meeting Life's Challenges

Neville Hodgkinson, UK

To be able to generate and sustain inner power you need a change of attitude, vision, and perception. This has been my own experience and it has made a huge difference to me. But it is no small matter; you are talking about radically changing your outlook on life. It's a conceptual shift to understand that there can be space between you, the observer of life, and the part you are playing in it.

When you see yourself as a physical being, then, because the material world is in a state of constant flux, keeping up with change becomes progressively draining. You suffer, because your sense of who you are is defined by those things that can be at risk - like your job, your partner,

There can be space between you, the observer of life, and the part you are playing in it.

your health. You lose power in the sense that you lose equanimity, happiness and clarity of judgement. You also lose your compassion, your ability to be sensitive to others, because of being needy yourself.

My understanding now is that we've all come from the Seed, a Source of goodness, peace and compassion - which is our original nature too. When we let go of the thinking patterns that create selfishness, we start to experience that original nature and this puts us on the same wavelength as the Source.

Divine protection isn't about helping us pass our exams or earn more money, let alone win a war; it is at a level where what is protected is the flow of goodness, unselfishness and joy that human beings experience when they are able to live true to their innermost nature. Right now, the

world seems to be re-awakening to the need for this kind of power.

When we learn to align with Divine purpose, it is as though we ride a wave that carries us over what might otherwise have seemed like insuperable obstacles. This is a powerful way of thinking to help us in our everyday efforts to live by our highest values.*

(Neville Hodgkinson is a writer and journalist, specialising in health and science issues. He has been practising Raja Yoga meditation for 30 years.)

What's in a name

- The most shaky author is: Shakespeare
- The quickest one: Jonathan Swift
- The most childish one: Tolstoy
- The richest one: Goldsmith
- The heaviest one: Milton
- The tallest one: Longfellow
- And the most recent one: Newton.

In Lighter Vein

- Elephant: A mouse built to government specifications!
- Neighbour: One who knows more about your affairs than you do!
- What is a secret?
It is something you tell one person at a time.
- What is the height of secrecy?
Offering blank visiting cards.
- What is the height of coincidence?
Your father and mother getting married on the same day.



Gumla, Jharkhand : After inaugurating Durga Tableau are Mr. Sudarshan Bhagat, Hon'ble Union MoS for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, BK Shanti and Mr. Kamlesh Oraon, former MLA.



Seoni, Shimla : Inaugurating 'Character Building Spiritual Seminar' are Mr. Acharya Devvrat, Hon'ble Governor of Himachal Pradesh, Mrs. Darshana Devi, Lady Governor, BK Amirchand Bhai from Chandigarh, BK Usha Didi & BK Prakash bhai from Mount Abu.



Goa : Mr. Surendra Furtade, Mayor, Ms. Lata Parekh, Dy Mayor and BK Vanita leading 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan' procession organised by local corporation.



BK Dr. Binny receiving 'Mahatma Gandhi Seva Medal' during Peace Day Celebration at AMITY University, Noida.



Bharatpur, Rajasthan : Mrs. Krishendra Kaur, Hon'ble Minister of Tourism flagged off 'Rajasthan Farmers Empowerment Campaign' along with Dr. P.K.Rai, Director, Mustard Research Centre, Dr. Amar Singh, Agriculture Scientist, BK Saroj and BK Kavita



Panipat, Haryana : Mr. Nayab Saini, Haryana Minister receiving a frame of God Shiva from BK Sarla Didi and BK Bharat Bhushan during International Senior Citizen Day celebrations.

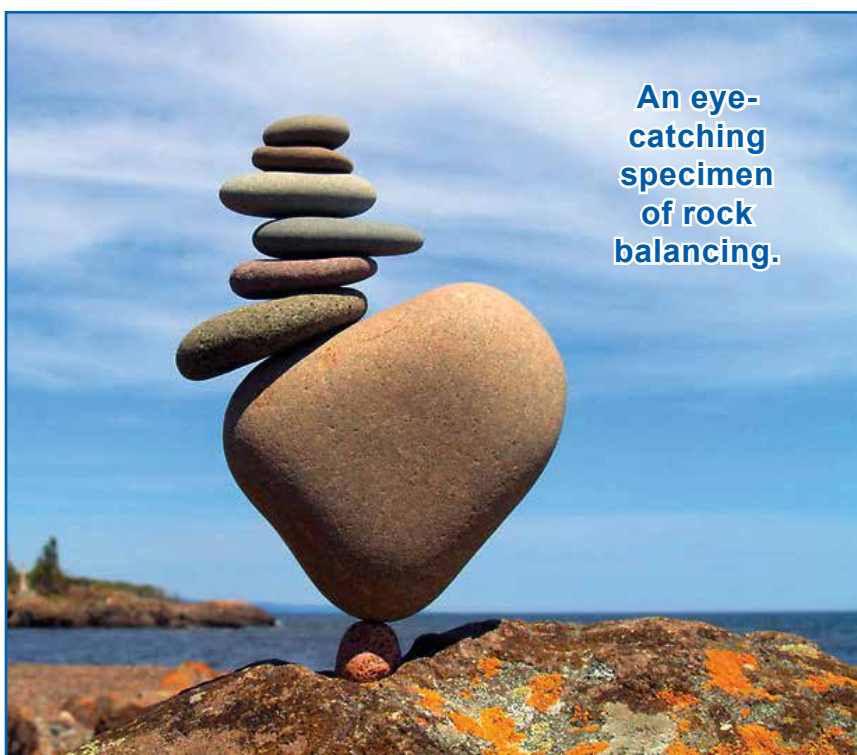


Milpitas, USA : BK Kusum speaking at a public programme on 'Deepawali the Festival of Light' organised at the new Rajyoga Centre.





Chandigarh: To mark the 80th Anniversary of the Brahma Kumaris organisation and the third anniversary of Achal Didi, dignitaries assembled at Tagore Theatre. In picture are Mr. Kaptan Singh Solanki, Hon'ble Governor of Haryana, Hon'ble Justices Rajan Gupta and Arun Palli of Punjab & Haryana High Court, Mr. Anurag Aggarwal, Home Secretary of Chandigarh, Major General MS Kandal (Retd.), BKs Amirchand Bhai, Karuna Bhai, Mruthyunjaya Bhai, BK Sister Meera from Malaysia and others.



An eye-catching specimen of rock balancing.



Bengaluru: BK Jayanti from London and BK Ambika with cultural performers during Deepawali celebrations.

Mr. Wise



Mr. Wise?
 Yes.
 Ignorance is bliss?
 Not always. For instance,
 ignorance of law is no excuse.
 You mean one needs to know
 where to be ignorant so as to enjoy the bliss of ignorance?
 I cannot say.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

And Mr. Wise?
 Come on.
 Knowledge is power?
 Knowledge is light and it becomes power only when put into
 practice. One gram of practice is better than a tonne of theory.
 What stops the knowledgeable from putting their knowledge into
 practice to create joy and happiness for the self and others?
 Too much thinking?
 I cannot say.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

Lastly...
 You're welcome.
 What is the reason behind the growing gulf between knowledge
 and practice?
 Crisis of character, which makes the modern generation scoff at
 values and indulge in glamourised vulgarity.
 Which makes Godly knowledge so relevant and significant in
 today's context?
 Yes, you are right.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

Tailpiece



A highway police patrol pulled over a driver and told him that because he was wearing his seat belt, he had just won Rs. 1 lakh in a safety competition.
 "What are you going to do with the money?" the officer asked.
 "I guess I'll go to driving school and get my licence," the man answered.
 "Don't listen to him" said the woman in the passenger seat. "He tries to be witty when he's drunk."
 This woke up the guy in the back seat, who saw the cop and said, "I knew we wouldn't get far in a stolen car."
 Then there was a knock from the trunk and a voice asked, "Are we across the border yet?"

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

Four pupils of a school promised one another to observe 24 hours of silence. During the day, this silence was carried through, but at night, when the oil lamps started to flicker and grow dim, one of them could not help instructing a servant, "Fix those lamps".
 The second turned to him in disapproval, "we are not supposed to say a word." A third scolded them: "you two are stupid: why did you talk?" And the fourth smugly declared, "I am the only one who hasn't said a thing."

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

A lawyer was defending a client who was being sued for returning a borrowed lawn mower in a damaged condition.
 'Your honour', said the lawyer, 'we refute this charge on the following grounds:
 In the first place, my client never borrowed the lawn mower at all. In the second place, it was already damaged when he borrowed it. And in the third place, it was in perfect condition when he returned it.'