

LEARN TO LIVE & LIVE TO LEARN

* **Prof. O. S. Dewal**

Rtd. Professor, NCERT, New Delhi

E.250 Mayur Vihar II, DELHI 110091

Phone: 09810124701 Email: opdewal@gmail.com

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➤ **By failing to prepare, we prepare to fail.**

Benjamin Franklin

➤ **Rise above the little.**

John Burroughs

Abstract

*The aim of life is self-growth, self-up gradation, self-rise and self-empowerment. A thoughtful individual ought to possess a clear vision of life and explicit strategies to attain that vision. Success in life is not a sprint; it is a Marathon. Life needs a positive approach. For that negativity and inaction must be rooted out. Possibility, optimism and criticality must become the substance of living. “We ought to **Learn** as if we are to live for next 100 years and **Serve** the society as if we will die tomorrow.” This view of Mahatma Gandhi must become our polar star and should always be guiding our path.*

Prof. A.P. Sharma, whenever in India has the greatness to meet me and discuss issues that are intellectually rich, curiosity driven and spiritually centered. This year (2016) he brought the point of symbiosis between life and living. Both of us tried to unlock many aspects of the theme and I, mentally decided to scribble a few lines on the theme. This article speaks my mindset on the theme.

Words have immense power. In Hindi “Word” is called “Akshar” that means one that does not die. The mantra is a combination of words that has unique impact. This power (intellectual and spiritual energy) can come in a long expression or a short one. The Rig Veda (10.53.6) says “Be a man” (*Manurbhav*). At times, one word demands elaboration in 10 pages. Likewise Gandhiji spoke of seven social ills. It is not very a long expression but needs hundreds of pages to explain the inner and the deeper meaning of the seven social ills, which are:-

- Education without character
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- Joy without peace
- Politics without principles
- Science without humanism
- Vocation without morality
- Wealth without work
- Worship without service

Similarly the Serenity of a Prayer by ‘Roinhold Niebure’ needs time, energy and mind to absorb the essence of the expression:

GOD, GRANT ME SAGACITY TO HAVE COURAGE TO CHANGE WHAT I CAN, TO ACCEPT WHAT I CANNOT CHANGE AND THE WISDOM TO KNOW THE DIFFERENCE.

Education is a word that involves, learning, de-learning and relearning. We ought to remember that due to time, space and persons (*Kaal, Sthan, Patra*) our perceptual world get re-programmed, re-invented. And that needs de-learning and re-learning.

Let us look at the term ‘education’ closely. It will be interesting and instructive to look at it (education) from the eyes of the learned people. It may mean that:

- Education in the most powerful weapon to change the world.
Nelson Mandela
- Education is not filling of a bucket but lightning of a fire.
W B Yeats
- Education must be an exposure to greatness.
A N whitehead
- Education is an ability to listen to almost anything without losing your temper and self-confidence.
Robert Frost
- Education is not knowing more but behaving differently.
John Ruskin

The Title of this paper has circular meaning. Life is assured on the scale of time (years) and learning in the context of change of behavior. They are the two areas of circles. Both the areas constitute the circle. We ought to devote life to empower ourselves and enlarge ourselves; making it more positive powerful and proactive for changing ourselves for self well being and social richness.

It is always observed that inner thought guides our speech and outward behavior. If the inner thought is only of self interests it has low objective. If our activity has positive impact on society at large, we are leading a good life.

A person's mind must be cool, heart warm & loving and hands that enjoy helping others. A cool mind is an open mind that accepts even contradictory perceptions. The expressions like 'bottomless pit', 'Cruel to be kind', 'audible silence', 'tree without roots' have complex meanings. Let us not blame boots for the faults of our feet. Let us remember Johan Von Goethe who said:

Whatever you can or dream you can,

Begin it.

Boldness has genuine power and magic in it.

Every individual has two objectives of life; self growth and social concern. These two interests must help each other. Self growth promotes social richness and socially rich climate promotes the positively in individuals. Gandhi Ji said 'self-purification is infectious, it impacts society also.'

Look to the five quotes given below. Each quote demands concentration of mind to absorb its deeper meaning.

- One cannot believe in God unless one believes in oneself.
Swami Vivekananda
- We live in deeds not years.
Houmer
- Education is not to know more but to behave differently.
John Ruskin
- Deep at the heart of Alexander you always find Aristotle.
- Elevate yourself by your own effort.
H.D Thoreay

“An unexamined life is not worth living” said the Greek Thinker Socrates. The Hindus have a tradition to sit quietly and reflect on self both early in the morning and before going to sleep at night. This habit develops the skills of self evaluation, self testing and self auditing. Schools and

universities must teach this point and bring out the impatience of the habit.

At this point I prefer to take a departure and walk on the less trodden road. We never teach the youngsters how to breathe, how to eat and how to drink. These are the basic essentials of life and the young ones learn only by trial and error which is a costly approach.

Let me now end this article. If one is pure, powerful and humble, he can take the world with him, he himself is like an army. One becomes more positive and powerful if he associates himself with the wise and thoughtful people, known as 'Apta Purush'. My association with Dr. Mohan Singh Mehta, Dr. Kalu Lal Srimali, Prof. J.S. Rajput and the like have made me what I am today. Our association with 'Apta Pursuh' gives us a new role. With one eye we see the merits of others and with the other eye we see our imperfections. Gandhi ji said, "I know my imperfections and that is my strength"

Let me reproduce a thoughtful idea from Dr. A.P.J Abdul Kalam's book **Ignited Minds** (P.136). Dr. Kalam asked Azim Prem ji of WIPRO that how it reached the high status in the business world. Prem Ji answered that the success was due to hard work of the teams, concern for customer's delight and a bit of luck. The reader himself will believe that one reaches stars by hard work and social concern that the Gita refers as '*Sarvbhute Hiterata* .

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