

Point of View

Two things indicate weakness
- remaining silent when it is
proper to speak, and speaking
when it is proper to be silent.

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

President of India lauds Brahma Kumaris for promoting peace & happiness

The Brahma Kumaris organization is internationally reputed for its high level network to promote peace, harmony, and cordiality among people of the world, said Hon'ble Pranab Mukherjee, President of India. The President was speaking at the felicitation function organized in his honour by Brahma Kumaris at Shanti Sarovar, Hyderabad on 26 April 2017. Human beings seek economic growth, scientific pursuits and technological developments for happiness which was the ultimate objective of everyone, the President said, but happiness and peace were closely inter linked and one could not survive without the other. "We are always appreciative of the great work rendered by the Brahma Kumaris and have deep respect for them," commended the President.

Earlier BK Asha from Delhi welcomed President Mukherjee and other dignitaries on stage, including Hon'ble ESL Narasimhan, Governor of Telengana and Andhra Pradesh and Hon'ble Mohd. Mahmood Ali, Dy. Chief Minister of Telengana. She told the audience about the prolific and illustrious public career of Mr. Mukherjee which spanned 43 years before he resigned from the Parliament to become the President of the Republic of India. He received numerous accolades and awards



which included the Best Parliamentarian, the Best Administrator, the Best Finance Minister of the Asian Region, one of the best five Finance Ministers of the world, eight honorary doctorates from universities in different countries as well as Padma Vibhushan (in 2008).

To mark 80th Anniversary of Brahma Kumaris organization the President lighted 'Deepam' along with the Governor of Telengana & Andhra Pradesh, the Dy. Chief Minister of Telengana, BK Justice (Retd.) V. Eshwariah and Senior Brahma Kumaris and Kumars on stage.

(Purity Report)

Looking Beyond Happiness

Happiness is increasingly considered the proper measure of human progress and the goal of public policy. Consequently, many governments are recognising that people's well-being, and not just economic growth, should be the focus of their efforts.

Almost everything we do in life is motivated by the desire to be happy. For most people, however, the experience of happiness is temporary. This is because their joy is based on external factors which may not be in their control. The Bhagavad Gita says happiness derived from the senses and objects ultimately leads to sorrow. Since the sources of such happiness, be they objects, the senses, other people or circumstances, are impermanent, the joy they provide cannot last forever.

There is a state beyond happiness in which one does not feel any need for pleasure. One who has attained that blissful state is neither perturbed by

sorrow, nor hankers after happiness. He simply is happy, says the Gita.

This state is attained by gaining full control of one's emotional and intellectual faculties and meditating on the Supreme. The peace of mind attained therefrom is a pre-requisite to lasting happiness.

To attain mental serenity, the Gita advises renouncing the fruit of all action, taking success and failure in one's stride, and remaining detached while living in this world.

Spiritual knowledge of the soul, the Supreme Soul, and the law of karma helps one remain equanimous in loss or gain, success or failure.

When we realise that we are immortal souls playing our role in this world, and that we create our destiny with our actions, we cease to see ourselves as victims of circumstances, and understand that our present is the result of our past, and that we can build a great future for ourselves.

Our experiences are the

consequences of actions of the present and past lives, which are all recorded in the soul and determine the quality of its future.

When we assume responsibility for our experiences, adversity no longer causes sorrow, as we recognise it to be the fruit of past actions and feel happy that our karmic burden is becoming lighter. Similarly, we are not swept off our feet by good fortune. Instead, it motivates us to keep doing good as that is the surest way to ensuring a happy future for oneself. This kind of mental stability helps one become a detached observer of life.

Being detached means not being mentally affected by anything, and observing events as passing scenes in the drama of life. This allows one to see things as they are and to take the appropriate decisions. On the other hand, when we become involved, we start questioning why things are the way they are, and why people behave the way they do. This can lead to

dissatisfaction, frustration and anger, which can lead us to act in ways that bring sorrow.

When one gains mastery over the self and lives with constant awareness of being a soul, the child of the Supreme Soul, one leaves the cycle of pleasure and suffering and reaches a blissful state that is independent of any sensory experience.

Bliss is the original nature of the soul, which is described as being 'sat, chit, anand swaroop', or the embodiment of truth, consciousness and bliss.

There are yogis who experience supersensual bliss, a spiritual experience that does not require any physical or material resource. One stabilised in this experience leaves behind the ups and downs of happiness and sorrow to reach a state of constant peace and contentment that no amount of wealth can buy or give such practical experience in life.★

(Purity Features)

Photo Gallery

Hon'ble Pranab Mukherjee
President of India
visit to Brahma
Kumaris Shanti
Sarovar Campus in
Hyderabad



Yogic Life — A Simple Life

BK Aruna Ladva, Kuwait

When we think of a yogic life, what do we think of? Somewhere in our definition will appear the word simplicity. The word yogi is almost synonymous with simplicity. As we make our life simple, we will be better able to concentrate and be more mindful.

There was a story of an American who visited a sage in his home in India. He asked the sage why his home was so bare. "Where are your belongings," he enquired. The sage replied to the American: "Where are your belongings?" The American replied in amazement: "But I am a guest here in India!" The sage replied: "I too am a guest here in this world!" This story should be a lesson to us all.



"We have to embrace simplicity with love and enjoy the freedom it brings."

Why is it that we need to hold on to so much? Is any of it really going to help us in those final moments? Or will it be the ones we loved and cared for that will be around us in those times that will matter most to us?

The yogic life is also seen to be one of contentment. It does not suit a yogi to have many desires and then to be haunted by them when they are not fulfilled. Desires make our life complicated. Desires are temporary and not fulfilling. They only add aggravation and frustration. When we cultivate contentment, we realise that never-ending desires are really the source of our peacelessness. It is a different matter to have goals and aspirations.

Rajyoga advocates that to the extent we reduce the external paraphernalia in our life, and even clear away the clutter of our mind, the more we will be able to concentrate and find inner peace. The more we go into the expansion and detail of life in terms of relationships, possessions, assets and the sorts, the more we have to put our attention to those things. The more those things will pull us throughout the day! Therefore, as much as possible, minimize.

This does not mean becoming a hermit, but rather to be discriminate and have more quality and not just quantity.

The following suggestions may help to simplify your life.

A yogi keeps his (or her) clothes simple. As we reduce the number of clothes, the colours of the clothes we wear and also the variety, we actually reduce our headache every morning. If you have three to choose from rather than a hundred, obviously it will make a big difference to our time and decision making, first thing in the morning. It's interesting to see the new trend away from overstuffed wardrobes full of redundant clothes towards a 'capsule wardrobe' of pieces. Also, the yogi à la mode creates his own fashion. He does not need to compete or compare. He is content with his 'look'!

The language of a yogi is simple, that is, soft, sweet and kind. If we decide to only see the good in others, only such positive and polite words can emerge from within us, nothing else.

The consciousness of a yogi is uncomplicated. He does not go into why or what or how or when. He is ever accepting of the flow around him and is ever embracing of those changes. He is not in conflict and therefore discontent. His



consciousness is that he is eternal, an actor in the play, and all this is fleeting.

The thoughts of a yogi are simple. Very few thoughts, yet powerful and productive. He does not need to think too much about something. Answers come easily and decisions are made readily. The mind of a yogi is uncomplicated. In this manner they come across as cool and flexible, accommodating and easy to get along with.

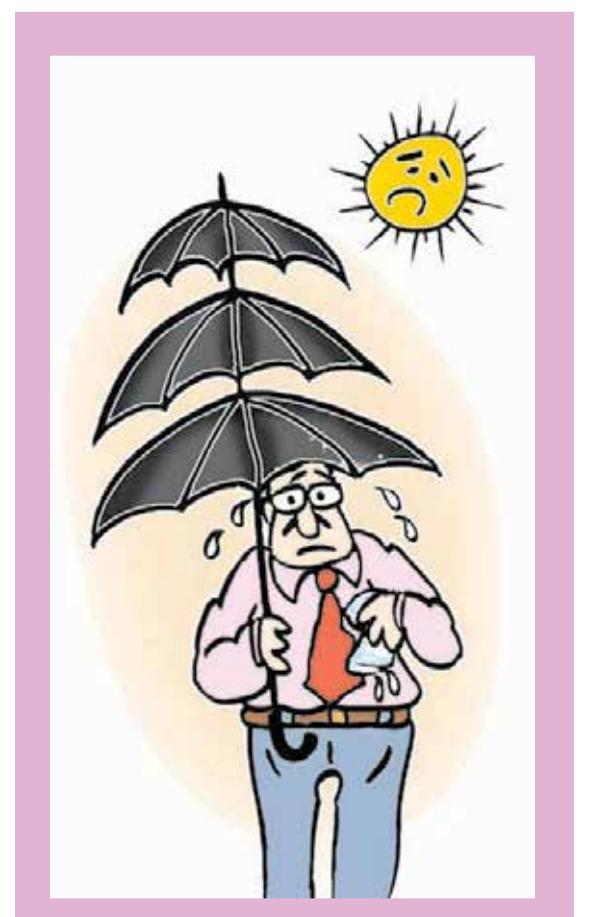
Most importantly, we have to embrace simplicity with love and not out of laziness or carelessness. We can believe we are simple, but it may be a form of idleness without order or cleanliness. So love to be simple. Enjoy the freedom that it brings. Feel the benefits of simplicity, you will be rewarded richly.

It's time... to un-complicate your life, embrace simplicity and enjoy your freedom!★

Raja yoga

- Raja yoga creates for you an oasis of peace in a turbulent world.
- Raja yoga enables a direct communion and relationship with the Supreme Soul.
- Raja yoga is a process of connecting to your innate spiritual resources.
- Raja yoga helps to perform all 'karma' with detached involvement.
- Raja yoga fills your heart with pure energy of true love, true peace and true happiness.

Chandigarh : Hon'ble V.P. Singh Badnore, Governor of Punjab, BK Amir Chand and others with Sister Shivani after her public discourse on 'Rajyoga for Holistic Wellness' at Ramlila Grounds attended by over 5000 people.



Is One World Religion possible?

God is the seed of the human family. When several religious messengers came on Earth to spread His message of peace and love, the tree of humanity grew further into new branches. Though their Source was One, all established religions developed differently as per the needs of the time, place and circumstances they were born into.

As years went by, religious communities acquired their distinct identity and way of life, and their social boundaries became more prominent. Differences of opinion among various groups grew, and later, factions emerged even within the communities. It all became a cause of conflict among people and countries, so much so that numerous wars were fought in the name of religion. This state of affairs continues.

While religion was founded for spreading compassion in the world, over the time it came to be misused, to give sanction to acts of intolerance and hatred. The concept of secularism was then popularised to embrace people of all religions, to create an atmosphere where elements of diversity were bonded by unity. Many new emerging nations, including India, adopted it as their fundamental value, but it has met with limited success.

As religious discords refuse to die down and extremist forces create fear, faith today has become a difficult subject for public discussion. We have come to the point where people refrain from talking about it, and leaders try to keep their vocabulary neutral for fear of causing disharmony.

As the goal of unity in the human family looks distant in the current scenario, some great thinkers have proposed considering the possibility of having one world religion. The concept of universal brotherhood resonates with the majority of us, but how it will come about is a big question. Let us explore if it is an achievable dream.



“It is within human reach to awaken to our original identity as an imperishable soul, our original religion of non-violence, and our original world family under the Fatherhood of One God, the Supreme Being.”

Religion is acquired by birth: it is the religion of the family one is born into. It is an identity given to the body of a person along with other labels such as a name, gender, class, colour, and nationality. When a soul completes one lifetime and leaves the body, it takes birth in another bodily costume, in another family. These labels then change.

When we do not know the truth about our immortality and our continuous journey, we become too attached to our transient bodily identity, get stuck in each other's dissimilarities, and are separated from our larger human family. And when we, as a unit, are fragmented, the question of harmony does not arise.

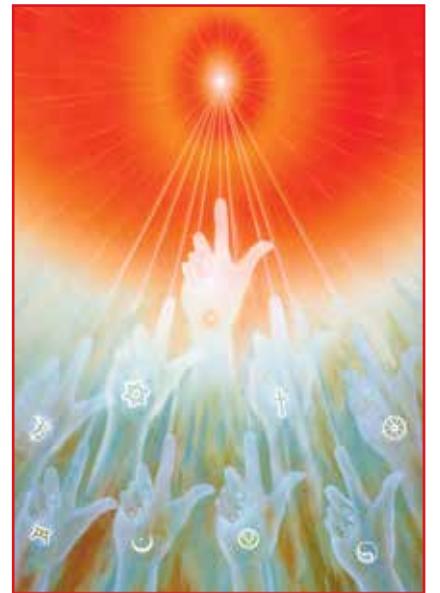
Virtues have nothing to do with the body, which is made up of matter. They lie within us, the sentient beings that drive our bodies and radiate qualities of peace, purity, love, wisdom, happiness, bliss and power. Religious teachings are actually derived from these innate qualities, which are common

to all of us. If we remove the base of spirituality, religion becomes a hollow superstructure which can be misused as a divisive force.

The reason behind communal conflict is not religion but the construct around it. While the essence of all faiths is similar, the expansion varies. To arrive at a common ground, we must focus on our pure core. If we learn the art of communicating soul to soul, our interactions will be based on mutual respect and compassion, and our acquired labels will lose relevance and hence cease to interfere. Thus, soul consciousness is the way by which all of us can unite as one family.

We may not be able to go back to the point where it all began, where we were all in agreement with each other. But we can definitely evolve to a stage where we choose to be together because of our permanent commonalities, and where outer differences don't matter.

It may be impractical to convert



everyone into one common religion but it is very much possible to awaken ourselves and everyone around us to our original identity as an imperishable soul, our original religion of non-violence, and our original family under the Fatherhood of One God, the Supreme Being. ★

(Purity Bureau)

In Lighter Vein

- It's hard to see the picture if you don't have a frame of mind.
- The road to happiness is always under construction.
- “A lot of ideas go through my mind”. “Tell me which one of them stops”.
- Doctors bury their mistakes, journalists print them and lawyers hang them.
- Mr. X works eight hours and sleeps eight hours. His boss fired him because they are the same eight hours.
- They say that money is one of the two stress factors in relationships. What is the other one? No money.
- Of course I can keep secrets. It's the people I tell them to who can't keep them.
- I have been through some terrible things in my life, some of which actually happened.



Russia, St. Petersburg : BK Santosh, Director of Brahma Kumaris' Centre presenting a report at the XIV International Scientific and Practical Conference on “Actual Problems of Science, Culture Education, Economics, Education and Social Transformations - 2017, Moscow Region.

Decoding the Law of Karma

A Quantum Physics Perspective on Spirituality

BK Shvetank Agarwal, S.Carolina, USA

Ever since the beginning of my spiritual journey with the Brahma Kumaris almost 16 years ago, I have been fascinated by the law of karma. From my practice of raja yoga meditation, I have understood the law of karma to be an immutable cause-and-effect phenomenon, often referred to with the phrase, “whatever goes around, comes around”. Just as an apple seed, when sown, produces an apple tree, never an orange or a mango tree, a positive action will always give a positive result. Similarly, a negative action will only have negative consequences.

Unfortunately, at the gross level, it doesn't seem to happen as consistently as we would like it to. Without clear understanding of this law, people often complain that despite their good actions, coupled with the best of intentions, the results aren't quite as positive.

An adverse situation is blamed on “past actions” — maybe we are receiving the fruit of actions we performed knowingly or unknowingly in the remote past. What ensues is a lot of passivism, fatalism and self-pity, because it seems as if we can't really do anything other than swallow it.

In this world of action we are constantly performing actions, whether consciously or unconsciously. Even the mere act of thinking is an action, so is sleeping, dreaming etc. With more than seven billion people inhabiting Earth, we would have at least that number of actions performed every moment. This is where I personally found myself getting stuck.

How is it humanly or super-humanly possible for anyone or any “computer” to keep tabs on the infinite number of actions performed every minute by each of the seven billion plus people inhabiting this world? When do I get the “fruit” of an action I perform at this moment? If I don't get the “fruit” right away, how does the

“fruit” find me several days, years or lifetimes later? If someone I have never met in my present life harms me in any way or form, how in the world can the “karmic account” that I have with him or her be carried forward from a previous life and find its way to me today?

To answer these questions, let's dive a little deep into the revealing world of quantum physics! Quantum physics can be quite weird; spirituality can also feel weird to some. What can be better than to marry them together so that they can live happily ever after?

For centuries, Newtonian physics believed light to be a particle. In the early part of the 20th century, when Max Planck came up with the revolutionary quantum theory, scientists were introduced to the idea of light as



a wave. However, for a long time, researchers continued to grapple with this particle-wave duality, as light would sometimes behave as a particle and sometimes as a wave.

This led to the classic double-slit experiment, where they found that light, when passed through two slits, created a typical “interference” pattern on the screen behind the slits, which reinforced the notion of the wave-like nature of light. However, when a deliberate attempt was made to see the behaviour of light passing through the slits, the



The universe responds negatively to our negative energy and positively to our positive energy, bringing the responsibility back to us.

“interference” pattern disappeared. Instead scientists saw a simple, linear pattern, which suggested that the light was behaving as a particle.

This was totally mind-boggling, as it implied that the mere act of observing the behaviour of light led to a change in its behaviour, and therefore the outcome of the experiment. When they repeated the experiment with what science believed to be actual particles, such as electrons, protons, neutrons or even complete atoms, they had similar results. The “particle” would exhibit the properties of a particle and a wave when observed and not observed, respectively. Scientists just couldn't fathom how a “particle” could exhibit wave-like behaviour, and, for the first time, science was forced to appreciate the effect of human consciousness on matter!

While Galilean/Newtonian physics led us to believe for several centuries that reality was concrete and objective, quantum physics for the first time introduced the concept of subjective reality. In other words, we constantly shape our worlds and, therefore, our reality by the way we

perceive and interact with the world.

Now let's redo the double-slit experiment, this time with a person as a subject instead of light or an electron, and two “researchers” observing the experiment's outcome — one totally non-judgmental, respectful and with full faith in the subject's abilities, while the other observing the subject's behaviour with doubt, disrespect and suspicion.

If we extrapolate the results of the original double-slit experiment here, based on the observers' consciousness, the person will exhibit two totally different behaviours for the two observers. While it may again seem bizarre, it is not as alien as it may seem.

Change in study outcomes caused merely by the act of observing is seen often in research, and is frequently considered to be the Hawthorne Effect. Hawthorne is a suburb of Chicago where experiments were conducted in a factory to improve productivity. As a part of these experiments, the work-related behaviour of the employees was to be observed. Interestingly, the researchers found that just observing the behaviour caused a change in behaviour patterns and, therefore, the outcomes.

From the spiritual perspective, I like to call it the “law of reciprocity”, which means that everything around us reciprocates our own energy. But what constitutes our energy? Every action we perform can be considered to be a quantum of energy that we store within our consciousness.

The energy we give out on a moment-to-moment basis depends on the sum total of all energies, positive or negative, that we have accumulated within us, corresponding to all our past actions. The universe responds negatively to our negative energy and positively to our positive energy, bringing the responsibility back to us. This means that if we want the universe to give us positivity, all we have to do is to make sure that the net energy that we emit is positive.

While the burden of our past negative actions may colour the net energy that we give out, regular practice of raja yoga, which is the undivided, uninterrupted connection of the soul with God, the Supreme Soul, the highest energy in the universe, allows channels of pure energy to flow into the soul. This then changes the quality of the energy we emit into the world around us.★

Wise Sayings

Talking comes by nature, silence by wisdom.

—American Proverb

We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give. —Winston Churchill

Only a life lived for others is the life worthwhile.

—Albert Einstein

Faith always shows itself in the whole personality.

—Martyn Lloyd-Jones

Editorial

Growing Risk of Nuclear Holocaust

The development of defence infrastructure in most countries is based on the premise that it strengthens their position strategically, and helps them avert the threat of armed conflict. Post the second war, when the first atom bomb was used, it was evident that humanity could not afford another world war. The United Nations was then set up to diffuse political tensions and to create an environment of goodwill so that the international scene did not take a U-turn.

The powerful nations, which later developed nuclear weapons, decided on non-proliferation of weapons, and advocated no first use. This is because irrespective of who pressed the button for the third world war, it would lead to assured mass destruction on all sides.

The purpose behind various treaties signed in the last several decades has been to end the arms race and use the existing stockpile of weapons for their deterrence effect only. In a broader sense, the nations so far succeeded on this front. Till now, nuclear weapons have worked as silent deterrents. But with the latest development around the world, especially the growing conflict between certain nations, that merit is in question. These nations are now talking of actually using nuclear weapons if the need arose. These serious developments hint that the risk of a nuclear holocaust is growing. The present signs appear to be the making of a catastrophe that the world had been trying to avert. Generally speaking, deterrence can't last forever as anything created will ultimately be put to use sooner or later. And it would take just take a single nuclear warhead to spur an unstoppable, all-devouring dance or 'tandva' of destruction. Once it begins, there will be no notice period for wise sense to prevail on nuclear nations.

When the situation can go out of control any time, and when the fate of entire humanity lies in the hands of a few power intoxicated individuals, what can masses of ordinary citizens do? Can they only wait for the disaster to strike? Is fear the only option for them or is there some other way out?

The need of the time is for all of us to increase our inner strength to face the situation we are in. This requires very high spiritual energy for which we will have to tune in to our Spiritual Powerhouse above. When a soul connects to the Supreme Soul in the awareness of its original imperishable identity, it does not just gain the strength to handle the present. The Yoga with the Ultimate source incinerate its past karmic debt, and enables one to realise and live fearlessly in the consciousness of our eternal identity of an immortal soul, and thus enhances its potential. Through regular yoga practice, one can create such an elevated stage whereby one's departure from one's body is a final liberation or 'mukti'.

When we are in the middle of a personal crisis, we look Godwards for salvation. In this time of extreme global crisis too, we must act to receive His powers and protection. When His powers work through the ordinary and humble masses, extraordinary realities are created.

Spiritual might can soften hard situations, build bridges, and bring about tangible changes in places where all hope was lost. Through group meditation, citizens can enhance their inner peace and collectively spread its vibrations in zones of conflict through the power of mind. These vibrations will act as a whiff of fresh air in a strife-torn world. Even if humanity looks to be heading to a holocaust, these spiritual vibrations would convert the tragic ending into a smooth transition for a happy new beginning. ★

Gleanings from the press

Salt makes you hungry, not thirsty

Eating salty food diminishes thirst while increasing hunger, due to a higher need for energy, according to a new study carried out during a simulated mission to Mars. The study found that 'cosmonauts', who ate more salt in the simulation, retained more water and were not as thirsty, and needed more energy. The study found that eating more salt led to a higher salt content in urine. (PTI)

The bane of excess sugar

Excess sugar, especially fructose in sugary drinks, might damage your brain, new research suggests. Researchers found that people who drink sugary beverages frequently are more likely to have poor memory, a small overall brain volume, and a significantly small hippocampus. (The Hindu)

Depression; Let's talk

Talking about one's depression is half the treatment done, according to Dr. Poonam Khetrapal Singh, Regional Director of the World Health Organisation (WHO), South-East Asia region. "Depression is an issue that needs to be heard. It can impact relationships, work and social interactions." Depression often expresses itself as disturbed sleep or loss of appetite, feelings of guilt or low self-worth, or feelings of tiredness and lethargy. It may also manifest itself as agitation or physical restlessness, substance abuse, and reduced concentration. Depression can also lead to suicide, which is the second highest cause of death among those aged 15-29 years in the region, noted WHO. (News Report)

Deadly micro pollutants can damage heart

Inhaled nanoparticles like those pumped out in vehicle exhausts can go from the lungs to the bloodstream where they can raise the risk of heart attack and stroke, scientists at the University of Edinburgh have discovered. (Reuters)

Artificial Sun

The world's largest artificial sun has been set up at the German Aerospace Centre. It consists of 149 high-performance solar-powered Xenon short-arc lamps. The temperature at targets can reach up to 3,000 degrees Celsius. The facility is intended to produce fuel such as hydrogen. (News Item)

BP drug can help avoid skin cancer

A laboratory error led scientists to realise that a drug for high blood pressure could prevent skin cancer. A former graduate researching whether car-vedilol raised the risk of tumours inadvertently tested it for its cancer-fighting properties instead. The results showed it could stop sun-damaged cells from turning cancerous. The Western University of Health Sciences, US, said: "Our research could lead to a class of new cancer-preventive agents." (Times of India)

Bhoola Bhai

And our friend Bhoola Bhai on Temple Street says a very subtle form of ego is the ego of humility. So let us check if we feel flattered on being told we have no ego!



Leading with Wisdom

Many people acquire knowledge and mistake it for wisdom. Knowledge is knowing what's right, what's wrong but wisdom is beyond right and wrong. Knowledge is the accumulation of facts and information. Wisdom is the synthesis of knowledge and experiences into insights that deepen one's understanding of relationships and the meaning of life.

Wisdom is the ability to discern and judge which aspects of that knowledge are true, right, lasting, and applicable to your life. It's the ability to apply that knowledge to the greater scheme of life. It's also deeper; knowing the meaning or reason; about knowing why something is, and what it means to your life. Albert Einstein once said, 'Wisdom is not a product of schooling but of the lifelong attempt to acquire it.' Such a process is lengthy and arduous, which teaches the pursuer patience and humility.

Wisdom is an element of personal character that enables one to distinguish the wise from the unwise. It is the ability to apply relevant knowledge in an insightful manner, especially to different situations from that in which the knowledge was gained. Wisdom is also the ability to know and applies spiritual truths. Basically, wisdom is developed and knowledge is obtained. The basic definition of wisdom is the right use of knowledge. It is also the ability to make a decision based on the combination of experience and intuition. 'Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers,' wrote Lord



Wisdom is the original innate faculty of the soul that automatically guides one to function in complete harmony and balance. Loss of purity depletes wisdom.

Tennyson.

Today communication technology has made access of information and knowledge quite easy for the majority of people. Knowledge can be acquired but wisdom is the original innate natural faculty of the soul. It is an innate characteristic of the being that automatically guides one to function in complete harmony. A wise person is able to lead a balanced life and experience true bliss. Such a person is able to discern and act in accordance with what is righteous, noble and benevolent. Such a person is able to earn the blessings of all.

In fact, all human souls come to the earth with an innate wisdom. In

the beginning of the cycle of time, in Satyuga, everyone is naturally wise and lead a blissful life filled with all blessings. Human beings are completely pure; free from all vices and are blessed with a godlike nature in that period. The natural wisdom that keeps them in a blissful state is an innate quality that is sustained by the power of purity.

In the course of time, the soul loses its purity and its wisdom is depleted, very slowly but steadily. When purity is completely lost, paradise is also lost. Then begins the era of knowledge. Human beings seek a way to regain their lost state of blissful existence and purity. They seek answers to existential problems and to find liberation from suffering. They explore and investigate various realms of nature and human life to find the means to make their lives better.

When the innate purity is lost, knowledge supports human soul to play its roles in the drama of life. Devoid of its innate spiritual power and purity, more and more of knowledge is needed to continue and as time passes and life becomes more complicated and increasingly burdensome.

A stage comes when there is implementation paralysis due to lack of power of purity. One can't do what one wants to do and one keeps doing things that one knows are unrighteous and wrong. Despite having knowledge of what is right and wrong, humans are entangled more and more in the web of sin and suffering. There is a huge gap in intellectual knowledge and

virtuous conduct. One may have very deep understanding of morality and spiritual laws but yet a weak soul will fall prey to vices and suffer from deep flaws in character. That is why we see very knowledgeable and educated people conducting themselves in unrighteous and sinful manner.

Today we are deluged by information. This information explosion is actually damaging our lives further. Our senses and intellect are bombarded with endless stream of information that instead of guiding us to our wellbeing make us more confused and lost. It creates more distractions and temptations. There is complete loss of control. It is true that knowledge gives us choice and power to improve our situation but to discern what choices we have to make and to allow knowledge to create only positive influence we need wisdom.

Knowledge knows the difference between right and wrong; Wisdom is using that knowledge and living with the right choice to create wellness. Knowledge knows mistakes are part of life; Wisdom is not making the same mistake twice. Knowledge knows how to manage money – budgeting, spending, saving; Wisdom understands how money impacts the quality of our life and future.

Knowledge has led us to the present situation where things are not quite in order. In fact, things have become worse. The change that the world is waiting for can only come from wisdom and wisdom can only come from God. He is the Supreme and the eternal source of wisdom. He imparts the true knowledge of Rajyoga the path of self-mastery through a human medium Prajapita Brahma. He not only leads us on the path to liberation but also gives us the power to follow that path.

His love and wisdom enables an ordinary human soul to discern and act righteously and overcome all vices. God is now actually imparting His wisdom directly through spoken versions which are known as 'shrimat' – the elevated wisdom of God. By imbibing that wisdom one can become divine like deities. God's wisdom is now leading us to the long awaited world transformation – mukti and Jeevan mukti – liberation from suffering and bondages to a new era of purity, peace and happiness.★

(Position paper by BK Brij Mohan, Editor, Purity for Work-Life Balance Conference of Scientists and Engineers at Mt. Abu to be presented on 28th May 2017)

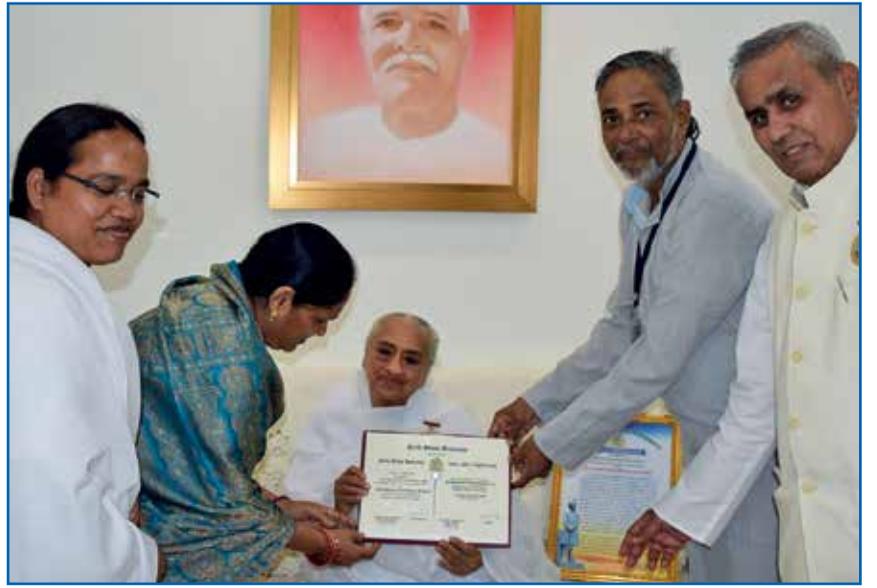


China, Shenzhen : BK Dr. Savita from Mt. Abu spoke on 'Meditation better than medicine' to a group of 1300 Chinese of The lady-Su setup who has her own Spiritual Research Committee in China. BK Chen, Brahma Kumaris NCO in China translated and also conducted guided meditation.

If I can create new images in my mind, I can dramatically improve the quality of my action.



Ahmednagar, Maharashtra : Hon'ble Venkiah Naidu, Union Minister for Information & Broadcasting, Urban Development & Poverty Eradication and Parliamentary Affairs being presented memento by Dr. BK Deepak.



Abu Road, Shantivan : Rajyogini Dadi Hirdaya Mohini, Addl. Chief of Brahma Kumaris being conferred D.Litt. (honoris causa) by Prof. P.K. Mishra, Vice Chancellor, North Odisha University for her contribution towards promotion of values, spirituality and social service.



Champaran, Bihar : Hon'ble Radha Mohan Singh, Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare inaugurating Brahma Kumaris pavilion along with BK Abhita and others at Farmers' Welfare Festival organised as a part of Centenary Celebration of Champaran 'Satyagraha'.



Karnal : Hon'ble Manohar Lal, Chief Minister of Haryana, Mr. Harvinder Kalyan, MLA and Chairman, HAFED, Ms. Renu Bala Gupta, Mayor, Mr. Bhagwan Das Kabir Panthi, MLA, Mrs. Suman Manjari, IG Police Haryana and BK Prem lighting candles at BK Sister Shioani's talk seminar on 'Karma & Destiny'.



New Delhi : Hon'ble D.V. Sadananda Gowda, Union Minister for Statistics and Programme Implementation being presented a copy of 'Purity' by BK Savita along with BK Falak and BK Raghu.



Nabarangpur, Odisha : Lighting candles at All India Campaign "Beti Bachao Sashakt Banao" are Mr. Manohar Randhari, MLA, Mrs. Bhagabati Batra, Dist. Block Chairman, Mrs. Basanti Soura, Chairman Municipality, Mrs. Supriya Naya, Mr. Jagannath Mohapatra, BK Dr. Savita, BK Neelam and others.



Nepal, Pokhara : Hon'ble Justice Shanti Singh Thapa of Supreme Court Patan being presented a memento by BK Parinita after laying foundation stone on Brahma Kumaris new building.



Koraput, Odisha: Mr. Anupam Shah, IAS, Collector being greeted by BK Swarna.

Raja yoga brings Self-Sovereignty

Sister Mary, Chicago, USA

Raja yoga is a practice of inner royalty, a royalty of the spirit. It begins with a desire to live a life of truth – to know the real, true self and to have authentic experiences of God. Through consistent practice of meditation, spiritual study and attention on the self, the raja yogi slowly forms a picture of himself as a spiritual being, a child of the Supreme Being and a brother to all human beings. From God, our spiritual Father, we learn to use the pure energy of love and peace in our earthly activities. Seeing the Earth as a mother, we gain respect and appreciation for the beauty and bounty of nature. We become wise and benevolent rulers of both the inner kingdom of the soul and the outer world of matter.

“Royalty of spirit” is an attitude, and it is cultivated through attention to these fundamental truths. If I, the soul, am a child of God, then I must possess all the qualities of my Father. However, we get misled by physical appearances and we get drawn into the apparent “reality” of identifying with what we can see – my family, my education, my accomplishments, my reputation, my possessions, etc. This can give us a sense of security, a practical identity combined with a network of support. But ultimately, none of these connections can satisfy the soul because they rob us of our innate royalty. We learn to bargain, trade or steal to maintain our self-esteem, and we feel anxious, fearful or depleted when our support network isn’t feeding us properly.

So, to regain our identity as wise and benevolent rulers, we must renounce the complicated support network that we have grown to depend on. The soul chooses a different journey, one that leads into the vast inner dimension of personal truth, divine virtues and spiritual powers. The goal is to find one’s highest purpose in life and live each moment according to that purpose. This commitment to the highest good sows the seed of spiritual royalty.

There are four parts to this journey: (1) being a lover of God, and putting all my faith and trust in God’s ability to satisfy all the heart’s deepest desires; (2) being a spiritual student and studying life from the perspective of the soul; (3) applying spiritual principles and divine virtues in everyday life; and (4) using my spiritual resources to serve humanity and nature. All four parts must be explored, practised and developed in tandem, as each part supports the others. The raja yogi does not abandon ordinary life to go on this journey, but rather uses life as material for learning. The more inconvenient or seemingly “unspiritual” a situation may seem, the bigger the potential for



The spirit rediscovers
its own divine qualities
and the urge to express
these qualities through
our bodies.

spiritual growth.

The journey is grounded in a loving relationship with the Supreme Soul, who is embraced as the soul’s Mother, Father, Teacher and Friend. The raja yogi invokes the Supreme by contemplating perfection: What is perfect love, perfect peace, perfect harmony? We aspire for perfection in life, but where can we find it? This desire draws us towards the Perfect Being and into His dimension of perfect love, peace, bliss and security. In this space, we encounter our own divine qualities. A desire takes root to express divine qualities through our bodies. This is the spirit expressing its royal nature.

The “raja” then decides to make some changes in his kingdom. Once we taste perfect love, we no longer want to bargain in love. Once we experience perfect peace, we no longer want to live with a chattering mind. And once we know supreme bliss, we stop chasing after small jolts of pleasure. Now we know true freedom – freedom to be myself.

Freedom is sweet, but how long can it last? The raja yogi sees that to remain in the state of freedom and royalty, one must be completely disciplined, especially in one’s use of time and thoughts. Raja yogis start each day with meditation – a loving and focused connection with the inner being and the Supreme Being. Then, spiritual study – principles and pointers of spiritual nourishment for the soul, and material for practicing divine virtues throughout the day. These take place according to a fixed schedule. Short interludes

of peaceful silence are also scheduled throughout the day, so that the mind never gets too far off track. Food is prepared and eaten peacefully, according to spiritual principles, not whenever convenient or whatever looks good. Filled with spiritual treasures, the soul is not hungry for love, attention, respect or sensual indulgence. Instead, the soul feels eager to share divine qualities with others. If no one is around, one can always have grateful thoughts for Earth or spread peaceful vibrations through the atmosphere.

With these practices, the inner kingdom assumes its rightful order and the ruler automatically manages it. Royalty of spirit comes from the sense that one is so full inside that whatever happens outside, there is always plenty to share. All forms of begging, borrowing or manipulating become unnecessary. Freedom prevails. In a clear and unperturbed mind, creativity flourishes. It’s okay to take chances. There is nothing to lose, provided I maintain the faith that I am an eternal soul, a child of God, and my Father is both powerful and benevolent.

As both social beings and energetic beings, we all need “connections” in life. Raja yoga offers us the highest connections, the return to our royal state of consciousness, through discovering our inner kingdom and remembering our Eternal Father. Once these connections are in place, we can connect lovingly and enthusiastically with people, activities and Earth, free from desires, attachments or misgivings.★

God is Not Omnipresent

According to the God’s own revelation, he is the Father of all. But can a father also be the child? Certainly not, therefore He is not omnipresent. God is the creator of all, but creator cannot be the creation and the presence of creator in the creation seems blemished. For instance, if a painter paints or creates a painting then he is the creator of the piece but he cannot be present in the painting or cannot be the painting. However, his thoughts and feelings can influence the painting which can be felt by the viewer. Similarly, the sun is in one place in the solar system but its influence can be felt throughout the solar system, as it provides heat and light in different places. A writer’s thoughts can be instilled in the writing but the physical presence of writer in every writing is not possible. Likewise, a movie director can direct film but do not act in the movie himself. In the same way, the God is the ocean of seamless qualities and powers and the source of all spiritual requirements and in order to be with us, he does not need to be omnipresent because the feeling of being closer to the God is beyond dimensions. Moreover, if God were literally omnipresent, there would have been no sin in the World. If God, the giver of happiness and health have manifested in every human then why should a person be sick at all? Why should people pray to God for healing? If he were present everywhere, then his qualities including peace, happiness, and purity ought to be found everywhere. However, nowadays we see the presence of strife, vices, and pain in every individual. All these facts reveal that God is not omnipresent. ★



Kottayam, Kerala : BK Pankaj receiving Dr.B.R.Ambedkar Highest Excellence Award 2017 from Hon’ble Governor of Kerala Sri P.Sathasivam for her contribution towards spreading message of values, spirituality & selfless service to society. Also on the dias are Dr. P. Abdul Gafur, MES President and Mr. Kadagampally Surendran, Minister of Tourism and Devaswom.

Wisdom of Dadi Janki

Chief of Brahma Kumaris

Being in the NOW

These days people feel they don't have enough time. This causes a lot of stress and unease. Multitasking often leads to reduced concentration and mistakes – which then take up more time. Some become so dispirited by their to-do list that they put off things, hoping it will be easier another day – or unnecessary if left long enough – and so the list gets longer... When time feels like this, everything seems an effort. Yet there are people who do a lot but don't appear to be busy; they are carefree. How do they manage that? The secret lies in how much we understand and value ourselves and time. This enables us to focus on what is important.

As human beings, we constantly experience change – from being a child, to a young person, to an adult, then an older person. Yet, 'I', the one who experiences the world and expresses myself through this ever-changing body, remain the same. The key is to be in the present and aware of myself as a spiritual being, temporarily inhabiting the body I use, observing and taking part in the great drama of life. I play my physical role with responsibility, but I can also step back mentally from that role and observe myself. The role then becomes more beautiful, more precise and more accurate, because, I can understand better how to play it objectively. I come into time – into the drama of life – but I can also step back into another awareness, that of timelessness, of eternity. We experience and develop this practice through silence and meditation.

I am sometimes asked, "Where do you get your energy from?" If I use my time, energy and money in ways that are benevolent and useful, I experience a lot of happiness and strength internally and in my relationships. We can waste so much time and energy thinking unhelpfully of the past – or creating expectations of an ideal future. Yesterday is gone and it is what I do in this moment that will determine the future that I and others would like to see. So what I have to do is focus my attention on the present and the quality of my thoughts, words and actions now.

With a better understanding of myself and time, I am able to tap into my inner power and the power and energy of the One above – and use that in a worthwhile way to help bring about positive change in my own life and in the world.

Silence

There is a part of you that is perfect and pure. It is untouched by the less than perfect characteristics you've acquired by living in a less than perfect world.

It is filled with divine qualities, so is in a constant state of resourcefulness and well-being. Its total absence of conflict and negativity of any sort makes this part of you a still point; a deep, enriching experience of silence.

Make time to practice reaching this inner place of silence. It will bring you untold benefit.

First, it allows you to manage your thoughts better. You will find, for example, that there is no need to think as much as you do, that simply sitting in silence will bring forth, effortlessly, much of all that you need.

Second, the experience of silence releases you from the grip of your negative programming and conditioning. You will more easily experience the truth of your inner peace and dignity. This further aids the mind in remaining focused and capable.

Third, the power of silence can be shared. As you increase your experience of silence, your power can help those without power to continue in their efforts of self-development and the experience of peace. Your stock of silence plus an additional stock of true, powerful thoughts will help others go beyond the limited into the unlimited and the divine.

It feels so good to 'go beyond' in this way, to leave behind thought and speech and become quiet for a little while. It's so refreshing and nourishing; it's habit-forming. Love for spiritual introversion, solitude and silence complement our life in such a beautiful way. ★



You Ask... We Reply

Send your questions to purity@bkivv.org

Satbir Singh, Chandigarh

■ **There is a thin line between ego and self-respect. How can one judge if it is ego?**

■ Yes, the line between self-respect and ego is indeed very thin. Ego begins where self-respect ends. Ego can also be perceived as an exaggeration of self-respect. Self-respect is to live in harmony with the virtues of the soul. It is about having or retaining respect for personal morals and principles. It is a state where thoughts and actions are transparent and we are ready to accept setbacks unless they divert us from our morals and principles. Therefore, self-respecting people are easy learners. For such people, it is about moral and ethical conduct, and not about being right every time. They accept and learn from their mistakes; at the same time, they are highly confident about their inner strengths and virtues. Contrary to this, ego is the feeling of being superior to others. An egotist never accepts his mistakes and hence, never learns. There is no space in him for any other viewpoint. He is self-seeking, self-absorbed and self-centred. It is ego when people never accept anyone being better than them. Hence, a sensitive or fragile nature is ego's accomplice, and it endeavours to stop us from seeing the truth. The sensitivity of an egotist keeps God out. Being honest and truthful to the self is the first step to begin overcoming ego. Honesty towards self can be achieved through self-awareness – that

I am not a body but a soul. Spirituality helps in gaining self-awareness and replacing the sensitive nature or ego with a true and natural self-identity.

Mohit Mehta, Bhavnagar

■ **How can we contribute towards a peaceful world?**

■ The world is now full of ferocity and brutality, where violence has become an accepted norm. It is now used even against innocent individuals for securing public attention, as an expression of disapproval or for redressing grievances. It is difficult or almost impossible to find sincere endeavours to maintain a harmonious or peaceful atmosphere, fraternal feelings, or amicable cooperation. A minor provocation is enough to trigger a quarrel, even bloodshed, over trivial matters. In such a situation, it becomes crucial to comprehend the reason behind all these troubles. Disharmony in the inner self is the main reason for disharmony in the world. Resentment in the inner self originates from vicious tendencies, including ego, greed, lust, attachment, anger, envy, and intolerance, stemming from the degeneration of human, moral, social, and spiritual values such as tolerance, humility, honesty, compassion etc. When almost all individuals are afflicted by one or the other vice, how can the society be free from vices? We need to recondition ourselves in order to transform others. Transforming the self is the real way to transform the world.

Ankit Prasad, Jharkhand

■ **How to gain the respect of all?**

■ Respect is commanded, not demanded, goes the saying. Give respect to all to get the respect of all. For this, practice seeing their good qualities and not their faults or defects. ★



News in Photos

The best preparation for tomorrow is to do today's work extremely well.

Bengaluru, Karnataka : BK Padma didi being presented bouquet after conferring the prestigious Kempegowda Award by Municipal Corporation of Bengaluru.



Panipat, Haryana : Inaugurating conference on 'Balancing Life and Work' at Gyan Mansarovar are (L-R) Mr. Ram Gopal, ED, Panipat Refinery, Mr. Pramod Vij, Distt. President, BJP, Mr. Sanjay Bhatia, Chairman, Haryana Khadi Gram Udyog Board, Ms. Suman Manjari, IG Police Haryana Police, Dr. Rajiv, Director, Balaji Speciality Hospital, Mr. Rakesh Garg, Secretary, Haryana Chamber of Commerce, BK Bharat Bhushan, BK Sarla and BK Shivani (Keynote Speaker).



Mohali, Punjab : Lighting candles to inaugurate World Health Day at Brahma Kumaris Sukh Shanti Bhawan are Dr. Priyadarshi Ranjan, Director, Kidney Transplant, Fortis, BK Prem Lata, Director and BK Dr. Rama, Co-Director of Rajyoga Centre and Dr. Mukesh Gaba, Psychotherapist.



Bilaspur, Chattisgarh : BK Manju being honoured by Hon'ble Amar Aggarwal, Chattisgarh Minister for Urban Development for promoting value education and spirituality among youth and women.



Dr. B.K.Binny receiving memento after speaking at National Seminar on "Positive Psychology and Spirituality for Holistic Health at Amity University, Noida



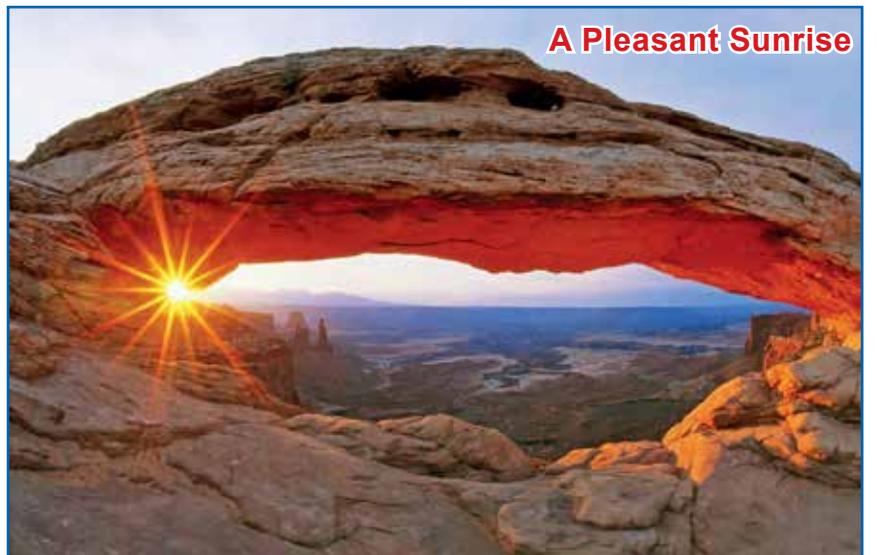
New Delhi, Hari Nagar : Lighting lamps at 'Value Education' programme are BK Shukla didi, BK Sunderlal, Dr. Surinder, Dy. Director, Education, Dr. Surinder Pal, Jt. Director, ICAI, Cdr (Retd.) Yugal Kishore and others..



Om Shanti Retreat Centre (ORC), Gurugram : Group of Nurses from Pushpanjali College of Nursing, Mathura who underwent 2-day training in 'Enhancing Healing Power through Sweet Temperament' gained from Practice of Rajyoga Meditation.



Abu Road, Shantivan :
Rajyogini Dadi Ratan Mohini, Joint Chief of Brahma Kumaris was felicitated on her 93rd birth anniversary. Dadiji pioneered overseas service with visit to Japan in 1954 alongwith the late Dadi Prakashmani and late Dada Anand Kishore.



A Pleasant Sunrise

Mr. Wise

Mr. Wise?
Yes.
Nothing is good or bad, only thinking makes it so?
It's a wise old saying..
Does it refer to faulty thinking or find fault with thinking itself?
I cannot say.



♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦
And Mr. Wise?
Yes.
Thinking enables us discern right from wrong?
And yet we are not able to do what is right and refrain from doing what is wrong!
With all the knowledge and thinking, we still suffer from such implementation paralysis, why?
I cannot say.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦
Lastly...
Yes.
How about wisdom? Does wisdom grow with thinking?
Perhaps not. Wisdom is divine. It sees no wrong and so, doesn't have to think or discern.
And thinking as we see, these days, is jammed with negative and waste thoughts with a few positive and creative ones struggling to survive.
Perhaps you are right.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

Tailpiece

On opening his new store, a man received a bouquet of flowers. He was dismayed on reading the enclosed card that expressed 'Deepest Sympathy'. While he was puzzling over the message, his telephone rang. It was the florist, apologizing for having sent the wrong card. "Oh, it's all right," said the storekeeper. "I'm a businessman and I understand how these things can happen".

"But," added the florist, "I accidentally sent your card to a funeral assembly."

"Well, what did it say?" asked the storekeeper.

"Congratulations on your new location."

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

At a variety entertainment show, a strong man took a lemon in his hand and squeezed it so hard that apparently not a single drop of juice remained. He then offered Rs. 1000 to any member of the audience who could squeeze a few more drops from it. At first no one volunteered, then a little middle-aged man rose to his feet and said that he would like to try. Taking the lemon firmly in his hand he pressed very hard until a thin trickle ran out. The strong man was astonished and asked the other man if he, too, was a performer.

'No', replied the little man, 'I'm an income tax collector.'

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

