

Point of View
 Yesterday is but today's
 memory and Tomorrow is
 today's dream.

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

God's wisdom for world transformation

During the course of history, many attempts have been made to change the way people think and the way they live, with the aim of realising utopian ideas, or simply to improve people's lives. Some of these endeavours took the form of religion, while others either died out or continued as movements or groups kept alive by faithful adherents. They succeeded to varying degrees in changing the conditions prevailing in their societies, but none could transform the whole world.

World transformation can take place only when a critical mass of humanity agrees on the need for it and makes the shift in consciousness necessary for that change. But for that to happen, the message of change must come from someone who is not a mere human.

No person, or an idea originating from a person, can find universal acceptance in our large, complex and diverse world, because the differences of opinion are too many for that to happen. But just as children stop quarrelling when a parent intervenes, humans put aside their disputes and pay attention when they find something that is universal and true, something that comes from a source that is above and beyond the fray of human affairs.

This message of change is not political or religious; it is a message of peace and love for each and every member of the human family. The Father of all human souls comes to relieve His children from sorrow when He sees that things have got out of hand and the children need His help.

There is a reference to this in religion. The Gita speaks of God re-establishing a righteous order in this world, while the Bible talks of the coming kingdom of God on Earth.

But He does not wave a magic wand to set everything right. Instead, He proceeds to remind the children of who they really are and how they can reclaim their peace and happiness.

God imparts spiritual wisdom to His children so that they can change this world for the better and create heaven on Earth. He begins by bringing the souls back to their true selves, pointing out that they are immortal spiritual beings and their bodies are costumes, wearing which they play different roles. When one role ends, they discard their costume, which is perishable, adopt a new one, and start playing another role.

The children also learn that forgetting their true identity and

International Yoga Fest 2016, New Delhi



At 3-Day International Yoga Fest 2016, organised by Ministry of AYUSH, Govt. of India, (Top) Mr. Rajnath Singh, Hon'ble Home Minister, Mr. Shripad Yesso Naik, Hon'ble Minister of AYUSH, with yoga masters and BK Shivani.
 (Above) A view of the audience at Talkatora Indoor Stadium. (Also see page 3)

identifying instead with their flesh and bones (bodies) is the root cause of their suffering. When people begin to think that they are bodies, they lose connection with the soul's innate qualities of peace, love and truth, and begin to be influenced by the sense organs and the material world.

They seek fulfilment in objects and other people, thinking that they will bring them happiness. This mistaken belief results in attachment to the perceived sources of happiness, fear of losing them, anger at the prospect of that happening, lust for whatever or whoever gives gratification, greed for more of the same, and ego.

All this produces uneasiness and pain within the self and creates sorrow and conflict in relationships as people compete with or use each other to satisfy their selfish needs and desires.

Since everyone is seeking happiness outside of themselves, the social, economic and political systems they create are designed to serve this purpose. This leads to increasing strife, inequality, and exploitation of people and nature.

The world has reached its present state by this process.

God shows us who we are and teaches us that happiness does not come from taking, owning or controlling other people or things; in fact, I don't have to look for it outside. I can experience happiness by remaining in touch with the natural qualities of the soul: purity, peace, love and truth. When I act on the basis of these qualities, I not only give happiness to others but also feel it myself, because every action has an equal and opposite reaction, and what I give comes back to me sooner or later.

This change in our way of thinking and behaving is the key to bringing about change in the world, and God makes His children realise that world transformation begins with transforming the self.

When one spiritually awakened individual sends out the light of pure love & peace, it touches those around him or her, and they respond similarly. When more and more people do this, the process of change accelerates, gaining momentum until it reaches the point where it changes the world.

That happens when the world is ripe for change. According to the Gita, when the world becomes extremely degraded, God incarnates Himself and rejuvenates it, returning everything to its pristine state. The present condition of the world, with its many crises, is a signal that the time for this change is very near. The world moves from a state of order to chaos and back to order again in eternally repeating cycles, like the cycles of nature, where a seed germinates, the sapling grows into a tree, which gradually ages and dies, but not before producing seeds that give birth to new trees.

When I recognise this present period of transition, I realise that it is time to give up my old ways of thinking and behaviour, which had brought me sorrow, and become my spiritual self again to free myself from bondage to ego, anger, attachment and all the other weaknesses that arise from identifying myself as a body.

This liberates me from sorrow and also enables me to help other souls achieve freedom. In this way, I become God's server in the task of world transformation. ★ (Purity Features)

Photo Gallery

When you stop learning you will soon neglect what you already know.



Om Shanti Retreat Centre, Gurgaon : Mr. S.C. Jamir, Hon'ble Governor of Odisha, in conversation with BK Asha and BK Brijmohan during his visit to the campus.



Karnal, Haryana : Inaugurating 'Prabhu Prem Sarovar' the new Godly Service Centre are Mr. Manohar Lal Khattar, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Haryana and Dadi Ratan Mohini, alongwith Mr. Bakshish Singh, Chief Parliamentary Secretary, BK Amir Chand, Justice V Eswaraiiah, BK Prem, Centre-in-charge and others.



Nairobi, Kenya : H.E. Mrs. Suchitra Durai, new Indian High Commissioner being presented Godly gift by BK Vedanti, Brother Parkin and BK Dipti.



Pune : Padmabhushan film director Mr. Shyam Benegal, winner of Dadasaheb Phalke award receiving Godly gift from BK Deepak.



Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh : Dadi Ratan Mohini, Jt. Chief of Brahma Kumaris being presented a sapling by Swami Chidanand Saraswati, President, Parmarth Ashram, Rishikesh at inauguration of Satyam Shivam Sundaram Spiritual Fair organised by Brahma Kumaris at Simhastha Kumbh Mela. Also in pic. are Mr. Paras Jain, State Education Minister, Mr. Makhan Singh, Secretary, Mela Organising Committee, BK Lakshmi, BK Mruthyunjaya and others.



Mehsana, Gujarat : Dadi Janki inaugurating 'Godly Palace' the newly built Godly Service Centre (pic. below) along with BK Sarla didi, BK Chandrika, BK Lakshmi, BK Hansa and others. BK Sarla, Mehsana sub-zone incharge is seen at extreme left.



Brahma Kumaris at International Yoga Fest



Twenty-eight yoga institutions from all over India participated in the three-day International Yoga Fest, a lead-up to International Yoga Day 2016. The Fest was organised by the Ministry of AYUSH, Govt. of India, and Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga, from April 20 to 22, 2016 at Talkatora Indoor Stadium, New Delhi. On day one, BK Shivani participated in the inaugural session and spoke on the meaning and significance of yoga. Sattvic breakfast was served by Brahma Kumaris to about 3,000 delegates and organisers. In the afternoon session, BK Sisters Vidhatri and Varnica presented a beautiful yoga fusion dance. In the evening session, BK Asha spoke on 'Techniques of Meditation'.

On day two, BK David Kilowsky from Mount Abu played reflective meditation music with 12 BK Rajyogi sisters and brothers meditating on the stage and a live commentary by BK Sapna for the capacity audience. On day three, BK Brijmohan gave a talk highlighting the significance of the coming together of so many yoga masters. In the valedictory session, chaired by Mr. Rajnath Singh, Hon'ble Union Home Minister, BK Shivani spoke on 'Yogic Lifestyle'.

Several Rajyoga workshops were also held daily for the public at the Brahma Kumaris pavilion, by BK Pushpa, BK Ansuya and BK Lakshmi. A book stall with audio-video CDs, photos exhibits and yogic farming items attracted a lot of visitors. A team comprising BK Suresh Gupta, BK Bhushan Jain, BK Meera, BK Vivek, BK Bharat Bhushan and many others worked untiringly to make it successful.★



Dynamics of Eternity

It's time for world renewal

When we talk of something being eternal, the image that usually comes up in the mind is that of something unchanging, strong and still. We expect that thing to be immune to any external influence, and to last forever. But in the material world, everything is subject to change.

The mighty mountains suffer erosion by the forces of nature, and can crumble one day. The vast oceans are constantly in motion, with the wind, currents and other factors affecting them. And contrary to popular belief, even diamonds are not forever: pure carbon, they can easily burn and vanish into a cloud of carbon dioxide.

Eternity is not a static state of imperviousness to change. It is a dynamic quality in which birth, growth and decay are followed by rejuvenation in a cyclic and never-ending process. We see this happening in nature, where seeds sprout, the shoots and leaves grow into a sapling that becomes a tree, which in turn grows, ages and dies. But the tree produces seeds that give birth to new trees, and so life goes on. The cycle of seasons, and that of day and night are eternally repeated in the same way.

Understanding this is important because it helps us align our lives with time. We already do this unconsciously: most people wake up in the morning, prepare for the day ahead and work through the day before they wind up their activities, relax a little and then retire for the night. This kind of a daily routine is in alignment with the times of

Now is the time
to awaken.
Awakened souls
are the 'seeds' that
will start the story
of life again in a
rejuvenated world.

the day and our biological clock, which regulates our metabolism and the activity of the endocrine and other systems that keep the body functioning and in good repair.

In a larger time frame too, our lives are regulated by time. Our activities as a child, a youth, an adult, and an old person usually conform to our age. Problems arise when we move against this natural order or try to reverse it. The natural process of growth and decay can be slowed down, and sometimes temporarily reversed, but it cannot be stopped. Trying to do so is akin to attempting to extend the day forever and stop nightfall. We can switch on as many lights as we want, but that will not turn night into day. It is futile and unnecessary to make such an attempt because day will follow night, but when we forget this fact, we invest our energy in trying to prevent the inevitable. It is better instead to prepare for the

inevitable so that it does not come as a surprise to us and we can deal with it happily, knowing that it is part of the process and will pass.

The world — the human family, other life forms and the elements of nature — goes through a similar cyclic process. The world was not always the way we see it now. There was a time when people lived in harmony with each other and nature. That was because human souls were aware of their spiritual identity and so were in touch with their inner peace, purity, love and truth.

They lived in happiness and contentment. But, over time, as they interacted with the material world, they began to lose touch with themselves and eventually forgot that they were spiritual beings. As a result, they were disconnected from their inner peace and contentment and began looking for it outside, in objects and other people, starting mankind's materialistic search for happiness. As people sought to acquire, consume and control resources, they began to compete with each other, leading to conflict. As the human family grew, the strife increased, and the souls began to violate natural and moral laws in order to satisfy their needs and desires. The result is the world we now live in.

There is a growing awareness among people that our present lifestyles have taken a heavy toll on nature, and that it may now be too late to stop a catastrophic breakdown of the ecological systems that have made human

life possible on this planet. But, in spite of gloomy predictions by scientists about the Earth becoming uninhabitable in the near future, there is no let-up in the global race to grab and use more resources. In fact, it remains the policy of most governments and corporations to boost production and consumption.

In parallel with this avaricious race driven by need and greed, there is a scramble among nations to make increasingly lethal weapons that can be used to intimidate, dominate and destroy.

Where all of this will lead is not difficult to see. No number of international conferences and agreements for peace, disarmament, or the environment can prevent the inevitable.

That is because all of this is part of the process of growth and decay of the human family. The final denouement will come, but it will be accompanied by a renewal, whereby human souls and nature will return to their original state and the story of life will begin anew on Earth.

As the time for this renewal approaches, many souls are reawakening to who they really are, and getting in touch again with their inner virtues. They realise that it is spiritual amnesia that has set humanity on its destructive course, and now is the time to awaken, recognise who they are, and to spread the message to their fellow humans. These awakened souls are the 'seeds' that will start the story of human life again in a rejuvenated world after the forces of destruction unleashed by man finally put an end to the miseries of the world and pave the way for a fresh start in the eternal cycle of life.★

(Purity Features)

Words of Wisdom

- A still tongue makes a wise head.
- Knowledge without application is useless.
- Only a busy person can enjoy leisure.
- Carve your name on hearts, not on marble.
- When you lose, do not lose the lesson.
- Greater than being great is being grateful.
- Good reputation is a person's greatest asset.
- We reveal our character in our prejudices.
- It is not the distance but the first step that matters.



Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh: Inaugurating 'Satyam Shivam Sundaram Spiritual Fair', organised by Brahma Kumaris at Simhasth Kumbh Mela, are (L-R) Mr. Paras Jain, State Education Minister; Mr. Makhn Singh, Secretary, Mela Organising Committee, Swami Chidanand Saraswati, President, Parmarth Ashram, Rishikesh, BK Atam Prakash, Dadi Ratan Mohini, BK Lakshmi and BK Mruthyunjaya.

The Power of Thoughts

All physical reality is made up of vibrations of energy. Our thoughts, too, are vibrations of energy. The material world is intimately linked to the subtle world of awareness, attitude, thoughts and feelings. We are radiating energy all the time. The world around us is a reflection of our thoughts. We have all seen the image of a stone dropping in water and the ripples that are created. Similarly, we are all constantly sending out 'vibes' or the subtle energy of thoughts and influencing our environment.

Conversely, we are getting influenced by other people's energy. Any negative or positive event is a result of such exchange of energy and the ripple effect between humans. An attitude that is predominant in our nature creates subtle vibrations around us, and over a period of time, these consistent vibrations create a certain kind of environment. We can sense or feel the vibes of any place. The environment or vibes in



New York: BK Gayatri, UN Representative of the Brahma Kumaris, speaking at the handover event of Interfaith Climate Change Statement to World Leaders, signed by 270 high-level faith leaders and received by the President of the General Assembly.

a place of worship such as a temple, an academic institution, or a natural resort are markedly different from the environment in a pub, a hospital or crowded public transport.

There have been interesting studies on the effect of thoughts and feelings on matter such as water,

The vibes in a place of worship such as a temple are markedly different from the environment in crowded public transport.



words show brilliant, complex, and colourful snowflake patterns. In contrast, polluted water, or water exposed to negative thoughts, forms incomplete, asymmetrical patterns with dull colours.

We now have profound evidence that we can heal and transform ourselves and our planet by the thoughts we choose to think and the ways in which we put those thoughts into action. It reminds us that we have to be careful about the quality of energy we are emanating, even though it is invisible.

It also reminds us to look at what is around us, and at what is coming to us. It is the result, in some way or the other, of what we have given out somewhere, sometime in the past.

When we understand this unbreakable law of human exchange, we begin to understand why things happen, why people's behaviour is the way it is, and why history repeats itself down the centuries.

All this makes us realise that we have to 'be creative' on the canvas of our mind, we have to be careful what we create and sustain in our mind. At every moment we are creating thoughts and it is the content and quality of these thoughts that will attract towards us what is 'on our mind'. Positive and pure thoughts will create a positive ripple effect and influence people and the environment around us positively. Negative thoughts will have the opposite effect.

To change our destiny, as well as the entire humanity's destiny, we have to begin by creating only those thoughts that bring benefit to us and others.★

(Purity Bureau)

VIBRATIONS

That every person, place and thing has a vibration has long been recognised. Vibrations are most easily distinguished in their extreme. With people, the eyes and the face are windows through which we can 'see' their vibrations. There are those who exude a vibrant vitality and power. Beyond the face it can be seen in their posture, actions, thoughts and words. They are magnetic. In contrast, the vibrations of one who is sick waft out like a repelling plague. Every place under the sun emits a vibration of its own. A pristine meadow with a carpet of grass and a crystal clear brook exude vibrations very different from that of concrete with a carpet of broken glass and a scum-coated gutter. A piece of fresh, ripe fruit is most unlike a piece of tripe.

To a certain extent vibrations fluctuate in all things, according to the time of day, the season, their age. The greatest range of vibrations is seen in the human mind and soul. Still, the extent to which things are in harmony with the Supreme or nature determines the quality and health of the vibration. Understanding this origin of vibrations enables us to become more discerning and selective about those with whom we come into contact.

We need to choose wisely to surround ourselves with the most health-promoting environment. Yet there are circumstances from which we cannot escape. In those situations we need pure, positive and powerful vibrations of our own. In that way we help heal others and elevate the environment.

A more challenging problem is to stabilize the fluctuations of our own vibrations. Negative thoughts can speed through our mind and affect our health with nauseating regularity. The sum total of the vibrational pattern is accumulated over time. Whether it is positive or negative, it will moderate the fluctuations. By grasping this, we can raise our vibrations consistently and protect ourselves from the influence of disease or distress-producing vibrations around us.

Vibrations, therefore, are at the deepest, innermost state of being. They are the result of our *sanskaras* — our predispositions. Whatever we are, that is what we will vibrate.★

plants and animals. Thoughts, like seeds, have a natural tendency to grow and manifest in your life, if you feed them with attention, interest and enthusiasm. Our thoughts pass from our conscious mind to our subconscious mind, which in turn, influences our actions in accordance with these thoughts. The power of the mind is part of the creative power of the universe, which means that our thoughts work together with it. Actions, situations and objects that we visualize frequently, eventually manifest on the material plane in a natural way. This manifestation does not happen overnight. We can use this process to change negative habits and build new, positive habits or skills.

Water takes the shape of whatever container holds it, whether it be a glass, a vase or riverbanks. Likewise, your mind will create and manifest ideas according to the images you habitually think of daily. This is how your destiny is created. A new life is created by new thoughts.

A creative and visionary Japanese researcher, Dr. Masaru Emoto, published a book, "The Message from Water", about the findings of his research. Dr. Emoto discovered that crystals formed in frozen water reveal changes when specific, concentrated thoughts are directed toward them. He found that water from clear springs and water that has been exposed to loving

Editorial

Groping in wilderness

Russian billionaire Yuri Milner, in collaboration with cosmologist Stephen Hawking, recently pledged \$100 million towards a 20-year research voyage to the star system closest to earth. Under the Breakthrough Starshot Project, multiple tiny crafts – designed using advanced nanotechnology and weighing a little more than a sheet of paper – would be propelled into space at one-fifth the speed of light using laser beams. These would collect data and images through ultra-small equipment fitted on them.

The prime reason behind such exploratory ventures has been scientists' desire to find out if there is a place that could substitute for earth, where disasters threaten our existence. Man has reached the moon and accessed images from Mars; the latest mission is to probe Pluto. However, we've not found evidence of life beyond earth that suggests suitability for human habitation elsewhere and merits further investment.

While we relentlessly look for greener pastures elsewhere, we are pushing the earth to the edge each day. Climate change is causing destruction across the globe. The air, water and soil have been heavily polluted, human health is deteriorating and we are losing our flora and fauna. We have ample data predicting a worse future unless we intervene urgently.

It thus makes greater sense to collectively focus on reviving our own planet, and diverting funds and expertise for this cause rather than wandering like this. Endlessly stretching our curiosity to explore space would be a colossal waste of resources, especially when we have many crucial issues to resolve at hand. Why continue to grope in wilderness when there's so much to be done at home?

Science has long been our companion on our trip to progress but its prime intervention has been in the physical world. A lot less is known about the metaphysical world, its truths and working. Prioritising matter over spirit has resulted in lopsided development. Our end products mostly fulfil material requirements rather than meet our humane needs. The majority of our inventions come with side effects, some so fatal that we fear our own destruction. When we are disconnected from the essential source of life, and our creations far removed from the vision of the Ultimate Creator, it is impossible to build an environment of peace and happiness – the fundamental aspiration guiding all our quests. We thus need to look inwards.

The human spirit or soul is the 'nanoest' of all things and is indestructible, sentient energy. We are each a soul operating through a body of matter, and not vice-versa; getting this equation wrong is the reason behind all our follies.

Souls originally reside in the soul world – a vast space that exists beyond this universe of planets and stars – and come down on earth at their respective times. Each soul dons a bodily robe for playing its role, then sheds it when a lifetime is over, and takes another one through the process of rebirth. All the soul's roles are recorded in it and it acts accordingly in the drama of life played out on earth.

The soul is innately wise, pure, peaceful, loving, happy, blissful and powerful. It wants to live and manifest all these qualities on earth and it employs its faculties – the mind, intellect and *sanskars* – to do so. The soul, however, loses its natural flight when it forgets its original identity and starts to identify with matter instead. Under this influence, its energy starts to get depleted and its three inner faculties become corrupt and disobedient. The soul is then compelled to act against its original qualities by vices such as lust, greed, anger, attachment and ego, which results in suffering.

All problems on earth stem from the adulteration of our inner world. Even global warming is the result of man acting against the environment under the influence of greed. But there is a way out for us. We souls can recharge ourselves with spiritual qualities by remembering our eternal parent – the Supreme Soul. He also resides in the soul world and is the ocean of all qualities that we originally embody.

Just as the utility of matter is made use of by science, anyone can tap into their spiritual resources through the power of silence. When we sit in the consciousness of our true identity and connect to Him via the power of thought, His spiritual energies are transferred to us. This is similar to a mobile phone's battery being recharged by connecting it to a source of electric current.

If we are able to benefit from this free-of-cost 'spiritual nanotechnology', and become sovereign rulers of our inner world, the physical world around us would automatically fall into place. Our choices would become benevolent, economical and for the larger good. We would then achieve happiness sooner and without much toil. ★

Gleanings from the press

Soon, you may get vegetarian capsules

There is a proposal to replace gelatin capsules with cellulose-based capsules which are of plant origin and are safer for use as compared to animal-based gelatin capsules. "The proposal has the support of various quarters in government. Besides, it is considered safer than gelatin because its plant-sourced. However, more scientific evaluation is needed before taking a final call," an official source said. As of now, the Bureau of Indian Standards has framed standards, norms and guidelines for manufacturing vegetarian capsules based on cellulose. Gelatin, a key element in capsules, is manufactured by processing bones, skin and tissues of cattle. Apart from pharmaceuticals, gelatin is also widely used in food products as a gelling agent, and in cosmetic products too. *(Times of India)*

Cough drugs may cause haemorrhage

Evidence collected over a few decades suggested that medicines administered to children for cough and cold are not only ineffective as a cure but also have dangerous side effects such as apnea, seizures and cerebral haemorrhage. Prescription of such medicines is rampant, says a study. *(Times of India)*

Ultra-thin sensor to detect air pollution in homes

Scientists in Japan, including one of Indian origin, have developed a graphene-based sensor and switch that can detect air pollution inside homes. The sensor detects individual carbon dioxide (CO₂) molecules and volatile organic compound gas molecules found in buildings, furniture and even household goods. These harmful gases are measured in parts per billion and are extremely difficult to detect with current environmental sensor technology, which can only detect concentrations of parts per million. The study was published in the journal *Science Advances*. *(PTI)*

An app to magnify phone screen

An application that can magnify a smartphone screen to potentially benefit low-vision users has been developed by researchers. The technology can benefit low-vision users, many of whom find smartphones' built-in zoom feature difficult to use. *(PTI)*

It's OK to drink before surgery

Surgery may never be comfortable, but at least some steps are being taken to ease the patient's thirst before an operation. Enough studies have been conducted now to remove the restriction against clear liquids before surgery, say researchers. Hunger and thirst before surgery is a complaint of one-third to half of all patients. But anaesthesia goes best with an empty stomach because solid food particles or acids that come back up from the stomach and enter the lungs can bring on serious, sometimes life-threatening consequences, say medical authorities. But liquids like water, apple juice and black coffee consumed up until two hours before surgery make little difference. *(News Item)*

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!



Inspirations from Dadi Janki

Chief of Brahma Kumaris

Humility is very useful

There are five things that will help you on your spiritual journey. First, have complete purity in your life – pure diet, pure intentions, etc. When there is purity, truth works automatically. We don't have to do anything to glorify our own name or the name of others. Then there will be patience and humility. The virtue of humility is very useful. We have to become egoless and viceless. When there's humility, there will then be sweetness. So, remember these five things: purity, truth, patience, humility and sweetness. You can't teach anything to others, but when they see you, they will want to become like you.

Spiritual Company

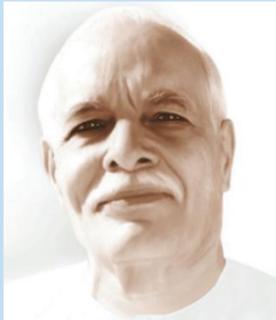
The atmosphere when we're together is such that no one has ordinary thoughts. Whatever is the quality of the atmosphere we create, so this is also the quality of the vibrations. These things cannot be taught, but we learn these things by being in spiritual company. Whatever the news is in the world, we have to share love, peace and happiness with one another and with the world. When we bring these qualities into our interactions, this will bring happiness. This experience of spiritual



sharing makes us forget things that are mundane and ordinary. These things we don't forget. They stay with us as memories that sustain us.

Brahma Baba said...

- Do not give sorrow, nor take sorrow.
- Whatever is to happen is taking place. There's benefit at every step.
- Live a constantly elevated and happy life.
- Give something to everyone who comes in your contact.
- Practise Rajyoga to settle past negative 'karmic' accounts.
- Let your heart be full of love and your head be always cool.
- Purity is royalty. It is the mother of peace and prosperity.
- Truth makes the soul constantly dance with happiness.
- Perform all actions in the state of yoga. A true 'Karma Yogi' will always be tireless.
- Never come under the influence of your 'sanskaras' (nature).
- Always have pure and positive thoughts.
- A contented soul will always remain light and happy.
- The more you practise detachment the more you will be loved by the world.
- The slightest mixture in your honesty will automatically distance you from God.
- Have pure feelings and good wishes for everyone.



To understand leadership

There are certain things that can only be learned by being in spiritual company. They cannot be taught. For example, what does it mean to be a leader from a spiritual perspective? To understand leadership, there has to be the inner awareness of the true self. When I understand this, it's not necessary for me to know someone through a physical connection or to know the name of someone's physical form. The meeting that happens through those loving feelings becomes very natural when I have been able to maintain pure thoughts and good feelings for everyone. Others naturally want to cooperate with someone who sees them in this pure way.

Creating a purposeful life

Because you are those who want to serve, you sometimes have questions about purpose in life. My purpose in life is to think good thoughts. No matter what someone may be like, they have virtues. They don't only have defects. Creating a purposeful life is learning to live with good wishes and pure feelings for the self and for others. When I look at you, I see your virtues, your qualities that have caused you to want to live a life with purpose. This desire to live a valuable life is what has caused us to remain close, isn't it? The heart feels that this is right. When we engage in pure thinking, there is only benefit for the self and for others. Live your life with the confidence that it's going to be good. Everything is going to turn out fine.



Abu, Shantivan: A view of the annual self-progress and service planning meeting of the Brahma Kumaris in Conference Hall. 1,600 representatives from all over India, including zone and sub-zone heads, teachers in-charge and centre supporters participated. On stage are (L-R) BK Brijmohan, BK Ramesh Shah, BK Nirwair, Dadi Janki, Dadi Hirdaya Mohini, Dadi Ratan Mohini, BK Mohini behn and BK Shashi behn.



Mumbai, Dombivli : At 40th Annual Day Celebrations of Dombivli branch (L-R) Mr. Rajendra Devlekar, Mayor, Mr. Ravindra Chavan, MLA, BK Nikunj, BK Nalini didi and BK Shaku behn.



Kurukshetra, Haryana : Justice V Eswariah, Chairman, Backward Classes Commission, Govt. of India, being presented Godly gift by BK Saroj behn at a public function. Also in pic. are BK Laxman bhai and BK Pushpa behn.



Mohali, Punjab : At 'Beti Bachao Sashakt Banao' campaign (L-R) BK Rama, Bibi Paramjit Kaur Landran, Chairperson, Punjab State Women Commission, BK Prem Lata, Mrs. F Nesara Khatoon, Chief Parliamentary Secretary Punjab, BK Sheela from Vashi, Mumbai and BK Kiran from Kullu.



Baroda, Mangalwadi : At Free Eye Camp organised by Global Hospital (L-R) BK Raj behn, Dr. Jaykrishna, Dr. Ketan Patel, Dr. Satish Upadhyay, BK Hari and BK Bhagwan.



Seeing Good



Below is an incident in the life of the Pandavs and Kauravs from the Hindu Holy epic Mahābhārata. In their childhood, the Pandavs and Kauravs studied together at the Ashram of their teacher, Sage Dronacharya. Yudhisthir, the eldest of the Pandavs, had gone through many difficulties in life, but was always content and happy. On the other hand, Duryodhan, the eldest of the Kauravs, despite having everything, was always miserable for some reason or the other.

One day, Sage Dronacharya said to Yudhisthir, "Go into town and meet as many people as you can. When you return this evening, tell me about the worst person that you met." Then, Dronacharya called Duryodhan and gave him similar instructions, "Duryodhan, my child, go into the town and meet as many people as you can. When you return this evening, tell me about the best and noblest man that you met."

Yudhisthir and Duryodhan set out on their quest. Each of them entered the town and met as many people as he could - young and old, rich and poor.

That evening, when Yudhisthir returned, he told Sage Dronacharya, "Gurudev, I met many people today. Each of them had some good quality that I lack. Thus, everyone I met today was superior to me in some way. So, I am convinced that I am the worst person and need to learn good qualities from others."

Just then, Duryodhan returned from the town and said to Dronacharya, "Gurudev, I met many people today and noticed that each person had some fault that I do not have. So, I am convinced that I am the best and noblest person of all!"

We, too, can be happy like Yudhisthir by learning from others' positive points, instead of pointing out their faults. We can remind ourselves of this story whenever we feel tempted to criticise or gossip about others. Regular spiritual practice removes our negative habits like criticising others, and develops good qualities like humility and learning attitude that ensure happiness.*



Navrangpur, Odisha : At 'Goodbye Diabetes' programme Mr. B Jugalkishore, IPS, Supdt. of Police, being given Godly gift by BK Dr. Shrimant Sahu from Mt. Abu and BK Neelam.

Delhi, Khanpur : At a programme 'Healthy Heart Healthy Mind' BK Asha & Dr. Mohit Gupta seen with Judges & Magistrates of various courts and their families residing at Saket Court residential complex.

Sir, you have given air travel bills even for places...where there's no airport.



Happiness Unlimited

Conversation between Sister Shivani and Suresh Oberoi adapted from popular TV series, 'Awakening with Brahma Kumaris'. (Contd. from last 'Purity')

First, I will take care of myself

Suresh Oberoi: I have been speaking to a few friends and they mentioned something called eustress – meaning good stress. They say we need that kind of stress and tension. One of my friends claims that he actually waits until he is stressed and time is less, because then he works best. How should one understand that?

Sister Shivani: It's a belief system. It is something that we are hearing everywhere around us – that unless there is stress I will not perform; if there is no stress I will become passive and laid-back. They call it the drive to perform, to achieve. So we need to ask ourselves: is it really true? For that I need to ask myself what is this stress and how do I feel when I experience it. Imagine that I suddenly have a problem in my knee and it starts paining. I am still walking, but is it the same as I was walking before, when everything was fine?

SO: No, there is pain now.

SS: Naturally, it's going to be a little uncomfortable. However, I say this is okay, or even accept it as a natural part of ageing. I keep walking, and because I am not treating it or taking care of it, the pain is constantly there and at times it is aggravated. I am still managing my life, though. Now, suddenly I have to run for some reason. Will I be able to run with that pain? I will not be able to. It's the same with stress. The stress is in my mind; it is a little pain in the way I feel. How do I feel when I experience stress? Even if I am not able to check myself at the emotional level, let's just check the physical or bodily parameters – my heartbeat increases and so does my pulse rate, at times my mouth goes dry, I start getting a very uncomfortable feeling in the stomach, my head feels heavy, and so on. This is when the effect of the mind has already taken a toll on the body, and it is a much later stage. Some students fall ill on the day of their exams, with fever or nausea. Some people start sweating or their mouth goes dry before a public speech. This is the effect of the mind on the body.

SO: But I thought it was normal. The first time I was facing a camera, my mouth and lips had all gone dry.

SS: Did you perform better?

SO: No, it was very bad.

SS: Let's say a child has to sit for an exam. The exam is a target and a source of pressure. If he creates anxiety, does he perform better? I remember when we used to give our exams and come back and evaluate our own performance, we would point out places where we knew the answer but made mistakes. We referred to these as careless mistakes. What is a careless mistake? I know the answer but I have written something else. And why have I done it? Because there is no clarity, which is a state brought about by the presence of anxiety. It's not carelessness. It has happened because I did not take care of my mind. So there is no clarity in thinking, decision-making is affected, performance gets affected, my hands tremble, and my speed of writing slows down. I may even say that I didn't finish my exam.

SO: So why do people say that they work best when they are stressed and tense, and when the deadline is looming over their heads?

SS: Deadline means there is a target, and the target could be a source of pressure. Target means I have to do this by such-and-such time. If you remove that target I may take six days to complete the same task. The minute you set a target, I start working faster. Now, while I am working faster, what will happen if I start creating thoughts along these lines – how will I finish it by tomorrow evening; if I don't finish it by tomorrow evening, what will the consequence be? Will I be thrown out of my job? Will my boss get angry with me? What if someone else finishes it before I do? Does that mean they will have a better chance for a promotion or a raise? If this happens, my career is finished, I am still performing, I am still working, but what is going on in the mind? What is going on is stress; negativity is creating the stress because it is creating an uncomfortable feeling. The target is fine. Two people are given the same target: they have to finish this job by tomorrow evening, both are set to achieve it and they will. This means both will reach the destination, but the journey will be different for each of them. One will think 'yes, I have to achieve this by tomorrow evening, I will have nothing else but this work on my mind, and I am going to do this'. The second person will worry 'what if something happens', or 'what if I don't achieve this'. So, one has reached the destination with stability, and the other has done the same by creating stress. The end result is externally the same, for both have performed, but internally the other person is totally fatigued. This other person will conveniently blame the pressure, and not realise that it is his own creation in the face of pressure. Stress in science has a simple formula: stress = pressure ÷ resilience. Pressure, the numerator here, includes what's coming from outside – targets, exams, relationships, situations, traffic jams, deadlines, etc. Resilience is my inner strength to face that pressure. Consider the simple metal sheets used in industrial applications. Different metal sheets are subjected to the same amount of pressure, but the stress factor of every metal is different because every metal sheet's power to face that pressure is different. Now, in the formula, stress = pressure ÷ resilience, we have conveniently ignored the denominator and embraced the conditioning of stress = pressure.

It's ignored, because I am not ready to take responsibility for my inner



strength. Hence, for me stress = pressure. If I have an exam, obviously I will get tense. If my boss is very tough, obviously it is going to be a challenge for me because stress = pressure.

SO: Do you think people like to be stressed? Why do we accept it easily?

SS: When I am not able to tackle it, I just say it's natural or inevitable.

SO: You mean to say it takes effort to not be stressed and be happy in the situation?

SS: Yes! Suppose you say something to me that is not pleasant. To get hurt is so easy....

SO: Even at my age, I tend to think it's so natural to blame others for how we feel.

SS: The weather changes. It's summer today, a couple months later it will be winter. The weather changes and it gets chilly. Do you say it's natural to fall ill since the weather has changed? No! You open the cupboard and take out the woollens and protect yourself. We don't keep blaming the weather, do we? We protect ourselves. Things are going to happen outside, but because we have not learnt the mechanism of how to protect ourselves, we say it is natural to fall ill. It's natural to get hurt, to get stressed, that's what we say. Spirituality focuses on the denominator, that is resilience. The pressure or the situation is not in my control. So the numerator is not in my control. In any situation, we can attribute 10 per cent to the numerator, but the remaining 90 per cent depends on my power to cope. Because if there is no pressure, then there will be no stress, so we give 10 per cent responsibility to the pressure. The remaining 90 per cent is about the extent to which I take charge of how I am going to handle that pressure.

SO: So, how I react to something is the 90 per cent. Somebody just hits my car – if it's an old car, I don't really get that upset; but if it's a brand new one, I react. What do you say?

SS: How you react is your choice. Someone has hit your car – the situation was not in your control. Now, you have two ways to respond: (1) Get out of the car, create a scene, shout at him, hit him, abuse him, have him respond in the same manner, and have ten more people in the scene, or (2) wish him good morning and a nice day.

SO: And the other choice is to just smile and say it's okay. In any case your car is insured.

SS: Yes! More important is the insurance of the mind. You claim insurance and your car is repaired. But for the damage that gets done inside you every time a situation arises, where is the insurance for that and where are the repairs?

SO: I am more concerned that my car is damaged.

SS: The car is more important than my happiness on my responsibility list, because I thought the car was my source of happiness. Only when I make my

Mantras for Happiness Unlimited

- Stress is a pain that comes to make us realise that there is something I need to change.
- Stress is our creation of negative thoughts, which has an effect on our efficiency, memory power, decision power and, hence, our performance.
- Stress has an impact on our physical and emotional well-being, and hence, any amount of stress is damaging.
- Targets, pressures, deadlines, exams, etc., are natural, but stress is our choice.
- Stress = pressure ÷ resilience, that is, inner strength. My first responsibility in any situation is to first take charge of my state of mind because that is the only thing which is in my control.

state of being my priority will I start taking care of myself. First, check if you are okay, then check if everything outside you is okay.

SO: If you don't help yourself, how can you help others? But isn't this being a bit selfish?

SS: If I don't take care of myself, can I help you? All my time and energy is spent in taking care of other people. What's the result? Today I am under stress, and so are my children. Earlier, depression was something that affected people when they were 60 and above; today we have schoolchildren with so many issues frequenting counsellors and psychiatrists. If we were fulfilling our responsibilities, this wouldn't be the result.

SO: We often say that the teachers are irresponsible, the politicians are irresponsible, but thinking inwards I am the most irresponsible person, especially by not being responsible for myself.

SS: First I have to be responsible. The ability to respond is responsibility. My ability to respond in every situation is response + ability = responsibility. Imagine the irony of life – we are always trying to control things that are not in our control, while ignoring the one thing that is in our control. We say, 'oh, my mind is not in my control', but that is the only thing that is in one's control. Going back to the matter of two cars bumping into each other – if you suggest to people that you can just say 'okay, never mind' and drive away, they might not agree. They strongly feel that it is important to get out of the car and shout at the one who made the mistake. You try and explain to them that it will be damaging for them, that is they will be hurting themselves. They will say, 'but what about making the other person realise their mistake'.

SO: So that he won't repeat the mistake again. I am doing him a favour.

SS: You see I am more interested in teaching others rather than taking care of myself. Whether it's a small situation or a big one, I have a choice of how I am going to respond. Let me just sit back and be aware in every situation. If I just say it's okay and drive on, how do I feel on that day?

SO: I would feel nice about it.

SS: Because you have conserved energy and conquered your own weakness. So it is something that has to be experimented with.

SO: The other day I was going to the airport and somebody banged my car. My driver was just about to get out and fight, but I asked him to keep quiet, close the door and ignore the other person. I felt nice about it. Right now, conversing with you, I realize I felt nice because I kind of conquered my weakness that has been there for years and years.

SS: Also, you had the right thoughts at that moment, so you felt better. If you create the thought that 'it's okay, it's just an accident, move on now,' it's a positive thought. It's a good feeling. But if I have thoughts like, 'why didn't he look where he was driving'; 'he should have been driving carefully'; 'who gives them their driving licence'; 'they think they own the road', how are you going to feel after that? The thoughts you have will determine your feelings. Then, after all this, we reach our destination, maybe we were headed to our workplace.

SO: And for how long will this kind of mood and the agitation remain?

SS: Let's say I have to drive for about half an hour to work. So, the mood will stay with me for about half an hour. However, the unfortunate part is, within the next half an hour, there will be another situation. By that time my emotional immunity is already low and the chance of my reacting has increased. Next, I

reach my office and my receptionist is not at her desk.... She has not come to office on time. Now, yet another situation confronts me. I go to my desk and see that the office boy has not cleaned my table properly. One more situation: my junior has not completed his work, which was supposed to be there on my desk at 10 o'clock in the morning. So, situation after situation unfolds, and I keep reacting. Every time I justify my reaction by saying it is because of....

SO: ... this, this, this. I am right, I didn't do anything but this happened, and it is natural.

SS: If you react, you are wasting and depleting your energy; you are reducing your emotional strength. When you encounter the next situation you will be weaker than before.

SO: Over a period of time it also becomes a habit. Then you get high blood pressure, heart problems start, and so on. It takes a toll on our health.

SS: Today we say high blood pressure is natural because the stress is natural, and the by-product of this stress will also be natural. So everything that was unnatural gets labelled as natural. And then we say we want happiness.

SO: Tell me, what is the meaning of unlimited?

SS: That which is not dependent on any limited object, people or situation. It's a state of being is unlimited, unconditional, and independent. It is free of dependencies and, therefore, free of the fear of failure. Whenever there is dependence on someone or something, the second thought instantly will be of fear. What if I don't get it? I have immediately created fear, and as I create fear, the happiness is gone. You will find people fearing happiness too – when everyone in the house is happy, someone will say 'don't be so happy, you never know what's going to happen next.' They are so fearful that they are scared to be happy today.

SO: Everything is temporary.

SS: Because it's all dependent on situations. Today the situation is favourable, so you are happy, but you don't know what the next situation is going to be. But, if your happiness is independent of situations, then you can be happy 24 x 7.

SO: You think we can be happy 24 x 7?

SS: It's possible and we can do it, but first we have to take care of ourselves and take self-responsibility. But if it depends on outside factors, it is occasional. The more the situations become challenging; the more people's behaviour becomes unpredictable. It becomes a struggle and that is why we start accepting stress as natural, whereas it is happiness that is natural.

SO: Sister Shivani, thank you so much for explaining how stress is not natural – happiness is. Let us do a small meditation to collect our thoughts at this point.

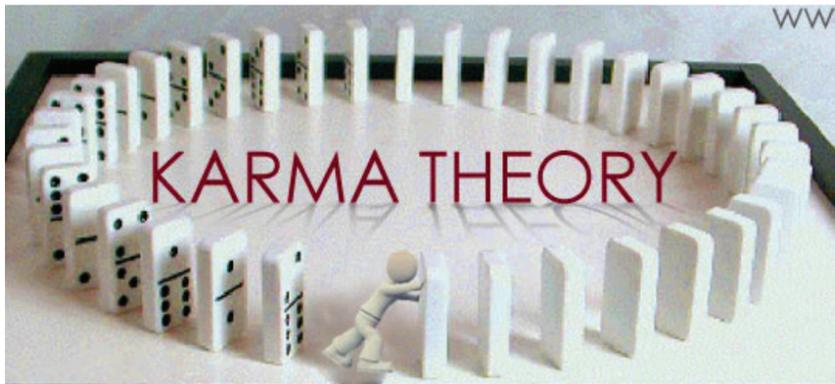
SS: *Relax and reflect on these thoughts. Let us sit back and be comfortable... I look at myself... I, the creator of every thought and feeling.... There are pressures in life... targets to achieve... deadlines to meet.... It's just a pressure... I am the one who is going to achieve the target... let me take care of myself as I work towards achieving the target.... The quality of my thoughts and feelings as I move towards the target... any fear... any anxiety... any worry... let me first sit back and change the quality of the thought... I am a powerful being... I can achieve what I have decided... but I will first take care of myself.... Nothing and no one can influence my state of being... It's totally in my control... I, the powerful being... protected and secure... now move towards my target. This is my journey, a journey of happiness. Om Shanti! **



Om Shanti Retreat Centre, Gurgaon: Monk Master Jijing (on stage) and a group of 270 Chinese participants in a two-day retreat on 'Strengthening Faith'.

Self Responsibility

There are certain laws which are involved in our actions and interactions. They are not human laws requiring lawyers to interpret or the police to put into action. They are natural laws which are constantly operating in every relationship. They are often called the Laws of Karma (action): briefly described by the saying - As you sow, so you shall reap. This reminds us that whatever quality of energy we give out, we get back. This might not be exactly tit for tat, but if we give happiness to someone, it will come back to us; if we give pain or sorrow, it will come back, perhaps not today or tomorrow, but at some time in the future.



Most of us are conditioned by the idea that we are responsible for some of our actions, but not all of them. For example, we would consider ourselves responsible for the actions which improved our company's business but would not consider ourselves responsible for not being on good terms with our spouse. If, as parents, we worked hard in educating our children and they grew up to become well placed and successful individuals in their lives, we would consider ourselves responsible. If on the other hand they don't make it to the top and are not so successful, we will blame our children for not putting enough effort or maybe the education system for the same. So we are selective in taking responsibility for our actions.

Through spirituality, we are reminded of the unchangeable laws of cause and effect, which awakens our awareness of our true responsibility for each and every action that we perform.

Because we have forgotten the principle of karmic returns, we have learned to avoid taking responsibility for many of our actions. We fail to see the impact of our actions upon others and we fail to see that the real meaning of responsibility is 'ability to respond' or responding correctly. Life can be seen as a series of responses which we each create in our interactions with other people and events. As is the quality of our ability to respond (energy given), so will be the quality of the return (energy received). The Laws of Karma also serve to remind us that the situations in our life, the quality of our body, wealth, relationships etc. and the type of person we are today are the result of what we thought and did yesterday, last month, last year, perhaps in our last birth. Many people do not like this idea or find it difficult to accept because most of us have been taught that our destiny lies in someone else's hands or in the hands of fate or luck, about which we can do nothing. The Law of Karma or the Law of Reciprocity teaches us that there is no such thing as luck and that whatever happens to us today is the result of our positive or negative actions in the past. If you spend a few moments reflecting on events in your life, without being judgmental, you will begin to see connections between actions and results, causes and effects. When you see how all effects have their causes, you will then be convinced that this universal law is at work in your life at all times. ★



Nepal, Kalaiya : BK Raj didi, Director of Nepal centres, being honoured with 'Abhinandan Patra' by Mayor Suresh Raut.



Panaji, Goa : BK Shobha being felicitated by Mr. Dilip Parulekar, Hon'ble Goa Minister for Tourism, for selfless socio-spiritual services over past four decades. Also seen in pic. is Mr. Laxmikant Parsekar, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Goa.

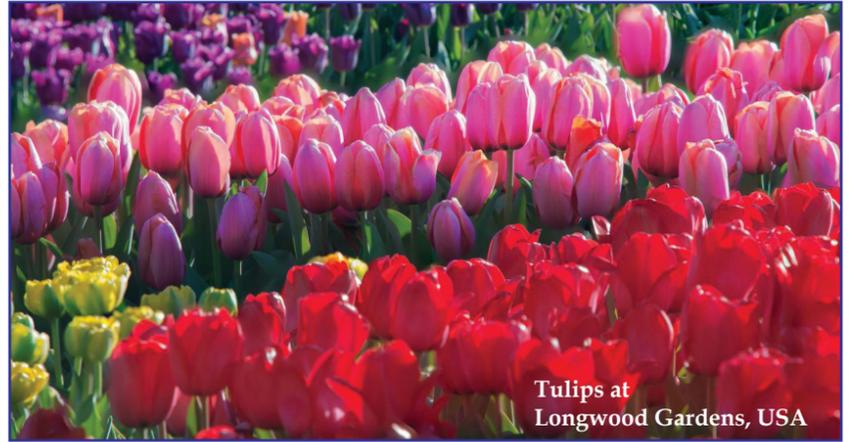


Shantivan, Abu : BK Mohini behn, flanked by Dadi Hirdaya Mohini and Dadi Ratan Mohini on her L & R, speaking at her 75th Birthday celebrations held in Diamond Hall of the complex.





A cultural presentation by foreigners at Om Shanti Retreat Centre, Gurgaon.



Tulips at Longwood Gardens, USA



Thousands of Brahma Kumars and Kumaris at 1st Mumbai Meditating, at Acharya Atre Gounds, Ghatkopar (East).

Mr. Wise



Mr. Wise?
 Yes.
 Peace in the whole world can alone be lasting peace?
 Obviously so.
 And yet, everyone is trying for their own peace and no one is trying for world peace, why?
 I cannot say.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

And Mr. Wise?
 Yes.
 Hasn't nuclear deterrence helped maintain peace in the world?
 Actually, it has led to growing fear and distrust, which means a constant threat to world peace.
 You mean anything can happen anytime to the fragile peace that exists in the world today?
 I cannot say.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

Lastly...
 Yes.
 Can lasting peace which calls for trust and goodwill be ever established with nuclear weapons of mass destruction?
 Perhaps not. These weapons can only lead to peace of the graveyard.
 And isn't re-establishment of world peace the divine task of God, as stated in the Bhagwad Gita?
 Perhaps you are right.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

Tailpiece



A person made a fixed deposit in a bank, jointly held by two persons. He filled in the prescribed form, and about encashment instructions, he wrote against the column "payable to" as below:

"Either or Survivor"

When he got the fixed deposit receipt, he found that the above payment instructions were written in bold letters as:

"Neither or Survivor"

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

Mother: How was school today, Lucy?

Lucy: Okay, but our teacher doesn't know how to teach.

Mother: What makes you think so?

Lucy: Today, he told us four and four make eight.

Mother: That's right.

Lucy: But yesterday he said six and two make eight!

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

"Why do you call your home a bungalow?" a man was asked.

"Well, if it's not a bungalow, what is it? The builders, the contractor, the engineer, have all made a bungle of it and I still owe everybody for it."

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦