

HOPE & INSPIRATION

Keeping a balance in turbulent times



ERIC LE RESTE

In these days of information overload, with news and other stories constantly coming at us from all directions, it can be hard to find the equilibrium between keeping yourself informed and feeling overwhelmed.

As a media professional, I have also experienced a sense of overload, unable to leave behind the tough images I saw coming into the newsroom. But there is a way to maintain a balance, founded on the practice of meditation.

Many years ago, Dadi Janki gave me some invaluable advice: "Your conscience at work should be the same as it is in the meditation centre".

Her insight had great impact. I saw that by maintaining consistency of principles

between our spiritual and professional lives, we stay true to our values in the face of whatever difficulties may arise. So, we should bring an attitude of respect, love, service and care to every sphere we move in.

Focusing on the positive angle in human stories, with messages of hope, resilience and kindness between people, can be highly effective.

Yes, on occasion, this has meant swimming against the editorial current; but I believe this is the most powerful, and the most effective, way to reach and touch an audience.

Consumers of media, faced with the sheer complexity of sources in today's information universe, need to take responsibility and use discernment when deciding where to turn for news.

In times of crisis, mainstream media such as public broadcasting services are generally considered most reliable. So, during Covid-19, the ratings of publicly funded and editorially independent bodies like the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation,



for whom I work, have risen exponentially.

It is wise to limit how often you access news and how many outlets you tap into. Constantly switching between channels or surfing the Internet for updates from here, there and everywhere, is a sign of inner neediness. It is a form of addiction.

It is also a distraction. After many years' experience of meditation, I have come to understand the primary screen of our life is the mind

within, and the primary voice, our conscience. This, in truth, is the most amazing media experience of all!

In silent meditation you discover a wonderful medium within that not only brings a new clarity and vision, but also sheer enjoyment. You are the producer and the main actor in your own "show", engaged in bringing together all the strands, and creating a world of inner peace.

Meditation changes the

narrative, and guides us to leave behind the emptiness underlying our search for distraction and entertainment outside ourselves. The world needs a new story, and we need to change the stories we tell, choosing those of hope and inspiration that reveal who we are — at our best.

Eric Le Reste is a journalist and producer for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and coordinates the Brahma Kumaris centres in Canada.

DISCOURSE

TO EXPERIENCE GOD'S LOVE, BE DETACHED



DADI JANKI

God is teaching us the art of loving. He is the Bestower, He is the Ocean of Love and He is willing to give us so much. But first we have to learn the art of detachment, otherwise we will not have the right to claim His love.

Detachment is a talent as well as

an art. It is developed through soul-consciousness which, together with a deep relationship with God, will keep us from being deceived by the attraction of limited love. It means to be so centred in the consciousness of our true spiritual nature that there is a natural, automatic rejection of adverse personality traits within us and illusionary attractions around us. Detachment allows us to be unaffected by these and so able to continue cultivation the values of our spiritual personality.

God is willing to give us all His love, but if the first condition of detachment is not met, we will not be able to receive it. Turning our eyes in any other direction will block the truth and finish our progress. It is a very strong prerequisite.



HARMONY

THE IMPORTANCE OF VALUES IN TODAY'S WORLD



B.K. JAYANTI

Wherever we look today, we see the breakdown of society, in terms of family life, religion, the environment, the economy and governance. This fragmentation and collapse of our world seems to be deeply connected with a loss of human values — a view that is becoming increasingly prevalent across the globe.

People are now more willing than ever to explore our common human values — those qualities that elevate and unite us and which are the source of our own inner dignity and that of all oth-

ers. Values are now high on the agenda of governments, schools, hospitals and businesses. However, whilst espousing and celebrating values is very important, what is essential is to be able to actually live our lives by them. That is where the challenge lies. In fact, it could be said that the greatest cause of unhappiness today is our inability to act according to our values. So, we need to understand what it is that prevents us from doing what in our hearts we want to do — what takes away our power — and how we can help ourselves to experience our own greatness.

The original state of every human being is goodness. The discovery of this is the wonderful discovery of our own inner dignity and our own value.

As we explore the inner self, we discover the original qualities of love, peace, happiness, wisdom and purity,



which are the core values of the self. We need to foster these values and use them in our lives and in our work. Relationships then become a give and take with happiness and love, rather than expectation and demand.

We start to respect ourselves, others, the laws of the world and the laws of nature. We experience an inner contentment that frees us from the tyranny of desires and needs.

Values give us an understanding of a different paradigm from which to operate,

rather than the materialistic, consumer society. They are the agents for change within the individual which then lead to transformation in a community or country.

So, let us work together to empower and sustain values and their practical implementation in personal, family, community and work life at this precarious time in order to create a world of unity and harmony.

B.K. Jayanti is a senior Rajyoga teacher and the director of the Brahma Kumaris' services in Europe.

BIG PICTURE

SOME SIGNS OF A POWERFUL SOUL



B.K. ATAM PRAKASH

What is the sign of the high stage of powerful souls by which one can tell that they are not ordinary people?

Firstly, such individuals are not perturbed or surprised by anything. They see nothing new in an unexpected development; their calmness and assurance give the impression that they have been through such situations before. They do not wonder why something has happened or how it could happen.

Secondly, they do not have to make an effort to compose themselves in the

face of sudden adversity. No matter how grave the situation is, to them it appears as a minor issue. They remain detached and unaffected by things that others find alarming.

The reason for this is their point of view. Just as when one is standing on a mountaintop, everything in the plains below appears tiny, and even a large factory

looks like a doll's house, one whose mental stage is elevated sees even big problems as trifles.

Since they perceive the larger picture from their high stage, they are able to discern things correctly and take the right decision. So, their words are meaningful and fruitful, and they succeed in their efforts.

They have also moved

beyond the stage of making mistakes and then regretting them. Let alone do something wrong, they do not even think or speak unnecessarily — their time, energy and efforts never go to waste.

B.K. Atam Prakash is a senior Rajyoga teacher at the Brahma Kumaris headquarters in Mount Abu, Rajasthan.



MIND MATTERS

Be stable within to overcome challenges



B.K. SHIVANI

Today we have advanced treatments for diseases, and so many medicines, yet more illnesses and medical complications are emerging. Why? Because of complications in our minds. Our relationships have become complicated for the same reason.

When we remove complications from the mind, those in the body cease to exist. Otherwise, doctors tell us that if we do not change our way of

thinking and living, the complications may return. The doctor can remove the clot or blockage in the arteries, but if we do not get rid of the blockages we have created in our minds, they will continue to harm the body.

How do we create these complications?

We do not face major problems daily. Our habits and traits are not formed by big issues, but by the small challenges we face on a regular basis. There is heavy traffic on the roads every day, and there may be a pothole too, which we have been driving past for months. We get irritated and create negative thoughts about such things. When we do this day after day, we lose a colossal amount of mental energy. The traffic and the pothole



are on the road, but when we think about them repeatedly, they start to exist in our mind.

What happens within families? One person is tidy and keeps everything in the right place, but another is slipshod. This causes frequent arguments. Putting things back in order probably takes

less time and energy than quarrelling about it, but we create a habit of getting worked up over trifles and bickering over them.

We waste our energy in this way, and the result is that when we are confronted by a serious situation, we lack the power to deal with it. We are unable to tolerate, for-

give, or put the past behind us, and instead of seeing the good in others we note their faults — these are all signs of a depleted soul.

It is because of this depletion that people nowadays get upset simply because someone did not "like" their social media post. They brood over it, become agitated, and end up wasting more of their mental energy.

Our complaining, grumbling or swearing at others does not change them for the better, but it certainly damages us by draining the mind of its strength.

However, we have become habituated to getting annoyed and impatient. We cannot sit calmly even during a one-minute stop at traffic lights, and start scrolling through messages on our

phone.

We need to remember that in any situation, the one thing that is in my control is my state of mind. Instead of focusing on that, we try to control the situation or the other person. Similarly, the other person tries to control us. So, we have two persons who are not in control of themselves trying to control each other, which leads to conflict.

To communicate effectively in such situations, we need to make sure that our mind is calm, our feelings are pure, vibrations are positive, and we have respect for the other person. In the absence of any of these, our words will make no impact at all.

B.K. Shivani is a well-known motivational speaker and Rajyoga teacher.

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

Do not take sorrow. When I say that someone has hurt me, I really mean that I took sorrow from the other person. It is up to me whether I allow someone's words or bad intentions to enter my inner world and affect me. If I take sorrow, I become hurt, angry and resentful. If someone tries to give me sorrow, I can choose NOT to take it. Today I will not take sorrow.