

RIGHT PATH

Serving humanity with the energy of the heart



NEVILLE HODGKINSON

One of the biggest calls to humanity at the current time is the call for compassion. But what does it really mean, to be compassionate? It clearly is a strength that helps us see the needs of others, but it would not be real compassion to let our own hearts bleed because of the suffering of others. It does not help to mistake sentimentality as compassion. Feelings of great sorrow damage the heart and eventually destroy compassion. We need a strong heart to be of value to others, and to know how best to behave in situations of suffering.

At the other end of the spectrum, some harden their hearts excessively, usually as a response to hurts and pain that they were not equipped to handle. There is no need to blame ourselves for this, but we do need to understand. Hard hearts can appear powerful; they get things done, they often 'win', but they cut themselves off from other people and lack consideration and perception of the needs of others. This can lead to disaster, on both a personal and national level. Hardening of the heart cannot last for long without serious consequences to health, both individual and in society.

The heart is an amazing organ with vibrational structures that link it with the brain and the rest of the body, and even beyond. Ground-breaking research at the Heart-Math Institute in the US has shown that it generates a powerful electro-



magnetic field that can be detected several feet from the body, and is directly involved in intuitive reception. What is going on in our own heart influences those around us, and also determines the kind of energy, being generated by them, that we 'tune into'.

This has to do with a phenomenon called the resonance effect. A heart that is hurting is more likely to pick up

negativity from others, while a heart pulsating with its natural, intrinsic rhythms of peace, love, and compassion will remain strong. We will then be better able to see the situation clearly, and know how to help.

The power of the heart's field increases when there is coherence within, with physical, mental and emotional energies all aligned.

The world is in turmoil at present, and the need for strong, resilient hearts has never been greater. For this, we need to take good care of ourselves. Rajyoga has taught me two powerful ways of doing this.

One is to practise the understanding that we are spiritual beings, who come from a pure spiritual source that is full of the strength I want in myself. Learning how to connect

with this purest source of peace and love takes care of both heart and mind, and restores an energy that allows me to relate to the outside world in a more giving, less dependent way.

Then, as I learn to live in this way, it is as if many more blessings come my way from others, so that my own hurts continue to be removed.

Dadi Janki, the 104-year-old head of the Brahma Kumaris, who passed away last March, once said: "The entire work of the BKs is all about the head and the heart: this heart of mine is filled with happiness, and this head and brain are cool."

The care she took throughout her life to keep heart and mind connected to the divine enabled her to share this strength with countless others. *Neville Hodgkinson is a UK-based author and journalist, and a long-time student of Rajyoga.*

DISCOURSE

MIND THE QUALITY OF YOUR THOUGHTS



DADI JANKI

An enlightened person understands that there is nothing to be gained by thinking about others. Pure thoughts

and feelings will do all the work. There is no need to think any further.

The quality of your thoughts will affect your spiritual endeavour, so keep checking them. If you do not, then at some point your mode of thinking will become quite ordinary, no longer spiritual.

The sign of this is that your mind begins to race, and you start reacting sensitively to little things. You become vulnerable, not just to the opinions of others but even to your own (limited) way of understanding. Thoughts can be your own best friend, or worst enemy. It is up to you.



BIG TRUTH

CHASING FAME LEADS US AWAY FROM GREATNESS



B.K. ATAM PRAKASH

Can someone entangled in their own troubles help others? If we are angry or depressed, can we bring peace and joy to anyone's life?

Serving others is an excellent way of making life worthwhile and valuable, but if we are wrapped up in our own problems, we will have neither the time nor the inclination to assist anyone.

In order to be of use to others, it helps to have not just good intentions and ability, but also an understanding of their situation,

which enables us to decide what exactly needs to be done. A clean intellect that can discern accurately is a great asset in this.

Our service cannot be conditioned by our comfort and preferences. If we accept any support or facility for the self and become habituated to it, we will be happy for a while and even do good service, but we are setting ourselves up for disappointment. Dependence on such support is a weakness that will cause distress when we find ourselves unable to do without it.

Seeking a reward for service is another mistake that can trip us up. If we crave acknowledgement and praise, our state of mind will be like a pendulum - happy one day and dejected a few days later.

It is said that God serves the whole world; He comes to the aid of everyone. Yet



he desires nothing in return. He is truly altruistic, which is one reason why He is held in the highest esteem.

Similarly, when we stop wanting name and fame, we come to be loved by everyone, as they sense that our motives are unselfish. The slightest wish to be appreciated taints the service we do. It acts as a subtle chain that holds us back from rising to greatness.

Longing for acclaim after serving others is shortsightedness. If we hanker after quick returns in the form of plaudits, we are depriving ourselves of the enormous rewards that charitable actions bring, including goodwill, blessings, and cooperation.

Some people complain of injustice when there is no immediate recognition of the good work they have done, and demand what they see as justice. They forget that one who asks for anything, in any form, cannot experience contentment.

The better way is to just give - our cooperation, good wishes, and any other help we can offer. It is a universal law that those who serve selflessly get a hundredfold return. They never lack anything they need.

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LIFE LESSONS

It pays to have enough spiritual resources



KEN O'DONNELL

A person without money thinks twice whether to take a bus or go walking. Someone with a lot does not even think twice about taking a taxi.

Similarly, when a situation arises that requires

more understanding and tolerance than I have, I find myself out of my depth. If I have a stock of spiritual power and an understanding of the rules of life, I can deal with it without problems.

Unhappiness is basically due to a lack of spiritual power. If I spend more money than I earn over a long period of time, I go bankrupt. If I spend more spiritual power than I replace daily, I become spiritually bankrupt.

The expression, 'make hay while the sun shines', refers to taking advantage

of a favourable situation to prepare for when it is not. What I have to do is accumulate a stock of spiritual power through daily meditation practice.

If I meditate accurately for 15 to 20 minutes as my first act in the morning, then for two to three minutes from time to time during the day, and another 15 to 20 minutes at night, that stock should be sufficient to pass through most situations without tripping up.

This power tends to accumulate as I learn to think better. When larger obstacles appear, there is enough to get past them as well. Actually, obstacles appear along the way precisely to test my understanding and strength. Well understood, they always bring good lessons.

Ken O'Donnell, an author and international consultant on strategy and leadership, is the director of Brahma Kumaris' services in South America.



SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Purity, pedestals and pathways



TERI CRAWFORD

A solid platform of pure self-respect is the basis of a spiritual life. Over time, my interactions with the world cause my consciousness to become dull and my outlook heavy, my best self becomes hidden. I look outside myself to find a path back to clarity and lightness. When I see others whose qualities I admire, I sometimes

put them on a pedestal, thinking that should be my path. Is it really?

PURITY
The spiritual path is a journey back to myself. The pure desire of every soul is to know and be known at their best. At our core we are pure, peaceful beings, although life has clouded our ability to see this. My pure form, the best me, exists inside, beneath the noise and debris of my surface consciousness. Meditation carries me back to my original qualities and virtues, restoring my innocence and authenticity. The pure energy of the Divine Source enables me to see the pure me.
PEDESTALS
One trap on the spir-

itual journey is to create pedestals for those who possess the qualities and virtues we admire. We put someone on a pedestal to see their strengths more clearly and be inspired by their example. However, as a strategy to return to my best self, it is doomed to failure.

By worshipping another person, I lose sight of my specialities. The comparison to another person moves me away from myself and takes valuable energy away from the work required to build my inner platform of self-respect. Just as a physical pedestal weakens with every centimetre of increased height, the higher the pedestal I build for others, the greater the likeli-



hood they will fall. This can shake my trust and leave me disillusioned about my own spiritual journey. The pathway forward is to honour my inner light so it can shine more brightly.
PATHWAYS
Each of us has a unique journey back to the

true self. My pathway is unique to me and can only be found within myself. When I direct my attention inwards, I begin to experience my original qualities of peace, love and purity. This makes my self-respect grow, increases my in-

tegrity, and I become more confident. When I open the door of my mind and heart to the Divine, I begin to accumulate a stock of pure energy to nourish and strengthen my inner qualities. On my journey, I will meet people who have

qualities I admire. Rather than comparing myself to them and building pedestals, I can be inspired to rediscover these qualities in myself. Admiration becomes inspiration to fuel my journey forward. But, to rediscover my inner core, my journey has to be internal.

The pathway back to my best self (the purity in me) is through self-respect based on my true, inner qualities. When a new facet of my best self is revealed, it can inspire others on their spiritual journey.

Teri Crawford is a retired Registered Nurse who has been studying Rajyoga in Halifax, Canada, for 12 years.

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

Linkage or leakage? I accumulate inner power when my thinking is linked to elevated ideas and attuned to see the positive qualities in others. Power drains away when I let my thinking sink and I begin to see the weaknesses in others. Each day, I am either accumulating or leaking spiritual power. As a result, at the end of the day I feel refreshed or drained. Today let me choose to accumulate power by linking my thoughts to positive energy.