



Inner Beauty

"Wow...that's beautiful!" Is either a cry or a thought when faced with the mountain sunset, a spectacular view or a well formed man or woman. But where is the beauty, where is the appreciation of beauty, where is the ability to discern beauty? It is within our own consciousness. For the essence of who and what we are, is beauty itself. The essence of beauty is not found in the body, a face or a mountain - they only stir the essence of beauty within our own spirit. And that beauty is not only something we taste within ourselves, but it emerges in our character as virtue, and in our life as care. For what is virtue, but love in action? The next time you say, "That's beautiful!" know that you speak of yourself, and it is you who are beautiful. Always were, always will be.

Inner Landscape

The ability to enjoy one's own company is one of the greatest gifts life has to offer. `Learning to turn our thoughts away from all our responsibilities at the day's end and take our mind into a state of peace and benevolence enables us to carry greater and greater loads without feeling burdened. When our inner landscape is full of beautiful thoughts, everything we do is a pleasure. Gently, we calm down chaotic situations and offer solace to troubled minds.

The Five Primary Qualities

The soul has five primary qualities; we could say they are the primary colours of humanity with which we paint the picture of our lives.

They are:

Peace

This is the original quality of the soul. Peace is serenity, the personal inner state of non-violence. In this state of peace, I harmonize with everything and everyone around me. The word 'shanti' means peace, and it is this thought (or word) we use as the key step in meditation.

Purity

A state of honesty and cleanliness where I am the same inside and outside, not deceiving either myself, or others. Consequently, there is no room for artificiality. Purity is the state of original truth where no violence is committed against others, nor can violence be committed against me. When the self is in its original purity, others cannot damage or destroy it, even if they try, because there is a natural aura of protection that acts as an invisible barrier. When I achieve this level of purity, it means I respect all things.

(To be continued tomorrow)

Soul Sustenance

Observing But Not Absorbing

To observe means we take a new, appropriate mental position in whatever situation, or in whatever relationship, we find ourselves. **Observation is a silent skill — a skill we need to learn if we are to assess clearly what positive changes are needed to be made in the self in a particular situation or relationship.**

If we fail to learn this art of observing, we are likely to react and absorb ourselves in the negativity of the person, or event. We get lost in the quicksand of 'what's wrong?' which prevents us from putting things right. As we absorb and fill ourselves with negative emotion, we become heavy and remain helplessly rooted to the ground. The gravity of overload does not allow us to rise above a situation and to understand the reality of what is happening. As a result, we lose perspective and overreact.

If we wish to understand how the mental position of observation gives us the power of perspective, we can look at the example of the bird and the ant. The ant, extremely busy, running here and there, scrambling over everything in its rush to find and collect food, will see only what is in front of its nose. The bird, on the other hand, leaves the earth and, as it flies higher and higher, starts to see the bigger picture, compared to when it was on the ground, or on the branch of a tree. Seeing the whole picture, it has a completely different perspective. It is only then that it can truly see where to go and what to do. When we get absorbed in a situation or relationship, we lose perspective; we become like an ant, we get too involved in the details, missing the obvious, and cannot imagine, or think of other possibilities.

Message for the day

The first step of courage is to consider oneself fortunate at every step.

Expression: The one who is courageous never has a doubt of being fortunate. Even if there are difficult situations and challenges, the faith of being fortunate never fades away. This faith enables such a person to recognize and use the available resources in a worthwhile way. Even during difficult situations, there is never a need to stop as faith gives courage to move on.

Experience: When I consider myself to be fortunate I never experience fear in spite of difficult situations. I am always happy with whatever is happening. Along with it I also have the enthusiasm to make effort to better the situation. I never worry but am able to enjoy each and every moment and make the best use of it.