

LIFE MANTRA

Reflection, application of knowledge bring power



B.K. SHEILU

Having a high aim in life improves the quality of our thoughts and actions. As is our awareness, so is our state of being. This is the easy method of self-improvement: keep an image of what you want to be like in front of you and that will remind you of what you need to do - how you should think, speak and act. Your elevated self-image will constantly guide and motivate you. In addition, we need to reflect on what we learn. We may hear a lot of inspiring and informative things and even tell others about them, but in spite of that we find that

we often do not practise what we preach. We just parrot information without having experienced the truth of it ourselves. How much confidence or authority will we have when we are explaining concepts that we have heard or read about but never tested ourselves? On the other hand, if we reflect on those concepts and apply them in life to see whether or not they work, we will become wiser by the experience. Without the understanding that comes from deep reflection, or the experience gained from practical application of principles, we do not realise the value of those principles and may find them too lofty or idealistic. Just as it is essential for the body to digest food in order to draw strength from it, reflection on knowledge is necessary for the soul to become wiser and stronger. Reflection, and the insights it brings, turn theoretical



information into a personal asset which can be used at the right time in the right manner. Digestion assimilates food into the body in the form of blood and other tissue, and the food no longer remains something separate from the body. Similarly, reflecting on knowledge turns it into a source of strength. For instance, we are told that we are souls, masters of our body.

We will not acquire the mastery by just hearing this. But when we reflect on this repeatedly and grasp all the implications of this fact, we become increasingly aware, and accepting, of our spiritual identity, which ultimately leads to mastery over matter. This is spiritual might. The ability to reflect on knowledge is a special power of the soul. It is the most important tool for turning knowledge

into experience, which brings strength in the form of confidence and authority. Those who are experienced have the authority of experience. They are neither easily deceived nor shaken by adversity or upset by hearsay. One word from an experienced person counts for more than a commentary from someone else. Lack of reflection and experience leaves the soul weak, just as a lack

of vitamins can lead to physical ailments. To restore physical health, we first check which vitamin the body is lacking. Similarly, we need to check what experience we need to gain to become powerful. Is it the experience of being a soul, or of connecting with the Divine, or of the intricacies of the law of karma, or the subtle understanding needed for harmonious relationships? We do not become powerful by listening to or giving lectures. To become an embodiment of knowledge one has to apply it and experience the results. Reflecting deeply helps in this, as it increases our understanding of the subject. Once we develop a habit of immersing ourselves in such reflection, the insights we acquire make us unshakably strong. *B.K. Sheilu is a senior Brahma Kumaris teacher at the Brahma Kumaris headquarters in Mount Abu, Rajasthan.*

DISCOURSE

GOD'S LOVE OPENS UP HEARTS



DADI JANKI

People have experienced a lot of deception in their lives. There has been a lot of exchange of everything that is false, so feelings have been destroyed. This is why some people have stopped feeling altogether, and have rejected the world. However, when a soul starts re-

ceiving something from God, the heart opens up. So, let us take God's love and have pure feelings. Let us experience what pure feelings are. Let us have trust in each other and faith in ourselves. Let us learn to love ourselves. Let there be purity in our feelings, so that we can then experience love. Let us take from God and give to others. When we have very powerful good wishes and feelings for others, those feelings reach them. We can help each other through the power of our good feelings. Deep in my heart there is just this one feeling: just as I have received so much from God, may all God's children receive the same from our One and only Father.

REDISCOVER YOURSELF

HOW WE CAN TURN FEAR INTO LIGHT AND LOVE



B.K. CHRISTINE MAHONEY

How we deal with changing circumstances and challenges in life largely depends on how we look at them. It is a matter of our consciousness. Negative feelings such as fear seem to bring us down. We may try to run away, or avoid the situations that give rise to the feelings. I say 'seem' because we need to understand that we have a choice. If we are truly aware, we can choose to convert any negativity into something more healing and positive. It takes courage to do this, but — like many other quali-

ties — courage can be developed with practice. One way to strengthen ourselves is to be resolute that nothing should make our lives shrink: As we get older, we are determined to expand and grow! But first there is work to be done in understanding ourselves at a profound level. Through meditation — the deep exploration of our inner story — we come to find the essence of the self and what makes us who we are. In part, this is a quest to rediscover our essential simplicity. Meditation is a wonderful tool to do this. An uncomplicated method to journey within, it brings a gradual understanding of the self, and a humble acceptance of what we do not know or understand. Fundamentally it is the means to help us reconnect with our inner essence, and with the Source of everything.



As a teenager, this began for me with a near death experience (NDE). Seriously ill after an operation, I had the extraordinary sensation of being at one with my own consciousness and light as I viewed the physical body that I called 'me' from a distance. I remember feeling complete-

ly at one with myself, and I had the thought: "Why do we complicate everything so much?" Finding the light is central to the spiritual journey. I think the greatest loneliness is our separation from the self, and it is through meditation that we find this self again and

connect with the Divine. Rather like my NDE, this is the way to find the light we are searching for. Connecting with the high frequency of the Divine, we fill with radiance and clarity. This powerful light of love brings reassurance, security, and a feeling of being protect-

ed. Whenever I begin to feel fearful, I envisage the Divine presence holding my hand on one side, and my higher consciousness taking the other hand. This allows the small child within me to feel safe. Even when faced with difficult situations, such as the current pandemic and the consequences of global warming, if we take time to sit and remember who we are, then we will find the power and strength within ourselves to rise to the challenges. We do this by reconnecting with our innate qualities of light, love, peace, and power. Far from being fearful, we choose to be capable and strong. *Christine Mahoney is an actor, mediator and conflict resolution professional based in Melbourne, Australia. She has been a student and teacher of meditation with the Brahma Kumaris for more than 35 years.*

SOUL POWER

QUALITY THOUGHTS KEY TO SUCCESSFUL DECISION-MAKING



GOPI PATEL

The power to make decisions helps us to integrate our values and principles into a sustainable framework for living. Often it is asked, 'what do I need to trust when making decisions?' There are two elements to base decisions on. One is the facts, that is, the human state of affairs, and the other is our core instincts, or in other words the conscience. We need both to make a decision, but if one were to win, it would have to be the human conscience. It is also important to understand that there is no such thing as a 'right' deci-

sion. A decision is an act. We have to keep performing small acts to reach the aim or destination we want. The aim opens up a pathway, so it is important. For example, a satnav device will not give me any directions unless I key in the destination I am travelling to. If I take a wrong turn on the way, the satnav will recalculate the route and bring me back on track. It is alright if I go left instead of right, and then realise that I have gone the wrong way, because I can turn around and go back in the right direction. Many people get paralysed about making the 'right' decision. This depletes our energy, and we end up doing nothing and avoid making the decisions we need to make, and we feel 'stuck'. We also need to remember that decision-making is not simply problem-solving. Problems may simply be



predicaments. Using spirituality to make a decision means we look at what needs to be empowered and what needs to grow within the self and others in the

situation. For this we need to carefully check the quality of our thoughts before we make those decisions. There are four categories of thought.

1. Negative thoughts come fast and flood the mind, draining us of energy. They need a 'No Entry' sign in our minds.
2. Waste thoughts of unnecessary worry and doubt, letting our imagination wander. They become a burden and we lose focus.
3. Ordinary thoughts connected to our everyday role

and duties. We know what we have to do, so just do it and not overthink it, otherwise balance is lost. 4. Good and positive thoughts come slowly, in ones or twos. When we have a good wish or a pure thought for someone or a situation, we feel enriched and content inside. We can tell how powerful our decisions will be by checking the amount of time we spend in each category of thought. Ultimately, the key word in making a decision is benevolence. Decisions should be benevolent for the self and others, and this is only possible when we spend a great deal of time having good and positive thoughts for the self, others and the situations we find ourselves in. Meditation helps decision-making at a very deep level. First of all, it heals the soul, and then it has access to the very core of peace and truth

inside us. It also creates stillness for discernment to become clearer, which is the basis of making a decision. That is why thousands of people across the world meditate every day. The image of weighing scales is a pertinent one when we talk about the power of making decisions. Scales do not work well because of what is being balanced, but by the still, correct setting of the centre point. Meditation helps us to return to the centre of who we are, and at the same time the healing quiets something inside the soul, and it becomes filled with peace and love, with God's power, and each decision is powerful and takes us to our destination, step by step. *Gopi Patel is a spiritual educator and senior Rajyogi meditator with the Brahma Kumaris, specialising in spiritual pragmatism in all areas of life.*