



PSALMS

For Leadership

A compilation of writings on
Motivation, Values, Team Building and Rotary

- by -

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FOREWORD

Rajashree Birla

Aditya Birla Foundation
Chairperson



For over two decades now, I have been closely associated with Shri. Ashok Mahajan, given our shared values and vision of polio eradication, first in India and then in countries where polio still persists. During this enduring and endearing association where we moved beyond polio to Rotary's programmes relating to diabetes, TB and thalassemia wherein we as the Aditya Birla Group are linked, several facets of Ashokji's humane nature and leadership traits came to the fore. I am pleased to see that he has strung his thoughts in his book "Psalms for Leadership".

Mulling through "Psalms for Leadership", it was heartening to see how the various articles penned by Ashokji, focus on leadership and life that far transcends materialism.

The pattern of thinking is quite unique, because it sets you on the thought trajectory as well. At its core is the philosophy of positivity expressed in a subtle and concise manner. For many, torn by vicissitudes of life there is comfort in pursuing the precepts highlighted.

You can glean a lot from the leadership lessons. For instance: Happiness is a derivative of inner peace. There is a kind of soul lifting experience in giving. Live life on your own terms. Be mindful. These I am sure, will resonate well with the reader. Passion, authenticity, equanimity and fortitude, I believe are the hallmarks of leadership and eventually lead to self-actualization. Quite a few of these characteristics form the tenor of the psalms.

Reading the book, I recounted the words of our beloved Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, "Your beliefs become your thoughts, your thoughts become your words, your words become your actions, your actions become your habits, your habits become your values, your values become your destiny." "Psalms for Leadership", is full of good thoughts.

FOREWORD

Jennifer Jones

Vice President 2016-2017
Rotary International



For many years I have found myself appreciating the writings and thoughts of Ashok Mahajan.

Each time I receive a piece of communication from him, I know that I will receive a gift. Sometimes it is inspiration, sometimes a life lesson and all of the times it leaves me with a full heart and ready to take action.

In bringing us together through his writings, Ashok understands that the core of Rotary is connectivity. It is the enduring connections that we make with each other that allow us to tackle some of the world's most pressing challenges.

He is unwavering in his belief that we are rooted in what our founders set forward – our core values, the objects of Rotary and our Four Way Test. These are the principles that are the bedrock of who we are as Rotarians and Ashok uses these tenets to showcase Rotary's relevance in our second century of service.

Ashok writes about peace, ethics and honesty, the significance of vocational service and so much more. He challenges us to do the right thing – to “remember that Rotary is judged by the quality and reputation of the men and women in Rotary and this almost entirely depends on your personal integrity.”

Social media and new technology have forever changed the way we connect with each other. Ashok uses these tools and understands that we must embrace that we are the original social network and harness what makes us unique.

He provides practical thoughts for Rotarians about business, life and service. This helps to bring to life Rotary's new vision statement:

Together, we see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change — across the globe, in our communities, and in ourselves.

This is our call to action and it is fundamental to Rotary's success.

I am truly grateful for Ashok's regular insights and thank him, on behalf of so many, for living a life dedicated to service and sharing his gifts with all of us.

FROM DG's DESK

Dr. Mohan Chandavarkar
RI District 3142 Governor
2019-2020



You can take the horse to the water, but you can't make him drink. PDG Anupam Desai gave that statement an intellectual twist, asserting – but, you can make the horse thirsty. Conversely, if your thirst for knowledge is strong enough, you will find the water to satisfy it. No thief, however skilful, can rob one of knowledge, which makes it the most secure treasure.

That is exactly what our erudite, experienced and knowledgeable Rtn. Ashok Mahajan has attempted. His blogs a treasure trove of wisdom, introspection and belief in the future. His writings are deeply religious, steeped in tradition, yet bring in a breath of fresh air. Neil Tyson once said – “For me, I am driven by two main philosophies: know more today about the world than I knew yesterday and lessen the suffering of others. You'd be surprised how far that gets you.” That sums up the ethos of Rotary, as PRID Ashok has seen in his long and productive sojourn in Rotary.

What the mind conceives, the heart believes and the body does. During one of my frequent discussions with PP Shirish Songadkar of Thane Hills ... Voila! We had a simultaneous revelation, which culminated in the publishing of 'Psalms for Leadership'. Our district is fortunate to enjoy the active support of PRID Ashok for many service projects like Thalassemia Day Care, Paediatric Cardiac Surgeries and Virtual Eye and more. It was most fitting that RI Dist. 3142 be the publisher. Further, we decided that the proceeds of the sale of this book will go to The Rotary Foundation.

Here it is, for everyone to read, enjoy, share and evaluate. The need of the hour is aptly put by Roald Dahl- “So please, oh please, we beg, we pray, go throw your TV set and mobile away, and in their place, you can install a lovely bookshelf on the wall.” There you can proudly display 'Psalms for Leadership'!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



PRID Ashok Mahajan

Ashok Mahajan was born on 23rd of July, 1947, in the state of Punjab, India. His parents Mulkraj and Rajrani instilled in him the philosophy of universal brotherhood at an early age.

After graduated in Electrical Engineering he obtained Diplomas in Operations Management and Business Management from the University of Bombay. He is the founder of Raj Industries, now one of India's largest manufacturers of Micro Switches. Over four decades, the company's guiding business philosophy - 'Ethics, Excellence and Empathy' -, has earned it the trust of employees, vendors and clients and great brand recognition in the business.

Ashok Mahajan was invited to join Rotary Club of Mulund, RI District 3140 in 1973. He served as **Club President** in 1982-83 and **District Governor**, RI Dist. 3140 in 1993-94. Under his leadership, Dist.3140 topped the charts in all avenues of services and added 700 new members and 20 new clubs during the year. He was the 1st DG from India to cross \$200,000 in TRF support. He was elected as **Director, Rotary International** for the period 2007-09, during which membership in India rose from 90,000 to 122,000. He was elected as **Trustee of The Rotary Foundation** from 2009-13 (while he was a serving Director, a rare achievement in itself) during which India's contribution to TRF increased from \$6.5 million to over \$ 14 million, changing India's status from a Receiving Country to a Giving Country. He has served as Chairman, Rotary International Membership & Retention Committee.

Mr. Mahajan has been a champion of the Polio Eradication campaign. He surmounted resistance to the Polio vaccine in the Muslim community, by forming the Ulema Committee and enlisting its support (recognized by Govt. of India and WHO as a critical factor in making India polio-free). He continues to be Chairman, Muslim Ulema Committee. He initiated the financial support of Rotary



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



activity by Indian corporate houses, raising more than \$ 15 million for the Polio Plus Programme. He has served as Member of the National Polio Plus Committee for 10 years and International Polio Plus Committee for 4 years.

He has been consistent in fund-raising and advisory support for healthcare projects like Thalassaemia Care, Diabetes, TB Control & Paediatric Cardiac Surgery and is fully involved with the Literacy programme.

A prolific writer, his previous publications 'From Where I am', 'Membership Matters' and 'Face to Face' (a compilation of interviews with Rotary luminaries) have been appreciated widely in the Rotary world.

A much sought-after speaker, he has addressed innumerable seminars and assemblies on TRF, Polio, Membership, Leadership, Youth and Team Building.

Mr. Mahajan is a Major Donor and Paul Harris Society Member and the recipient of 'Service above Self Award', 'Distinguished Service Award' from TRF, 'International Award for a Polio-free World', 'Regional Award for a Polio-free World' and 'Polio Plus Pioneer Award'

His wife Nayantara is a home-maker and Past President of Inner Wheel Club of Mulund. His children Nikhil & Namrata have been Interactors. The extended Mahajan clan is a Paul Harris Family.

IN MY DEFENCE

PRID Ashok Mahajan



I consider myself as a dangerous optimist and live by the maxim: Rotary First! I am also a 'people first man' and believe that Rotary can deliver more from less for more people.

As an eternal optimist and a passionate believer in the future and glory of Rotary, I have attempted to share my thoughts in this book.

It is my desire to energize a new generation of Rotarians to become thought leaders. I have tried to capture the spirit of Rotary service and encourage the aspirations of members to become leaders of Rotary and take the organisation forward in the coming century.

I always seized the opportunities for service that came my way in my community and in my Rotary club. I believe in engaging with grassroot Rotarians toward building an innovative Rotary. Rotarians have reposed their trust in through the myriad responsibilities I was given and the contentious issues I was asked to resolve.

My thoughts laid out in this book may at times, seem like crazy dreams. Can a movement with over 1.2 million members drawn from several countries and cultures bond together for the next 100 years? We have done it in the past and with a little innovation we can do it again. My confidence comes because of my interaction with Rotarians, Inner Wheel Members, Rotaractors and supporters of Rotary.

My dream in 1993 about making India stronger in the Rotary movement is not as crazy as it sounded then because today India is being looked as a donor country and has shown that membership can rise gradually and sustain itself.

I asked myself a simple question. Should we be satisfied with what Rotary has achieved in India and worldwide? When and how are we going to raise the membership to over 2 million? I gathered my thoughts and have put them together in this book. I believe Rotary will grow from strength to strength, reinvent itself in all nations and carry on with its incredible journey.

I look forward to travelling with you all on this journey, into a glorious era for Rotary, My Rotary.



PRID Ashok Mahajan with his spouse Nayantara

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Too often, we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, an attentive ear, an honest compliment or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.



Rotary Cares

Relationships makes life meaningful and enriching. No one is ever happy and satisfied living all alone, sharing one's talents with none and without having any social concern. Living in and as a part of a family and society, everyone experiences love, care, concern and forgiveness. These experiences keep us going in spite of all the misunderstandings and differences that personal inclinations and interests bring along.

As rational beings, humans are not confined to a particular family, class or society. They belong to the whole universe. Hence, human beings are obliged to extend care, love and concern not merely to those who are close to them and those from whom they benefit. The joy in their hearts resonates in the entire universe.

Rotary teaches us that everyone and everything deserves our care, because they are precious and beautiful in a unique and particular way. Care is the attitude of unconditional benevolence and respect, irrespective of all distinctions. Only such an attitude of care and reverence can make life truly significant and meaningful.

Always remember, people who care about each other enjoy doing things for one another. They don't consider it servitude.

Let us care to promote peace and friendship.



Throughout history, people have created marvellous things by using their imagination.



The Power of Imagination

Do we remember what it was like to be a child? The best part of it was the time we used to spend imagining all that we wanted to do when we grew up, bringing out so much of our creativity unconsciously.

We were always happy and alive during those days. Sadly, as we grow older, we tend to neglect our imagination and lose the ability to fully enjoy life. Our imagination is one of the keys to living life on a higher level. We will never be able to achieve anything unless we think of it within our mind.

Imagining ourselves living life on our terms will motivate us to take action in order to move in the direction of our dreams. We must learn to use our imagination to raise our thinking to a higher level. Let our thoughts inspire within us the belief that we can live the life that we have imagined. As Albert Einstein says, "Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world."

There is nothing more powerful than imagination. If we can imagine something constructively then we can create reality from it. Our imaginary thoughts are the building blocks through which we can make this world a better place.

The beauty of imagination is that there are no boundaries, the possibilities are limitless. The world is a canvas on which we draw our life with the creative use of imagination. We need to discover our innate powers and then bring them to life. All that we require is to become aware that we have the power of imagination within us to create everything we wish!



Always remember you are more intelligent than you feel, braver than you believe, stronger than you seem and smarter than you think.



Self Confidence

Self is the most important aspect in each person's life. No wonder, ever since life began, human beings have been ceaselessly hunting for an answer to the question, "Who am I?" The most common answer would be: the sum of everything one knows and can imagine about oneself

Low self-confidence is not a life sentence. Self-confidence can be learned, practiced, and mastered, like any other skill. Once you master it, everything in your life will change for the better.

Successful people have fear, successful people have doubts, and successful people have worries. They just don't let these feelings stop them.

It is said, 'whatever you wish, that you are'. Such is the force of the will that whatever we wish to be with a genuine determination, that we become. What you think of yourself is the personality you take on. Like cancer, a poor self-concept can eat up the person and gradually he/she grows weak in every aspect. Therefore, there is a greater need for changing one's inner beliefs than for attempting to change the external conditions.

"Nothing can stop the man with the right mental attitude from achieving his goal; nothing on earth can help the man with the wrong mental attitude." Said Thomas Jefferson

There is no more unique gift God could give us than the 'power of choice'. Because of this exceptional gift, life is what you make it. With faith and confidence in yourself and with the right thought in your mind, you can measure up to anyone and get out of life almost anything you want, for as Ven. Fr. James Alberione says, "You are a miracle of God."



Be always someone worth imitating !



Living by Example

When it comes to look for inspiration and guidance, you do have a few role models whom you can think of. But have you ever realized that you are also a model for those around you? What kind of model are you?

Living by example is the best way to inspire others. Mahatma Gandhi, the father of our nation, rightly said, “Be the change that you want to see in the world.” It is only by becoming the messenger as well as being the message, your role as a model become effective.

There is a South Indian legend about a holy man who became known all over India as a famous preacher. He showed kindness to all who came to him. Thousands of pilgrims came to learn from him. Everyone who visited him went back inspired. Yet, this great preacher had never in his life been able to utter even one word, for he had been born dumb. The example he set by his actions was the only sermon he could preach.

People prefer to watch what you do rather than listen to what you say. “Action speaks louder than words,” goes an ancient proverb. No matter how convincingly and impressively you may try to speak, you will be a failure if your actions do not correspond with your words.

When you live to make a difference in the life of others, your life focuses on intentional living. It is only by being conscious of your purpose in life that you can set an example to the people who look up to you.

Be always someone worth imitating!

“

*Honesty is more than not lying. It is truth telling,
truth speaking, truth living and truth loving.*

”

Honesty And Integrity

The high road is always respected. Honesty and integrity are always rewarded. When you are able to maintain your own highest standards of integrity – regardless of what others may do – you are destined for greatness. Integrity is doing the right thing, even when no one is watching.

Rotary claims to stand upright for honesty. Do we? It is ironic that in the age of great advances, we are traveling the other way as far as ethics are concerned. No development can survive if honesty starts disappearing. Rotary works for Peace. Peace is at stake as we tend to overlook honesty. Why is it so difficult? Because honesty begins with us. Ethics depend on us. Individuals can only promise ethics. There is no path to Honesty. Honesty is the path.



*The greatest legacy you can pass on to your children,
is not accumulated money or materials, but the wealth
of character and faith.*



Character Matters

Today people are learning new and varied ways of forming their identity. The idea of one's self begins to change depending on the society in which one lives. Instead of defining the self through the possession of virtues, material possessions have become the new means of defining the self.

Your reputation may not lead you to success but character will. Very rightly someone has said – Wealth is not power, Strength is not power, Knowledge is not power, Ability is not power, But Character is power. If you are a person of good Character, you will be considered truly great.

Authenticity is everything! When you wake up every day and look in the mirror, you want to be proud of the person who's looking back at you. You can do that only if you are honest with yourself and are a person of high character. Every day presents an opportunity to form your character.

The greatest influence on your character is the way you respond to circumstances, events and persons in your life. Remember that you are being moulded every moment of your life.

Compassion, honesty, truth and ethics have to be disseminated far and wide. Rotary provides us the unique opportunity to send signals all around us to promote all that we desire and all that the world deserves.

So, what is your main concern? Your Character formation or your reputation? Are you ready to do your part to be a man or woman of good Character?

The bottom line is, what matters in life is Character.



*If you fail, it is your responsibility.
If you succeed, give credit to others.*



Are Leaders Born or Made

Rotary has produced great leaders – true leaders- compassionate leaders – lovable leaders. They are so very different from leaders from other walks of life. They are leaders amongst equals and they do not wield power as other leaders do. They have learnt an important aspect of leadership. This important lesson is – when you fail, accept your responsibilities. When you succeed, give credit to your team. This works so well in Rotary that it is worth repeating. Success is to be shared, failures owned up to.

When A P J Abdul Kalam was in charge of India's Satellite Launch Vehicle (SLV) to put 'Rohini' into space, he found that just before the launch in 1979, the computer showed some indication of a problem. However, as per the manual, things seem to be in order. The vehicle was launched but instead of entering the space, it crashed into the Bay of Bengal. Everyone was disappointed. The then Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organization, Dr Satish Dhawan addressed a press conference and owned up the responsibility of this failure.

In 1980, another attempt was made by ISRO and the launch was a total success. Dr Dhawan asked Dr Kalam to address the press conference and announce the success.

This carried a very important message for all the subordinates. If you fail, it is your responsibility. If you succeed, give credit to others.



The Rotary Foundation does not build monuments of brick & stone... We build monuments of tolerance and understanding that will illuminate the world.



The Rotary Foundation is the Helping Hand of Rotary

Most of Rotary's programmes and projects aimed at helping the needy, the poor, the illiterate and the health – compromised, are sponsored, supported and managed by The Rotary Foundation. The primary aim of International Service of Rotary is to promote better understanding amongst the world communities and ensure Peace.

Polio Eradication Drive is an excellent illustration of Rotary's concern for the world community. To date, this has been the most outstanding achievement to promote Peace and protect millions of children against a preventable disease.

The purpose of the Foundation is to ensure that Rotary serves humanity, in perpetuity. The Rotary Foundation does not build monuments of brick and stone. By infusing Rotary with love for fellow-men, we build monuments of tolerance and understanding that will illuminate the world.

The world today needs abundant service activities especially in those nations that are plagued heavily with poverty, ill health, illiteracy and many such ills that must be redressed to ensure world peace.

With more than 36,000 clubs and over 1.2 million Rotarians, our assistance in the form of funds & programs, reaches its intended beneficiaries.

Today, The Rotary Foundation is poised to take a big leap. With more efforts to understand people around the world and major drives to tackle global conflicts, Rotary will succeed in creating a more peaceful world.

Rotary may not be able to prevent terrorist mania or fanatic behaviour, but Rotary will bring a degree of harmony and a little less bitterness amongst people. Rotary has a chance to succeed where Governments, religious leaders or politicians may fail. The Rotary Foundation can usher in an era of peaceful co-existence.



The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.



One Step At A Time

It is said, “A bucket gets filled drop by drop.” What does this quote mean? It means that you can achieve greatness by taking little steps.

When you want to achieve something big, first, you wish for it and second, you work for it. Wishing for it to happen quickly would not work. To reach your goal you must have patience, consistent effort and steady progress. A little effort every day will help you to reach your desired destination. Since there is no quick fix remedy or readymade master plan that will get you there faster, you have to work it out patiently.

Be prepared to take small steps towards your goal. No task is overwhelming or insurmountable when you take small steps every day. Put it down in black and white; your short- term and long – term goals, as well as the process you will follow. Then start today...

Hard work certainly pays. “To be idle is a short road to death and to be different is a way of life; foolish people are idle, wise people are different”, thus goes the saying. Start small, be patient and consistent, and success will be yours.

Do not wait until everything is just right. Conditions will always be less than perfect. So what? Get started now. With each step you take, you will grow stronger, more skilful, more self-confident and more successful.

To execute your plans and projects you must take a step to achieve your goals . The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. Rest not till you achieve your goal.



*Rotary provides us with the boat.
Navigation depends on your ability to adjust the sails.*



Against Your Sails

The other day, I had an opportunity to travel by boat with sails adjusted by the navigator. The sails were fluttering strongly as the wind took us to our destination in no time. As I got down, I enquired of the sailor, “We had a strong wind behind us as we travelled to this island. Will the wind be equally powerful when we return?” He smiled and said “Sir, come back when you finish your work and we will discuss this later”

After completing my mission, I returned and went aboard. The anchor was released and we sailed almost as fast, though the wind seemed to be less strong. Explaining the mystery, the boatman said “Look up Sir, and you will understand. The wind may blow in any direction and as strong as it can be, but we need to adjust our sails and the journey will be smooth and fast.

Our lives also encounter strong winds – sometimes opposing, sometimes confusing. We can reach our destination by adjusting the sails. Rotary provides us with the boat. Navigation depends on your ability to adjust the sails. Be the Inspiration and all will go well.



*There will be many who will walk in and out of your life
but true friends will leave footprints behind.*



Love and Friendship

The Holy Bible, speaking on friendship says, “A faithful friend is something beyond price. There is no measuring his worth”.

Love and friendship do not just make a good story, they make history. The core of every human being longs for love and friendship. Real friendship is a caring, trusting and affirming inter-relationship; it is a rare pearl, a sure shelter, the elixir of life.

The capacity to care gives life its deepest significance. Unless you love and care for someone, nothing else makes any sense. Our lives are shaped by those who love us and those who deny us their love. We find many around us who are friendless and their lives tell very sad stories, devoid of all hope. Therefore, do not ever be afraid of taking the first step to extend the hand of friendship.

True friendship does not consist of what we take from others, but what we give to others. It is genuine understanding, acceptance and commitment to the growth and welfare of another. It requires us to show respect, instil courage, and have faith in the goodness of others. Friendship is a source of strength and comfort in the midst of trials, disappointments and moments of sorrow. Sharing of pain and sadness strengthens friendship. It is a chain that binds people together for a lifetime.

Rotary blesses us with the opportunity to make friends and spread joy. Let us pledge to make the fullest use of this blessing and build a happier world.



*If we don't stick to our values when they are being tested,
they are not values, they are hobbies.*



Are We Value Driven?

How many of us stop for a while and reflect on own words and actions? Do we ever endeavour to know what we actually stand for, or understand what we believe? For the majority, the day gets over even before we realise it.

Why are values important? Our values form our thoughts, words and actions. Our values are important because they help us to grow and make life decisions. Values are important because they connect us to a group of people. Values tell us – in a more abstract way than norms, how to behave if we want to be accepted, respected, and venerated by a social group. The more we align our actions with a group's set of values, the more popular we become in the group. We rise higher in a social hierarchy the better we implement its value hierarchy.

We live in a topsy – turvy world where the majority engages in the hurly – burly of modern living, with values that come from the dregs of the society. Values, once followed unquestioned as unwritten laws, today stand twisted and compromised to suit one's needs and fancies.

Values give meaning and strength to a person's character, embellishing our behaviour with good qualities helping us take a stand against the dreadful forces of our times.

Regardless of our life experiences and influencers, we can choose the values that are most important to us, things we believe in and that define our character. Living in congruence with our values is the best way to become the person we want to be and to achieve the career and character we want and deserve.



Sometimes, life is hard. However, it also offers a path to great happiness. This path is paved with noble thoughts and positive actions that spread joy to others.



Have A Life Full Of Positivity

Life is not made for keeping score. It is not about how popular you are, how many Facebook friends you have, how many Whatsapp messages you receive every morning, how many phone calls you receive every day. It is not about how beautiful you are, how expensive your clothes are, what brand of shoes you sport, or which restaurant you dine at, or how often you travel abroad. It is not about the size of your house or your choice of car. It is most certainly not about the colour of your skin.

Life is about whom you love and whom you hurt, whom make happy or unhappy. It is about being trustworthy or unreliable. It is about cherishing friendship or being transactional. It is about your thoughts, words and deeds.

Most of all, life is the power to touch people's hearts. Life's true gift lies in your freedom to design it with beauty, clarity and joy. With each rising of the sun, you get to chase the opportunity to fill your days with meaning—to live your life the way you choose.

It is a hard life sometimes, but it is also a life in which attaining overall happiness is possible. The path to such a beautiful life is paved with beautiful thoughts and positive outlooks, that help to bring a smile to your face and spread happiness to others.

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Peace means resolving differences through humane and non-violent means; through dialogue, knowledge and understanding.



Let Peace Be Around

We often talk about peace – it is one of the most important topics of world discussions today. Peace between nations, peace in our societies, peace in our families, peace within ourselves. Though we spend great resources each year on think-tanks, brainstorming sessions and international conferences, this much-desired peace continues to elude us.

All the resources spent on building big structures in our cities, is laid waste by war, when they bombed to ashes, if we are at war. The most beautiful homes will have their windows smashed, if we live in a violent neighbourhood. We can work hard and successfully at our jobs, but if we come home to turmoil at home, there is no joy in the success obtained at work, for there is no one to share it with.

We can devote ourselves to obtaining high education, top credentials and a beautiful figure. However, if we are miserable inside, no outer achievement will ever pacify us.

Rotary's ultimate goal is to establish world peace. Every program of Rotary takes us a step nearer world peace. The root of success in life at all levels – personal, familial, societal, national and international – is peace. But how can we attain peace? What is the secret to finding this elusive treasure?

Our ego is the greatest obstacle to peace. Our ego wants us to be in the centre of every activity. Rather than seek glory and prestige, let this ego become a bridge in the service of the world. Let every Rotarian stand smaller than others instead of always trying to stand tallest, let us put others in the centre instead of ourselves. Then we will stand united and peaceful."

Let's work together and establish peace all around that will be our biggest gift to the world.



Very often, the difference between a success and a failure lies not in the better ability or idea, but in the courage to bet on the idea, take a calculated risk and take decisive action.



Be A Risk Taker

Life is full of risks. There are unavoidable risks like organ transplants, brain surgery, etc. There are also chosen risks which involve actions we deliberately take to get something we want. However, every chosen risk holds the potential for success or failure. For example, when we invest, we also risk losing money; when we love, we also risk being rejected, when we compete with someone, we also risk failure.

All risks are considered too dangerous and scary. But taking a risk in life is all about growth, and to grow we need to venture into the unknown courageously. Even if the expected outcome is not achieved, the long-term consequences of that risk-taking act can be positive because we become more resilient and capable to deal with natural risks more easily.

What matters in chosen risks is whether they are well calculated ones or not. The US General George S. Patton once said, "Take calculated risks. That is quite different from being rash." A calculated risk is one that has been given thoughtful consideration and for which the potential costs and benefits have been weighted and considered. Calculated risks make us confident that we have full control of our action. As a result, we do not experience fear at the thought of the unknown.

Life offers us abundance of possibilities. The moment we settle for our comfort zones, we merely exist without experiencing real happiness and success. The moment we take calculated risks, you may have a hundred-fold returns! **BE A RISK TAKER AND ACHIEVE EVEN WHAT WE FELT IMPOSSIBLE...**



The victory of success is half won when one gains the habit of setting goals and achieving them.



Have Realistic Goals

Everybody wishes to achieve things they like. Setting goals and achieving them not only gets things done, but it also builds self-esteem, happiness and confidence. This is more likely if our goals are realistic. Realistic goals are also more motivating than those that set the bar too high.

Most people think that whoever can list the most goals win. Unfortunately, merely expressing the things you want cannot get you there. Why do these goals remain just goals, and collect dust in our attic? Goals help us measure our success, keep us motivated and remind us what we are working for. When setting goals, it is important to evaluate the chances of success. If the chances are slim, goals can do more harm than good.

Few of us know how to set goals effectively. When we bite off more than we can chew, we may end up choking on our food. Unrealistic goals can be overwhelming and time-consuming, and make us give up altogether.

It is always better to break down our goals into small, measurable and realistic goals, set against reasonable time frames. Working on smaller goals will lead to achieving larger goals. Setting realistic goals help us through rough patches, because we can see the larger picture. Goals that seem impossible can be met simply by breaking them down into bite-sized chunks, writing them down and then going full speed ahead.

Many give up their efforts when they are almost there, while others exert themselves more vigorously to breast the tape. Let us be the victors and not the losers. If we set our goals just out of reach, but not out of sight, we are sure to be the victors.



Keep Blooming...



Bloom Wherever Planted

Have you ever observed a weed that grows in the corner of your courtyard? You may smash or chop it off, or even pull it out, but to your surprise, a few days later it is back. The reason is that the weed adapts to wherever it is. Unlike us, human beings, it blooms without reference to the myriad other possibilities.

Too often we get caught up in thinking that 'we'd be happier if we...' and the list of 'ifs' goes on. Our perception of the grass being greener on the other side of the fence keeps us dissatisfied with life, and this in turn makes our life miserable. Life is worthwhile and meaningful only when we like a rose, bloom in the given situation without lamenting the past or standing on carefully to try to foresee the unknown future.

We know that diverse situations whether at home or in the world around, invariably present us with conflicting demands and at times generate turmoil beyond our level of endurance. What we need is to develop the ability to see beyond 'this too shall pass' and try to remedy some of those situations. Once we wither, even a better situation cannot revive us. As someone put it so beautifully, "Cross the river, even if it's stormy on this side. Do not keep crying or cursing. The river will flow away. Life will go on and you will be left behind."

We need to be at our best wherever we are, and not just where we want to be. Remember, each of us blooms in our sweet time and the soil of our choice nurtures our growth.

Get set to bloom in all kinds of situations!



*Happiness does not come from attaining luxuries.
It comes from attaining inner peace.*



Creating Inner Peace

Life is surrounded with happiness-stealers that put us on a roller-coaster ride of emotional highs and lows. Most of us live our lives in circles of gloom and doom. It is only through inner peace that we can gain the joy of living and face every challenge of life.

Inner peace refers to a state of being mentally, physically and spiritually at peace with enough knowledge and understanding to keep oneself strong in the face of discord or stress. Being at peace is healthy as against being stressed or anxious. It is a sense of stability which carries us through all trials, with serenity.

It is a delusion to think that inner peace is the by-product of perfect moments and circumstances. Inner peace is always attained from within, and not from any external sources. It depends on our positive mindset towards whatever happens to us and how content we are with whatever life offers.

Inner peace does not happen overnight. It is attained through a gradual process as we learn to take full control of our mind. Meditation, outward thinking, helping the needy, emotional detachment are some of the ways to reach it.

The life of inner peace is harmonious. It is the easiest type of existence. Never be in a hurry, do everything quietly and in a calm spirit. Do not lose your inner peace for anything whatsoever, even if your whole world seems upset. Inner peace can be reached only when we practice forgiveness. Forgiveness is letting go of the past and is therefore the means for correcting our wrong perceptions.

As Dalai Lama says, “Do not let the behavior of others destroy your Inner Peace.”

“ Be more concerned with your character than your reputation. Your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are. Good character is not formed in a week or a month. It is created bit by bit, day by day. ”

Self Regulators

It is said that what lies before us or what lies behind us are tiny insignificant matters compared to what lies within us. What lies within us is character. When character is lost everything is lost.

What has taken so much time to build is lost in a second due to the indiscretion of people who forget that they have to regulate their actions themselves. Our organisation has been rocked time and again by issues relating to fudging of contributions, accounting and other money-related matters. The perpetrators were identified time and again but managed to get off with some light penalties or admonishments.

However, some recent events make us question the very basis of admitting members into our organisation. Our programmes have been abused to harass visitors, with lewd comments bordering on exploitation of women. News of these cases has really alarmed the leaders.

Members must know the difference between right and wrong. It is obligatory that each one of us develops a self-regulatory mechanism which will apply the brakes when the mind goes astray. Your character is defined by what you do when you think that no one is looking. Those who wilfully break the laws of our organisation or the country for their own gain, must be jettisoned from the clubs.

Our country is going through a phase where the public demands that wilful defaulters of banks must be named and shamed. Do we now need to put in place such mechanisms in our organisation which is purely built only for those with character?

Be a member with character and a mechanism for self-regulation. Absence of character will disgrace the entire organisation.



*Be the best teammate you can be, the best player you can be,
and be as supportive and encouraging for the people
who are playing.*



Be A Great Teammate

Great teams have great teammates. Here are some of the qualities every great teammate should possess.

WORK HARD – put in your best you can for the success of your team. At every moment be your best for yourself and your team.

EFFORT – it takes time and energy to be a great teammate. Your team doesn't care if you are a super star. They care if you are a super teammate.

BELIEVE – believe in yourself. Believe in your team. Believe in what you can do together.

ENCOURAGE – We don't give up because it's hard. We often give up because we get discouraged. Your team members need encouragement. Encourage them. Speak life into them.

BE A FRIEND – Being a friend to your team members means you support and help them. You let them know that you are there for them.

OPTIMISM – No matter what challenges you are facing believe the best is yet to come. Learn from setbacks and know that your vision and optimism are greater than your circumstances.

RESPECT – not everyone on your team is like you. It's important to respect your team members for who they are and the contribution they make.

ENERGY – You can give it or take it. Be a giver and fuel yourself and your team with positive energy.

MOTIVATE – One of the most rewarding parts about being on a team is the opportunity to raise other people up and to experience being raised up yourself.

ENTHUSIASM – it's contagious just like optimism and belief. When you are enthusiastic you lift up yourself and your team. Share your enthusiasm today.

“Alone we can do so little, together we can do much”, said Helen Keller.

“Without community service, we would not have a strong quality of life. It is important to the person who serves as well as the recipient. What is the relevance of Rotary in today's world?”

Community Service - Heartbeat of Rotary

Rotary offers a helping hand without asking for anything in return. Community Service, therefore, is the heartbeat of Rotary, pumping vital assistance to all those areas that are hungry for aid.

The needs are gigantic. Despite our best efforts, Rotary may be able address a problem, only partially. It is important to inform and educate the community about our limitations and strengths, to avoid possible disappointments in the minds of the beneficiaries. This step is vital for continued co-operation and mutual understanding in every avenue of service.

Service to the community must be laced by personal participation of Rotarians and their families. The helping hand offered by Rotarians must be visible through our presence. We not only need a healthy budget but also a bigger heart. When such a heart beats for the needy, the flow of help will be better appreciated, better utilised and better understood.

The community will appreciate our compassion, our love and determination to help and will always be at our side when we undertake other service activities for these communities. Let our service be timely, productive, satisfying and compassionate.

Rotary will, then, live forever in the hearts of all those that are touched by our love, Viva La Rotary.



Most of the great achievements in the world had been declared impossible before they were achieved.



Get Rid Of Impossible

'Impossible' – the word has so much poison that it has killed the drives, dreams, and ambitions of many! How often have we lied to ourselves that something is 'impossible' because it is so difficult! We have countless excuses to explain why we cannot do something worthwhile. If we can make up so many excuses that drain our energy and time, why can we not make up one excuse that inspires and enthuse us to do what we want to do? Instead of giving ourselves reasons why we can't, why not give ourselves reasons why we can.

The mould maker in my factory would always say, "If there is another individual who can make that new product why can't we?" Our positive and negative thoughts influence and determine our opinions and judgement and what we feel about ourselves, others and the world,

Our beliefs and values are formed by our perception of our past experiences. For example, when we were young, someone- a teacher, friend or even a complete stranger- told us that we weren't 'good enough' at something, be it studies, singing, sports or whatever. Until that moment, we might have never felt that way, but that 'not good enough' made its way into our mind unchallenged and we accepted it as true.

The ideas and inventions that were created in the past 100 years seemed crazy when they were first attempted. Now we use them daily and cannot imagine life without them. The tales of great people and amazing discoveries reveal that whatever a human being can conceive, he/she can achieve.

The impossible is often the untried! Always remember the words of Napoleon Bonaparte- "'Impossible' is a word always found in the dictionary of fools."



*Practice can help us acquire mastery in any field, because
Practice brings perfection into the action.*



Practice Is The Key To Success

Watching our favourite sportsman or actor performing, we often find ourselves remarking, “Wow! This guy is just awesome!” Experts are not extraordinary people with unnatural ability but ordinary individuals who attain and maintain a high level of consistency in terms of practice. As the old saying goes “Practice makes perfect!” It is rightly said “You are what you practice most.”

You can do something extraordinary if you put more than 100% into sincere practice. Someone has said “Tomorrow’s victory is today’s practice’.

Think about how you became good at something — be it some sport, dancing, writing or public speaking. With persistence. One can get the hardest rock with the softest rope and the dullest brain can become brilliant.

There is no substitute for practice, the only ‘magic formula’ that enables you to cross boundaries! Inspiration may be fleeting but it is the perspiration you can never withhold or do without.

Practice is the beginning of beautiful miracles waiting to happen. Therefore, whatever your goals, skills, artistic aspiration or creative dream, work towards building a steady and unshakable practice schedule around it.

The more you practice the more it builds up your confidence, improves your skill, and enhances the results. Practice is that mantra which tunes your physical and mental faculties to the required frequency and leads you to perfection.

Practice helps you in strengthening your capability beyond your own imagination and helps you achieve your goal. PRACTICE IS KEY TO SUCCESS.

“

*To love someone is nothing, to be loved by someone is something,
but to be loved by the one you love is everything.*

”

Let Love Find You

There is only one happiness, one purpose in life: to love and be loved. Love gives meaning to our life and it makes it worth living. Each of us is capable of loving and being loved.

Everyone craves to love and be loved. But do we love ourselves? If we don't love ourselves, we won't be able to love others and be loved in return.

Some people would say that when you love someone, you're supposed to fight for them until your very last breath. Some people would say that love is worth destroying yourself for. Some people would say that you could never love someone if you don't love yourself first. Some people would say -Never lose yourself in love, because you are worth so much more than that.

If other person is the cause of our love, we set ourselves up for some initial ecstasy followed by inevitable frustrations. Because, sometimes he/she will do things that make us feel loved, and sometimes he/she will do things that make us feel unloved. our purpose of life is not to import love, but to express it. Instead of being love seekers, we become love finders. We do not await love, rather we generate it.

One simple truth about love is that we can't make people stay in love nor force them to love us. But we can be happy accepting others as they are. Like in a garden, we need to tend to our love, pull away carefully the weeds that might take from our love the nourishment that it needs.

Therefore, let's love and celebrate love!



*Always be yourself, express yourself, have faith in yourself.
Do not go looking for someone to duplicate.*



Your Personality - The Mirror of Your Heart

“There are three ingredients in the good life: learning, earning and yearning”.

Everyone wishes to be liked and loved. We all want to appear attractive. Indeed, who does not desire to be admired and respected? Although many might like to believe that as long as one is happy and content with oneself, the opinion of others and their acceptance don't matter much. But for a happy and fulfilling life it is important that the people around us treat us with love and concern. A pleasing personality is a prerequisite to experience this.

Your “personality” is the mental, spiritual and physical traits that distinguish you from all others. It is the sum total of your personal characteristics and appearances that makes you a unique individual. The clothes you wear, the line in your face, the tone of your voice, the thoughts you have and the character shaped by those thoughts – all this forms part of your personality. Your personality can draw people to you; it can also drive people away from you.

Developing a pleasing personality starts with making an inventory of our habits, both good and bad. Habits, as such, are the most outward expressions of your personality. Now, if we are able to introspect and weed out those unhealthy attitudes and habits which are part of our personality, we would each be able to develop a truly pleasing personality.

Always remember, your personality can capture the heart of another, even as it mirrors your own!



Character is who and what you are when no one is observing.



Your Character Is Your Legacy

Every single person leaves a legacy when his/her earthly life is over. Your very existence has an impact on the world whether you intend it or not. Your character says who you are. It is what you will be remembered for. So, what legacy do you want to leave behind?

Character is who and what you are when no one is observing. It is not just the face in the mirror, but 'the face behind the face'. All of us are born as diamonds in the rough, uncut shape but with great potential value. Over the years we chisel away our undesirable traits, exposing many facets of our goodness. The brilliant diamond that we are shaping is our character.

In a world overly preoccupied with image, the tendency is to worry too much about our reputation and too little about our character. Reputation will change with our circumstances and can be destroyed in a brief moment, but character is built in a lifetime and is everlasting.

"No artist's work is so high, so noble, so grand, so enduring, so significant, so important for all time, as the making of character," says Charlotte Saunders Cushman. Character is built how you respond to what happens in your life. The root of it is self-discipline.

A good character is the best tombstone. Rotary is a wonderful organization which allows you to be a person of good character. It is a fine organization with members who believe in high ethical standards. Therefore, joining Rotary and rubbing your shoulders with men and women of good character will help you live in such a way that you carve your name on hearts and not on marble!

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You have within you, the power to change the world.



Future of Rotary - Young Professionals

While analysing the decline in Rotary membership in many countries, one particular reason comes to my mind. The organisation maintains that membership is by invitation. Though this practice has been considerably watered down, it remains a barrier because elderly Rotary members do not easily invite youngsters below the age of 30 to join their club.

Youngsters, especially professionals, who are battling it out for growth in their chosen career should have the necessary motivation to join Rotary and this can be provided only by those they consider their equals in thought.

Today, when the growth of Rotary is dependent more on young professionals, the membership development plan, must be like a modern human resources policy that can allow the youngsters to work and also serve the community in ways that are most suited for a locality.

Young people have to see themselves as part a club which can nurture their extra hours after work. We must speak to them without barriers caused by our own impression that we are special.

There is no greatness about a person who has volunteered to join a service organisation. In fact, only those who are really very humble can claim to be service minded.

Once there is a sense of inclusion, awareness about the other person comes naturally. Awareness is life and life is awareness. There is no other way. It is only because of exclusion of certain people in our mind that we have excluded them from Rotary.

“

*The harder you work for something, the greater you will feel
when you achieve it.*

”

On Achieving Success in Life

The achievements of great people like Narendra Modi , Abdul Kalam , Warren Buffett , Sachin Tendulkar and Amitabh Bachchan inspire us to aspire for more that we previously considered possible.

We might possibly pose a question to ourselves, “How would I possibly do this, achieve this goal or arrive at this position?” Chances are that we would come up with a list of obstacles, barriers and excuses that prevent us from getting what we want.

When these obstacles and troubles seem insurmountable, we might consider adjusting our goals. We tend to believe that those great individuals achieved such great heights because they were more talented, more fortunate than us or probably had all the resources to get there. Before reconsidering and re-adjusting our goals, seldom do we think of taking a different route or adopting a different strategy.

Whether the goal is to get to the top position in any organization, be an outstanding sportsman or may be a great scientist, or even lose a little weight, there is certainly more than one way of doing it. If we are ready to understand this truth and look critically, I am sure it will make a difference. That will gradually enable us to plan the steps we take to reach the goals we have set.

Always remember if you want to achieve greatness in any field, stop asking for permission. To live a creative life, we must lose our fear of being wrong. The simple formula of achieving greatness is **“Dream it, Believe it & Achieve it”**



*Our thoughts can either move us forward or leave us paralyzed.
Do not let fear cripple your growth.
Do not let doubt disable your dreams.*



Attitude Is A Little Thing That Makes A Big Difference

Believe it or not, there is only a little difference in people, but that little difference makes a big difference. That little difference is attitude. The big difference is whether it is positive or negative. Your living is determined not so much by what life brings to you as by the attitude you bring to life.

Your life is a reflection of your attitudes. They decide the size of your dreams and influence your willpower when you are faced with new challenges. Sensing no rays of hope, the soldier cries out, "Sir, we are surrounded by enemies on all sides." To which the Major responds, "Excellent! We can now attack in any direction!" It is not what happens to you that counts, but how you react to what happens to you. Here rests your attitude!

Your attitude is the one solitary thing over which you have total control. People and things may influence your attitudes; but you are the one wearing those attitudes like a suit of clothes. Ultimately, you alone decide what meaning you are going to give the events that occur in your life.

Do you consciously choose your attitude each day? Most people tend to let their circumstances choose their attitude for them. As a result, they run the risk of developing negative attitudes because situations don't always adhere to their expectations. Make an effort to focus on developing a stronger awareness of our attitude moments by moment in your daily experiences, and begin choosing a more positive one more often. If practiced, you will experience remarkable changes in your life!



People with determination are those who get up and keep trying, who learn from what went wrong and adjust course and who believe in themselves despite all obstacles.



The Power of Persistence

A successful person treats failures as temporary and understands that success is a long haul. They persist while the also-rans people lack the stamina to see things through.

Thomas Alva Edison, in his pursuit of inventing the electric bulb, suffered many failures and disappointments before he finally succeeded. Reflecting on those failures he famously remarked “Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.”

You will face stumbling blocks but they cannot paralyze your actions. You must convert those stumbling blocks in to stepping stones. Steve Jobs was fired from his own company. Michael Jordan was cut from his high school basketball team. Despite these setbacks, both men persisted and went on to do extraordinary things.

Victory belongs to those who are ready for the grind. It is the feeble-minded who look for short cuts. Great people have the persistence that allows them to rise victorious over temporary losses and disappointments.

Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful people with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. You may face many defeats, but you must not be defeated. In fact, those defeats may be necessary to make you aware of who you are and how you can still come out of it.

It is the ability to tie a knot and hang on there for a bit longer at the end of the rope, that differentiates a winner from a loser.

Your thought must remain, “I will persist until I succeed.”



*Dream, struggle, create, prevail. Be daring. Be brave.
Be compassionate. Be strong. Be brilliant. Be beautiful.*



Make the World a Beautiful Place

“The world is full of angels, if you can’t find one, be one,” goes a popular saying. You are not born in this world to be a mere spectator, passively watching others living their lives to the fullest. You too are born to fulfil the same mission as others, to make our world beautiful.

We like to say that we are civilised, but the truth couldn’t be further from that. Although we have made a lot of scientific and technological progress, we still behaving inhumanly, fighting with one another, harming other creatures and destroying the environment.

People who live only for themselves are easily forgotten after their death. The individuals who have left an indelible mark on human history are those selflessly dedicated themselves to a noble cause so that future generations would have a better life to live. It is said, “One who picks fruit is forgotten quickly, but one who plants trees is remembered enduringly.”

Life presents a golden opportunity to make this world a beautiful place by a kind deed , a warm smile , a tight hug , a genuine gesture of appreciation, mindfulness and unselfish love for the unloved. Plant a tree, create awareness for cleanliness, save a child from disease, adopt a child for his schooling. You can do so much.

All this is possible if you identify the important things in life, and commit yourself to them. Rotary teaches us the philosophy of Service Above Self. Let your love and action be the Inspiration to all. Let us all work together to Make the World a Beautiful Place.



*Peace of mind is of utmost importance in your pursuit of success.
Let there be peace within you so that you can
accomplish your dreams.*



A Life Of Happiness, Peace And Love Is All Within Our Grasp

Ever since life began , human beings have been yearning for Peace . True Peace is much more than ancient “tranquility of order “. It is a way of life — a life of Love , forgiveness, generosity, patience and kindness.

“Peace is not made at the Conference table , or by treaties , but in the hearts of men” said Herbert Hoover . Peace is a personal responsibility and it is vain to seek it from outside sources , if not within oneself.

Peace comes from living in the moment and looking for the good in others . Peacefulness comes from facing our fears and letting them go — trusting that things will turn out all right . Peacefulness is also a way of resolving conflict with others such that no one is made wrong and everyone wins.

Peace is one of the deepest desire of every human. This peace is not merely the absence of war ... it is the presence of Love . In our times , the concept of peace cannot be isolated from that of human rights , freedom and ecology.

To work for peace is to work for the transformation of personal and social reality and to make it more fraternal, more humane and more just and to collaborate for the liberation of all human beings .

Peace for all requires the personal contribution of each individual, to help people change the way they see things . Peace does not come by itself, we have to prepare for peace, work for it, and struggle for it.



A true leader unites people, not divide them; does not find faults, but finds remedies; does not show hate, but cultivates love.



Be An Effective Leader

The success of individuals depends upon the direction they give to their lives. The success of an organization depends upon its ability to hold members together till the goal is reached. The development of a nation depends upon the vision it has for its citizens. A leader is the one who can give direction, who can keep an organization united and who provides a vision for peoples and nations.

A leader's vision be realized only if he gets people to follow him. The most important message you can share is yourself. "The greatest leader is not necessarily the one who does the greatest things. He is the one that gets the people to do the greatest things", said Ronald Reagan, the former President of USA.

When there is a gap between the leader and the vision, people will stay off the bus. However, if people trust the leader they will hop onto the bus.

Andy Stanley said "As a leader you can have all the rules you want but if you don't invest in your people and develop a relationship with them, they will rebel. This applies amazingly to children as well. It's all about relationships."

We usually associate leaders with authority. But those with authority need not be leaders. Authority comes to us in two ways. First, a person with authority should delegate it to us. Secondly, leaders command authority by virtue of the way they live their lives.

Those who rely on their physical strength, wealth, influence, and inheritance for their authority are not genuine leaders. The attributes of a genuine leader are: unwavering courage, self-control, keen sense of justice, clarity of vision, definiteness of decision, a pleasing personality, sympathy & understanding, and a willingness to assume full responsibility. Leaders make things happen.



*We Rotarians are ambassadors of Rotary to our respective vocations.
It is therefore our duty to propagate the ideals of
Rotary at our workplace.*



Our Salvation Lies in Vocational Service

Vocational Service mainly deals with individual Rotarians and their resolve to be honest and trustworthy, be good whilst doing good. It is therefore one of the most difficult Services a Rotarian can offer.

Human beings want to be treated fairly. If you expect this from others, why can you not offer your trustworthiness to others? The same rules apply for both.

We need to groom our youth to take up the vocation of their choice. It is important to impart the skills and expertise that will help them earn a livelihood. There are millions of young men and women who are literate but unable to use their skills to earn a living. Rotary Clubs are engaged in promoting Functional Literacy, training and gainful employment.

In Rotary we respect all vocations, no job is 'too small'. It is the people who work at the job who make it important, by putting in something 'extra' into their work; extra effort, extra care, extra involvement, extra dedication and extra honesty. Rotary's Vocational Excellence Awards are a recognition of this truth. While these awards are normally conferred on those who achieve great heights in their vocations, let us not forget those who give their extra to comparatively humdrum work. They can be recognized through Vocational Utility Awards. Together they form a strong army of ethical, honest, fair, compassionate and worthy men and women.

Rotary can be a torchbearer for honesty in the personal and work space. In its second century of existence, Rotary will be remembered as much for the good work it has done, as for the good men and women it has produced. Our salvation lies in our Vocational Service.



For centuries, people have seen the eagle as a symbol of courage, pride and grace. This magnificent bird manifests the best of all leadership characteristics.



Learn From The Life Of An Eagle

The eagle flies at very high altitude and does it all alone. It does not fly with other birds. If you wish to do something great, learn to be alone and share your time judiciously.

The eagle has unbelievable vision, so sharp that it can spot its prey 5 kilometres from the air. The eagle focuses and does not back out until the prey is captured. Stay focused and never allow dissenting voices to deter you.

The eagle, unlike the vulture, is very choosy and feeds on fresh prey only. Stale information will never do you any good. Update yourself regularly with fresh information from reliable sources.

Most creatures run away from a storm, but not the eagle. Do not allow storms to discourage you. Use the storm to be better, wiser, healthier and greater.

The female eagle tests the male, before trusting him to mate with her. Test the commitment of people before you trust them with your time and resources.

The parent eagles take the baby eagle to a mountain top, and release it from that high altitude. The free fall is frightening, but the mother eagle comes to the rescue and the process is repeated until the baby eagle can fly alone at high altitude. Preparation is vital for future success.

When the eagle feels weak, it retires to a place far away in the dark to shed old wings and grow new ones. Stress and fatigue are part of life. Take time to rest, refresh and rejuvenate. It is an indispensable tool for success and longevity.

Learn from the eagle and live like the eagle.



“Originality is a by-product of sincerity”



Dare To Be Yourself

We live in a world that gives a lot of attention to the externals of life. The kind of house we live in, the car we drive, the grades on our certificates etc., seem to define us. In addition, our physical appearance, shape, weight and colour do matter when it is assumed that after all it is the ‘beautiful people’ who make it in this world.

As a result, we wear hundreds of masks, masks that we are afraid to take off and none of them is us. We panic at the thought of our limitations and fears being exposed. That’s why we frantically create masks to hide behind, a nonchalant sophisticated facade to help us pretend that we are better than others.

Has anyone become a Britisher by speaking English? Has anyone become an Italian by eating lots of spaghetti? Being British or Italian is not something you do or don’t do. It is you or it is not you at all. Similarly, external facades and masks cannot make us what we are not. By projecting a false picture of ourselves, we only diminish our true worth. Remember that a flower filled with honey need not wear a mask to attract bees.

Living authentically means we accept what we are and courageously face all the aspects of our life: the light, the dark, the new and the old. Be who you are and say what you feel because those who mind don’t matter and those who matter don’t mind.

Therefore, strip away the mask and let yourself just “BE.”



Beware of the leader who divides us.



Groups Around us

It does not matter how wealthy the person is or what position he holds in society. As long as he does not carry morality within himself, he will always find ways to do the cruellest possible things.

It has been said that the single most powerful thing one can do to destroy an organisation and promote disharmony is to create groups which hate each other. One person, if left unchecked, can create many disruptive groups within an organisation.

Assume that in your organisation, the Hitler who spread mental violence and groupism is dead. What is the guarantee that there will not be another Hitler who will emerge to take the destruction of the credibility of the movement to a higher level?

We have seen that the 'Hitler-like' people in any organisation were by themselves powerless. It is the others who empowered them. When such people assume leadership positions, they moved people around them through hatred.

If you want to move a group of people to do something unethical, all you need to do is create an enemy. The more people are revved up with hatred, they quicker they act. If you create an enemy for your followers, you can have them fighting and dying to please you. This is such a simple trick which many noble organisations have fallen for again and again. It is happening even today in communities and corporate bodies. Even service organisations are not spared.

Those who forget history are condemned to repeat it.



*Sincerity is an openness of heart; we find in very few people.
What we usually see is an artful dissemination to win the
confidence of others.*



Sincerity Always Pays

Human beings consciously or unconsciously project the kind of personality and attitude they possess. What they project are essentially two: the thoughts that they externally express and the inner feelings they experience within. The thoughts externally conveyed and the inner feelings of a person need not always be complimentary.

A student can pretend to be quite confident for the examinations while the inner feelings within may just be the opposite. A thief can plead innocence of a theft which he/she committed. And practice has made several persons to be very convincing in their external expression of thoughts while cleverly hiding the feelings within. A person of integrity is one whose thoughts and feelings are not different.

Sincerity in what we speak or do in our lives is a great personal value which has its influence on the society. Persons of integrity and sincerity find acceptance and command respect. But it would not be an exaggeration to say that persons of integrity are rare today. Honesty and sincerity do not have much market value today. In fact, persons of honesty and uprightness fail to thrive in today's world.

The remedy begins when one is courageous enough to see the truth about oneself. One should be willing to admit one's failures rather than finding justification for one's bad behaviour. Secondly, one's life should be rooted in values. Thirdly, sincerity can be practiced by obeying the dictates of one's conscience. Finally, remember that we cannot hide our actual self for too long because people perceive both parts of our communication- what the thinking part says and our inner feelings.



*A person without the knowledge of history,
origin and culture is like a tree without roots.*



Discover Yourself By Looking Within

Self-discovery is the starting point of holistic and authentic living. 'Know yourself' is the central component of the philosophy of the saints. The answer shows forth who and what you are, what you can achieve and what you value.

It is a lifetime search, an inner process of understanding yourself. "A true knowledge of ourselves is knowledge of our power," asserts Mark Rutherford.

Your work will fill a large part of your life, and the only way to true satisfaction is to do great work, putting all your love into it. In his message to Rotarians the world over in 1993-94, Past RI President Robert Barth said - "Believe in what you do and Do what you believe in." If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. As with all matters of the heart, you'll know when you find it.

People put together the few facts about you, and piece you together in a way that makes sense to them. If you don't know yourself well, you might even believe that they are right. The truth is, that isn't you at all. Therefore, it is essential to let go of the old descriptions and labels.

Be your own friend always because you are the only one whom you can constantly lean upon in every place and situation. You can support yourself even when nobody else will. Your self-discovery will pave the way for your self-esteem and self-reliance.

Don't belittle yourself by trying to be like other people. Learning to discover and to live your potential is a marathon race and not a sprint. It takes courage. You cannot discover new oceans unless one you lose sight of the shore.

Therefore, discover the miracle called YOU!

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*Transparency and good stewardship are important for progress
in Business and Charity, at all times.*



Stewardship Makes A Difference

Thank you for being in Rotary and believing in doing good in the world. I ask you to believe in your ability to create change. This belief motivates people to donate repeatedly to the causes which Rotary takes up every year. This belief is the bedrock on which Rotary International and The Rotary Foundation are built.

Rotarians must stand for the highest ethical standards while dealing with the contributions we get from individuals and corporate houses. Donors give money to clubs, districts and to The Rotary Foundation because they believe that Rotarians can be trusted.

We all have one important thing in common. Philanthropists asked us to build a disease-free world and we said yes. We have work to do. The result India and the rest of the world will see in eradicating such as polio, diabetes, TB and many other debilitating diseases will be the product of our ideas being put to work together.

Today we seem to be grappling with issues concerning stewardship and managing funds which were placed in our hands with good faith by major donors in our society. None of us can rest on accomplishments of the past, even those as momentous as polio eradication, if there is even an iota of doubt raised about the integrity and transparency with which those funds are utilized.

I ask every Rotarian to honour our movement and the way it has changed the lives of millions over the years by making a commitment to uphold the highest standards of accountability when it comes to handling donations. Even it is small. Especially if it is small.



*Your dreams are too precious to let other people taint them.
Nurture your dreams and protect them from naysayers.*



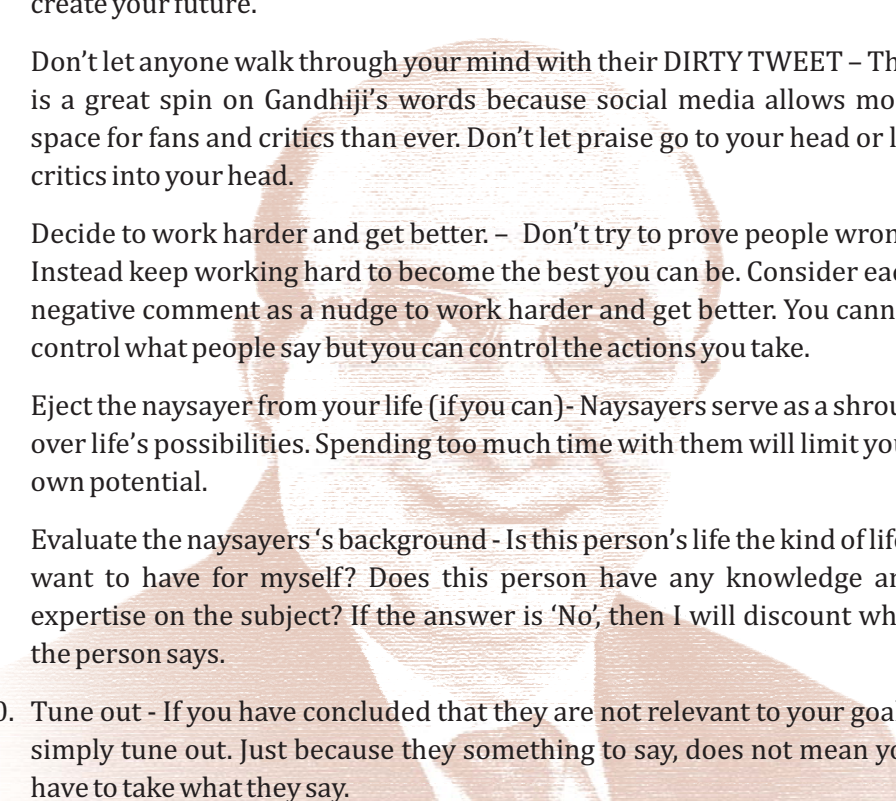
10 Ways To Deal With Naysayers

Unfortunately, the world is filled with many unfinished projects, unrealized goals, broken dreams, half-written books, untapped potential and wounded hearts pierced by the words of a naysayer.

I know this well because when I first thought of starting my own business, I consulted a businessman whom I respected very much. He told me that it was not my cup of tea as I had no experience of the problems faced in business, that I would never make it and should do something else. He was right about one thing. I had no experience. But he didn't share my vision for the future. He didn't know how hard I would work to succeed and grow. He couldn't see the plan God had for me. The naysayer was focused on what I was, not what I was becoming. Thankfully I didn't let the naysayer stop me and hopefully you won't let naysayers stop you.

In this spirit, I want to share 10 Ways to Deal with Naysayers to help you create your future.

1. Ignore them – Simply ignore what they say. Of course, you want to receive feedback that will make you better but you want to ignore people and words that seek to derail you from your goal.
2. Hear them and know their words have no power over you – This is what I did. I heard the words but knew they had no power over me. The power inside you is much greater than the words of a naysayer.
3. Remember Gandhi's advice "I will not let anyone walk through my mind with their dirty feet." – Have faith in the power inside you to overcome the negativity in the world. Don't allow the opinion of others to define you or your destiny.

- 
4. Remind yourself that history does not remember the critic. History remembers the one who withstood criticism to accomplish something great. – You will have to overcome negativity, adversity and naysayers. While few will remember the naysayer's words, you will leave a legacy no one can forget.
 5. Your faith and belief must be greater than all the negativity and doubt –It may sound clichéd but you must stay positive each day, as you work to create your future.
 6. Don't let anyone walk through your mind with their DIRTY TWEET – This is a great spin on Gandhiji's words because social media allows more space for fans and critics than ever. Don't let praise go to your head or let critics into your head.
 7. Decide to work harder and get better. – Don't try to prove people wrong. Instead keep working hard to become the best you can be. Consider each negative comment as a nudge to work harder and get better. You cannot control what people say but you can control the actions you take.
 8. Eject the naysayer from your life (if you can)- Naysayers serve as a shroud over life's possibilities. Spending too much time with them will limit your own potential.
 9. Evaluate the naysayers's background - Is this person's life the kind of life I want to have for myself? Does this person have any knowledge and expertise on the subject? If the answer is 'No', then I will discount what the person says.
 10. Tune out - If you have concluded that they are not relevant to your goals, simply tune out. Just because they something to say, does not mean you have to take what they say.



*No one succeeds without effort ...
Those who succeed owe their success to perseverance.*



Success Through Perseverance

Dear Rotary Friends

Success is never an accident. It is always hard work, perseverance, learning, sacrifice and most of all, love of what you are doing. Perseverance is the hard work you do after you get tired of doing all the hard work.

“The greatest error of a person is to think that he/she is weak by nature, evil by nature. Every person is divine and strong in his / her real nature. What are weak and evil are his or her habits, desires and thoughts, but not himself”, says Ramana Maharishi.

In the month of March, students prepare themselves to face the annual examinations. Those who come out of colleges look for jobs. The predominant mood is a desire to achieve something and thus be counted in society. Some will triumph and others fail.

The ladder of success is never crowded at the top. It is easy to say “I can do it.” Those who persevere don’t just say it — they do it. Anyone who wants to be successful in life has to control his mind, discipline himself the hard way and make it a habit.

Pessimists scoffed when Henry Ford tried out his first crudely built automobile on the streets of Detroit. The sceptics were many. But Ford was so determined and persevering that he said to himself: “I will belt the earth with dependable motor cars”, and he did!

We all possess an intangible yet powerful master key that unlocks the doors of life’s bountiful success. The key is a burning desire for definite objectives in life. It costs us nothing to use the key, except the will to persevere!

“

*Do not be too timid and squeamish. All life is an experiment.
The more experiments, you make it better.*

”

Learn from Mistakes

One of the main roadblocks to achieving our full potential is the fear of making mistakes. In fact, we are constantly told to learn from the mistakes of others but never make any mistakes ourselves! All through school, a mistake indicates the prospect of lower grades. Good students don't make mistakes, we're told. At home, mistakes lead to admonishments. Good children follow the rules. At work, mistakes have serious repercussions. Good workers get it right the first time.

Gandhi once said, "Freedom isn't worth having if it doesn't include the freedom to make mistakes." He clearly saw life as constant experimentation where you learn and unlearn preciously by making mistakes. There's growing evidence to suggest that innovation flourishes when people are allowed due space to make mistakes. Indeed, great inventions have often been stumbled upon by mistake! If you are afraid of making mistakes you are afraid of learning by experimentation which is indeed, the best form of learning.

People fear mistakes because they feel that success is driven by a person's image as an expert rather than as a learner. But if we are able to see mistakes as opportunities to learn important lessons in life, we will fear mistakes no more.



*Trust, honesty, humility, transparency and accountability
are the building blocks of a positive reputation.
Trust is the foundation of any relationship.*



Honesty Is Still The Best Policy

Most of us use lies from time to time to avoid difficult situations and hide our feelings or intentions. However, lying always comes with a price whilst the truth is invaluable. You will feel better about yourself if you are honest and open.

The world is fast changing, and becoming increasingly complex. Despite the amazing changes, age-old evils of society remain. Millions are still deprived of their basic needs. The gap between the rich and poor still continue to widen. Rape, violence, corruption and conflicts based on race, religion, region etc are rampant. There is a lot of hypocrisy in our talks about justice, liberty, equality and human rights.

Despite all this, there is no reason for us to despair if we are prepared to take a stand. The change should start with each one of us. We need to be free from corrupt practices, underhand dealings, and unjust behaviour. This of course poses a challenge – a challenge to live as honest citizens of the world. When we act upon a clear conscience, we become agents of change.

It is therefore, the responsibility of all Rotarians to study their own personal business and conduct it according to the highest standards of practice in their relations with employees, vendors, customers, competitors, the general public and the Government.

Rotary Clubs should use their weekly meetings to discuss ethical concerns, which all the business people face today. We need to exert greater leadership in our professional and trade associations to maintain and enforce codes of correct practices. Rotarians must promote high ethical standards in all forms of human endeavour. Rotarians must put all efforts to spread the message that honesty is still the best policy.



Truth always prevails.



Be Bold To Speak Truth

In a lighter vein Mark Twain wrote “It is by the goodness of God that in our country we have these three unspeakably precious things – freedom of speech, freedom of conscience and prudence never to practice either of them “. But it is certainly true of many of us, many of our friends.

Recently I had the good fortune of attending a Rotary Youth Leadership Award (RYLA), a three- day camp attended by about 80 young boys and girls. At the end of the camp, the participants were asked to give a written evaluation of the camp so that if any shortcomings could be taken care of in the next camp. The participants were asked to sign their views with their names. Some amongst those who made a negative evaluation hesitated to sign their evaluation with their names. They were afraid of saying the truth. I wondered who they were afraid of? They were free to express whatever they thought and felt true. But they did not prudently use their freedom.No less a person than Martin Luther has said that “A believer in God is the most free lord of all, and subject to none; he is most dutiful servant of all and subject to everyone.”

If it is so, these young men and women were lacking in maturity. They have not yet attained that freedom of which our great poet Rabindranath Tagore writes;

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high,

Where knowledge is free,

Where words come out from the depth of truth,

Into that haven of freedom, my father,

Let my country awake.



*There are latent resources in Rotarians
that can light up a whole community with happiness.*



Utilise Human Resources

Rotary is rich in financial as well as human resources. Judicious deployment of these resources can ensure that Rotary achieves its objectives. Each club has, amongst its members, Rotarians who have the money and are willing to donate and Rotarians who have the experience and an inclination to serve.

There was once a road building process going on as I passed by. I saw a man sitting by the wayside supervising the process. There was a large boulder of rock in the middle and two labourers were trying to shift it out of the way. Despite their sincere efforts, they were unable to move the stone and reported the same to the supervisor. "Have you used all your resources?" asked the man. "Yes Sir, we have used all our strength but are unable to move it." "No," said the supervisor, "you did not use me." Use your resources — all resources available and the unknown resource comes from your fellow Rotarians.

However, resources are often latent. At the Atomic Energy Head- quarters near Miami, there is a glass-panel cabinet with a large black stone mounted on a panel. Underneath this cabinet is a placard which reads "Here is a large piece of coal. If used conventionally, it will generate limited energy and if used in a specific way, it will generate enough atomic energy to light the whole town." There are latent resources in Rotarians that can light up a whole community with happiness. The latent resources have to be activated.

When you open a bottle of tomato ketchup, you may find that the ketchup refuses to trickle down. You will have to invert the bottle and give a little thump to the bottom and the ketchup will flow. Rotarians may need a little thump at an appropriate place to start their services flowing.

“Public Relations means telling the truth and working ethically, even when all the media wants are headlines, all the public wants are scapegoats. Public Relations fails when there is no integrity.”

Public Relations

If Rotary has survived for more than 100 years, survived two world wars, survived major threats to Peace, survived depressions and survived competition it is because of one single factor - People need Rotary. People have faith in Rotary.

Maybe we could do much more and be a stronger force, maybe we could grow phenomenally, but the fact remains that for an organisation to grow numerically and geographically, we need the acceptance and support of the community in which we exist.

We have a long way to go but we are on the right direction. What we need is more speed, more volume, more recognition and more community partnership in service. We can achieve this through more effective public relations.

Public relation is recognition by the community and cooperation by the community to fight problems with greater vigour, greater involvement and greater success.

Visibility of Rotary is vital. People must see the role of Rotary in conquering major problems of immunisation, health, environment, drug abuse, AIDS and many others is essential.

Rotary is also judged by its individual members. While we may need professionals to promote Public Relations, we need more honest and dependable Rotarians who bring glory to Rotary.

“

*The first time you do wrong is a mistake.
If it happens again, then it is a bad decision.*

”

The Power Of Failure- We Get To Decide What It Means

We all dream of success. Because of this, we are all afraid of the very same thing; failure. It is up to us to decide what it means. Is it a bad outcome or a work-in-progress? When you look at failure in the right perspective, you will see that it has the power to help you reach your goal.

Everyone Makes Mistakes. Do not be so hard on yourself. Nobody is perfect, remember? Whenever you face one failure, accept your fault, get up and move ahead.

One Day You Will Laugh at This. Try to remember the past failures that had upset you badly. The problems you cried about years ago are things you can laugh about now. The things that bother you today may not seem all that bad a few years from now.

Learn From Your Mistakes. Every mistake has a lesson to teach. As the saying goes, the first time you do wrong is a mistake. If it happens again, then it is a bad decision. Be smart enough to avoid the reasons that led you to them.

Every Thing Happens For A Reason. When I wondered why bad things happened in my life, I also realized that one failure has led me to much greater things that may never have happened otherwise. Trust that there is a good reason for your failures and things will turn out fine.

Rome Was Not Built In A Day. No dream or goal is ever easy. Every great success, has seen some failures along the way. This failure is just part of a process. Do not give up and do not be afraid to make mistakes. It is all part of the game.



People want to be appreciated, loved and trusted. But they also want to be understood. If you are able to establish that empathy, then you become exceptional.



The Power Of Appreciation

History is full of inspiring tales of great individuals who could not have achieved big things in life if it were not for the sincere and constant appreciation they received from others. Human beings have the innate need and desire to be appreciated and accepted. Thus, a simple gesture or word of appreciation serves as a whiff of fresh air to a discouraged individual and lights up his/her life.

The most important aspect of appreciation is that it helps both the giver and the receiver to rise above their routines and feel gifted. Genuine appreciation enriches both concerned parties because it endorses the inherent goodness in both. Perhaps that is why someone has said, **“I spoke one little word of praise and sunshine fell on both our ways.”**

Always remember when you offer someone a sincere compliment or appreciation, words of encouragement or just a smile, you are making that person's world a happier place. You making him/her feel valued.

In order to give unconditional positive regards to others, one should be appreciative of oneself and able to see the positive in any situation. When we realize our own need for appreciation, why should we shy away from extending it to those who really deserve it? When we look for positivity around us and appreciate the good in people, we can help them to achieve greatness in their lives.

LET US BE GRATEFUL TO THOSE WHO MAKE US HAPPY, THEY ARE THE CHARMING GARDENERS WHO MAKE OUR SOUL BLOSSOM.



*Water turns into steam
with a difference of only one degree in temperature
and steam can move some of the biggest engines in the world.*



Be Enthusiastic

Enthusiasm and success go hand in hand, but enthusiasm comes first. Enthusiasm inspires confidence, raises morale and builds loyalty. It is priceless. Enthusiasm is contagious. You can feel enthusiasm by the way a person talks, walks or shakes hands. Enthusiasm is a habit that one acquires and practises.

Many decades ago, Charles Schwab, who was earning a salary of a million dollars a year, was asked if he was being paid such a high salary because of his exceptional ability to produce steel. Charles Schwab replied, "I consider my ability to arouse enthusiasm among the men the greatest asset I possess, and the way to develop the best that is in a man is by appreciation and encouragement."

"Nothing great is ever achieved without enthusiasm", says Ralph Waldo Emerson. Enthusiasm and desire are what change mediocrity to excellence.

Water turns into steam with a difference of only one degree in temperature and steam can move some of the biggest engines in the world. That is what enthusiasm helps us to do in our lives.

Therefore, live while you are alive. Don't die before you are dead. Be the Inspiration to all you come in contact with, that will certainly make things work the way you wish.



*Some of us think holding on makes us strong;
but sometimes letting go makes you stronger!*



Letting Go

Have you ever heard of how people catch monkeys in Africa? They place bananas in the bottom of a narrow-necked jar. When a monkey comes upon the jar, it would put its hand inside to grab the banana. Of course, with the fist around the banana, it can't pull its hand out, and remains stuck with the jar on its arm, making it fairly easy for the people to catch monkey. 'No matter what, the monkey would not let go of the banana, even if the banana is rotten !

When it comes to our lives, the majority of us are not much better than the monkeys. Often, we cling on to something or someone and refuse to let go. We cling on to what we have – the safe, the secure, and the familiar – even when we know it prevents us from moving on to a better life.

One of life's biggest challenges is to let go. The only way to go beyond where we are in our life is to let go of things, people, habits and beliefs that keep us where we are instead of where we want to be. For a trapeze artiste, to get from one side of the net to the other, he or she must be prepared to let go. Similarly, we cannot discover new oceans unless we have the courage to lose sight of the shore.

We should not forget that as long as our palms are holding on tight, we cannot be open to receive the beautiful gifts that life has to offer. We need to take stock of every single thing that holds us back and exchange those limitations for a life of limitless potentialities and possibilities. Sometimes we simply have to let go!



*Every event in this life is a comma,
the full stop is too far to see.*



Expect the Unexpected

Life is often compared to a journey, battle, game, race, voyage, etc. Uncertainty is common in all. Nothing is certain in life. There is no security in life. Therefore, 'expect the unexpected' in life as life favours only the prepared mind. Failure to expect the unexpected may find you unaware in the sea of life, not knowing where to go, why to go and how to go.

'Desire (expectation) is the root-cause of all suffering', said Buddha. We form expectations around our friends, relatives and nature. We expect friends to understand us, relatives to support us and nature to be favourable to us. When expectations are not fulfilled and when things go against our expectations, we suffer. We are hurt. We become revengeful, resentful, ruthless, rebellious, reactive and bitter. These negative and destructive feelings eat up a person, because these do more damage to the person in whom they are stored than to the person they are directed.

Hence, do not worry too much about certain events in life realizing that 'every event in this life is a comma, the full stop is too far to see'; think and feel about life because 'he most lives who thinks the most, feels the noblest'; plan for life because 'he who fails to plan, plans to fail'; share your life because 'it is like an echo – what we send out, comes back to us'; Take life as a gift because 'we have no choice but accept life, the only choice is how'. While doing these, have this attitude – 'expect the unexpected' – lest expectations weigh us down.