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*Rise Dharma, like the sun to end communal strife.
Unite all in ONE and to give us New Life
- Yogi Shuddhananda Bharati*

DHARMA

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Festive Greetings

*Having come out of
the Deepavali festival period
and as we move into Christmas,
New Year, Thai Pongal and
Chinese New Year in the
coming months, the Editorial
Team of Dharma wishes all our
readers a very happy, peaceful
and joyous time with your
family, friends and loved ones.
Stay safe, stay blessed.*



LOVE, PEACE AND UNITY

Love, Peace & Unity - these mentally and spiritually elevating words, are the best in the human dictionary. Yet we have not been able to sustain them. They have been very much in the air since the 60's of the last century, among the kids raised during the 2nd World War who had become teenagers during the 60's. You may remember the well-known Beatles and the Flower-Girls at that time in history, who have been revolting against norms, ever emphasizing the need for love and peace.

Love and peace are inevitably vital needs in humanity for progress and prosperity, and this they expressed through their lifestyles, free of encumbrances such as attachment to money, attire, belongings and worries of the future. They just roamed the globe like free birds, singing their way along at a time when the world was in want.

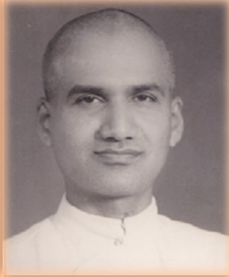
Even their singing was unique, no *raaga*, no *taala*, according to carnatic music terminology, that is no melody, no beat, but free style that did not follow any norms. As for relationships, they were all inclusive as far as race, religion or culture, were concerned.

They adored the freedom of the Hare Krishna movement and even showed great reverence to Yogi Mahesh, referred to as the Beatles Swamy - who owned nothing and lived simply and happily, living always in the present, without thinking of the past or future. No fear, no greed, no worry but always living in peace and living in the state of transcendental meditation.

In recollecting the feelings of the young, who have gone through war and its after-effects,

Continued on page 4

Cover page photo:
Significant decorations found in the homes of
Hindus and Christians
celebrating Deepavali and Christmas



From The Founder

All practice of spiritual discipline, ethics and morality and selfless service are, consciously or unconsciously, aimed at or mean the elimination, partly or fully, of the selfishness in man.

- Dr Swami Satyananda, JP, 1958



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Do Not Believe

Do not believe in anything simply because you have heard it.

Do not believe in anything simply because it is spoken and rumored by many.

Do not believe in anything simply because it is found written in your religious books.

Do not believe in anything merely on the authority of your teachers and elders.

Do not believe in traditions because they have been handed down for many generations.

But after observation and analysis, when you find that anything agrees with reason and is conducive to the good and benefit of one and all, then accept it and live up to it.

- Gautama Buddha

EDITOR'S NOTE

The whole world is reeling under the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and overcoming it requires not just the material/physical, but the indomitable spirit that keeps mankind standing in good stead, despite the many crises that have peppered us and our planetary abode over time. We have no reason to believe it will be any different this time.

Life is like that. Always has been...consequential. We get what we deserve as a result of our actions, as a result of the choices we make. Choose right and all is good. Make mistakes and there's a price to pay, lessons to be learned. The pandemic that's ravaging the world is simply another case in point.

And it's come down to a matter of survival, with the search for a vaccine going on frantically. It must be found and will be found. We've had pandemics before and survived them. Thankfully, the indomitable human spirit is awesome and by that same token this new crisis can be said to be bringing us together as in many instances in the past.

Could it be, when we are in danger of losing our way, there's an unseen hand at work to bring us together? There's nothing lost in thinking like that because it's the end result that counts. Our front-liners in the medical, security and various other services are having to work doubly hard and with much personal sacrifice on the line, given the threat to life. But, being heroic can be taken as reward in itself.

There's also the matter of discipline, regulating ourselves by wearing masks, sanitising, social distancing and even isolating ourselves when the need arises. Discipline, regulation pave the way for success in any undertaking. All that can also be seen as being spiritual. It's held that cleanliness is godliness, but so must everything else that uplifts the human condition.

Places of worship, congregational and other large gatherings have been banned or severely curtailed to prevent the spread of the virus and those who fail to adhere to the rules are sinning as much as they do when transgressing in other ways, such as stealing and cheating.

It's said that prayer serves as a "centering of our focus beyond ourselves" and, in the present context, helps us connect with health and other front-liners. Without this core strength we are bound to become afraid, helpless or hopeless even, when we should be fortified by a sense of purpose and meaning instead.

That said, we can rest assured we will emerge from this crisis battle scared, but much the wiser. If only we could come up with a vaccine for spirituality!



LOVE, PEACE AND UNITY

continued from front cover

we can sense their unrest and their mistrust in adults and their politics.

By reiterating these happenings of the 60's, it is not that I advocate such life patterns but such happenings in history bring to us lessons that can build us into better people and make us sensitive to the feelings of the young, who have gone through the throes of war and violence.

The lifestyle that had emerged from this group is more out of despair, anger and a hate for life. Today, they resort to drugs and alcohol. Life, in whichever form, loves freedom, and non-attachment is an attitude that will help us in feeling free. But such way of life will have to go with responsibility.

When a child is born, it is born into a family, and then it further goes into a community, then into the nation, and then onwards into the world at large. At every stage, *life*, you would agree, has to be lived with responsibility.

From responsibility emerges feelings of empathy and when there are feelings of empathy at every level of social interaction, which encompasses the family, the school, the workplace, and even in governance, the environment would naturally exude *love, peace and unity*.

LOVE

People talk of true love. If so, is there such a thing as untrue love? You will agree that there are many types of love. The love of a mother, the love of a child, the love between a couple, the love of friends, the love towards our pets, our belongings, our job and so on. But the way it is expressed, differs from person to person.

And then there is selfish love and unselfish love. It is here that we will have seen the difference and to learn to stabilize our EQ (Emotional Quotient) and cultivate in us, a love that knows no bargaining. It is said com-

monly, that a mother's love is next to God's love, as in the case of a prodigal son, who comes back and is accepted with open arms.

Do we realize that in spite of Man's misdeeds and abuse of the natural resources, we still get rain and sunshine? Isn't that an act of love by an Unseen Force that people address by many names?

PEACE

Man's quest for peace is eternal. As far as we know, history has had many truces signed between nations and governments, through the centuries. Yet, it is such an elusive element and we still have wars and cold wars.

For the past few years, on the 21st day of September, International Day of Peace, the Malaysian Inter-faith Network (MIN), followed by the Partners of Peace supported by the Pure Life Society, under the ambit of Inter-faith Spiritual Fellowship (INSaF), sends a peace convoy right up to Taiping, (the city of peace), where people of different faiths assemble in peace and friendship, to carry out humanitarian activities with a spirit of togetherness. The convoy also travels right up to Johor and other parts of the Peninsula. But this is only one time in the year.

Talking about peace and love and displaying it through assemblies, speeches and dramas alone cannot establish these values. We will have to make every attempt to tone up ourselves in body, mind and spirit to face the several challenges that affect us from time to time. The challenges can be lack of material needs, ill health, natural disasters, flaying tempers, erratic tragedies in the environment such as earthquakes, tsunamis, etc, political instability, relationships between loved ones and the like.

UNITY

In this context, let's remember the devastating Tsunami in Japan in the year 2011.

How it shook the world and how the Japanese people, young and old, rose courageously to the occasion, with self-confidence and worked with unity of hearts and how the nation recovered most miraculously back to normal within a few months. This portrays their undying love for the nation and its peoples.

Values such as loyalty, patriotism, empathy, the will to survive, work discipline and of course, presence of mind, all came into play during this trying period, without depending on outside help. The Japanese were truly independent. All these would not have been possible, if not for their love of the nation, which made the people get together in a spirit of oneness and of course, peaceful interaction while at work, is the root to success in any enterprise. Love cannot stand alone. It goes with concern for others and understanding our neighbor.

We should always be mindful of the fact that the body is a divine instrument with great potential. It has got the mind, the spirit, the emotions and the vital energy and all these are driven by our will, which we are free to use. The body is often referred to as a 'temple'. In order to keep the 'temple' clean, one must eat healthily. Once our 'temple' is in order, our thoughts will be in order and when our thoughts are in order, our intentions will be pure and with such intentions, our output of

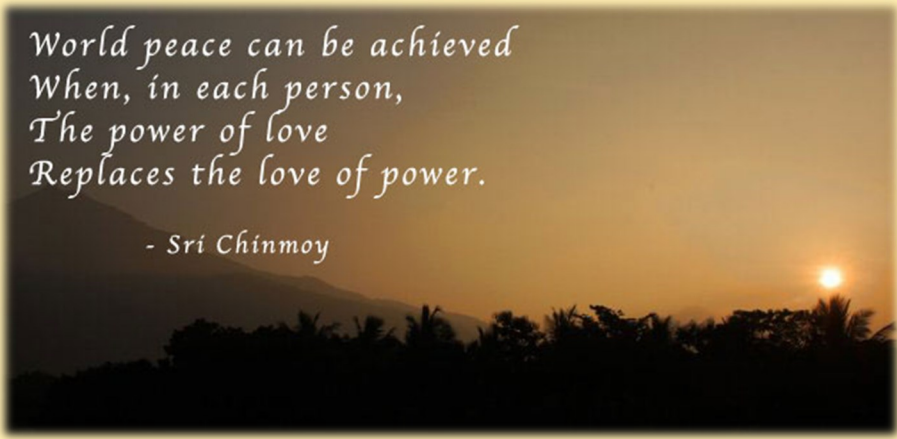
work will be beneficial to others and once those are in place, everyone will live in peace, harmony and happiness.

THE WAY FORWARD

The way forward to the establishment of love, peace and unity is an inner journey so that these values can remain established in us, in all circumstances and for this inner journey, one needs to raise one's consciousness to a higher level and emerge the individual mind into the Cosmic Mind at least for half an hour in the early morning hours and in the evening. In other words, a period of silence. This will help the individual to build up a sense of security within oneself. Insecurity is the root of all wars, cold wars and violence.

In conclusion, I wish to state that the rise of any family, institution, community or nation to success depends very much on love, peace and unity. To be able to achieve this, each one of us will have to be embodiments of unalloyed peace and love. As Mahatma Gandhi had stated '*be the change you want to see*'. If each one of us can change ourselves, we can certainly materialize what you and I want to see, that is, love, peace and unity. ■

**- Key Note Address by Mother Mangalam on
World Peace Day 2013, in Kajang**



*World peace can be achieved
When, in each person,
The power of love
Replaces the love of power.*

- Sri Chinmoy

ANGER OR KRODHA

- continued from previous issue

In the Mahabharata, Yudhishthira asks Bhishma, "What is one great quality that can enable a person to be successful anywhere in the world, in all projects?" Bhishma replied, "Mastery over the tongue. If you could stop expressing anger through your tongue, your success would be secured in all directions."

Finally, your ultimate goal is to eliminate ill will in your mind, to free yourself of the affliction of mental anger. Ideally, your mind should be so free of this affliction that you don't even recognize the evil done to you.

But that requires a profound understanding of philosophy. To encourage yourself to reach this higher state of mental purity, reflect upon the following insights:

Anger is like a Boomerang

Whenever you sustain anger in your mind, you are hurting yourself. The one who is angry and the one to whom the anger is being directed both become degraded. The effect on the person to whom you are directing your anger varies according to that person's karma. If that person is vulnerable, then he will be affected. Otherwise, your anger will simply come back to you like a boomerang and hurt you with all its force.

If you send somebody to hell, you have also sent yourself there to babysit him. How would you know the person is actually suffering in Hell unless you are there to watch him? Out of anger, people curse each other, but they have really cursed themselves. The moment you send someone to Hell, you'd better get busy and pack your own suitcase for that long trip. Every time you hold a grudge and intend to hurt another person by your thoughts or actions, you create a negative karma that keeps you in conjunction with that person in the future. You have to remain close to them in order to see the desire for revenge fulfilled!

As You Sow, So You Reap

Develop insight into the law of karma. No one can hurt you unless your karma allows it. It is the impressions in your unconscious that draw negative situations to you. You have drawn those situations and circumstances to yourself by your actions and thoughts in the past. Therefore, if you don't want to reincarnate again and again into a world of bitter circumstances, you should not hold any grudge against others. Rather, hold a grudge against yourself for creating the karmic process that has brought you pain and consider others as Divine agents reminding you of that error. In so doing, you will develop spiritual qualities within yourself and become a saint, rather than a perpetrator of violence. Day by day you must be watchful that the negative qualities that might lead you to acts of angry revenge are not encouraged in your personality. If you are irritable and insensitive, if you are not patient and adaptable in your relationships with others, if you are intolerant towards other people and can't wait to listen to what they have to say before you pass your judgments, you are sowing the seeds of negative karmas which will bear bitter fruits in the future.

You will eventually find yourself in situations where no one will be able to tolerate your behavior, your personality traits, your weaknesses, or even your looks. Your very presence will become a source of disharmony. When you crave compassion, you will find that people around you are not compassionate. Then you will wonder how it is that the world has become so cruel

and insensitive! At that time you will not realize that you made the world around you as difficult as it is.

Spiritual virtues have a special magic about them: when you develop them within your personality, similar qualities proceed from others and are directed towards you. If you are compassionate towards others, compassion from an external source comes to you in a time of need.

It could have been worse!

In confronting life's annoying and difficult situations, one has to constantly reflect upon the relativity of things. When things seem bad, remember that they could always have been worse - and give thanks to God that they were not!

Once a disciple appeared before Buddha and said, "I want to go home to pay back to society some evils I did before." In his early days, the disciple had been a robber and had caused a lot of hurt; Now as a *sanyasi* (renunciate); having attained a state of purity, he said that he would like to face those people from whom he had run away before, and thereby exhaust his negative karma.

Buddha said, "Suppose you go there and people don't appreciate your presence? Suppose they insult you, or they laugh at you?" He said, "I will say to myself, 'Thanks to the Buddha within me that they are simply saying insulting words. They are not beating me, they are not pelting stones at me.'"

Buddha responded, "Suppose they do pelt stones at you?" He said, "Then I will thank God they are pelting stones at me and thereby repaying me for what I have done to them so the account will be cleared." Buddha then said, "Suppose they don't just pelt you, but kill you?" He said, "Then they would have released me from the bondage of embodiment."

Why waste precious energy?

Life is short, and must be well-utilized for a higher purpose. Do not allow the mind to

acquire the habit of being angry over little things. Be introspective. Look within yourself again and again. If you create dissension and tension during the first half of the day, spend the rest of the day worrying about the repercussions, and then the next day struggle to remedy the situation, think of all the time and energy you have wasted.

Conserve your energy for the central project of your life — the attainment of Self-realization. In the short duration of your life, you have this tremendous task to accomplish, and it requires that you should be as enduring, patient, forgiving, and broad-hearted as possible.

Patients require patience

You must realize that an evil doer is a sick person. If a doctor is caring for a sick patient, how will he deal with that person? If the patient, due to illness, is throwing things around, the doctor will try to save himself from injury-but he will not start throwing things back in anger. He will wait for an opportunity to help the patient. Similarly, you should have that type of attitude in dealing with all those who seek to harm you.

Love even your enemies

Terminating anger implies promoting the opposite of anger - forgiveness, love, patience, endurance, understanding. Even in cases where the mind seems to direct hatred on a rational basis, one must place before himself the ideal taught by Buddha and Jesus, and endeavour to develop goodwill and compassion even towards those who are bent upon harming him. Remember the sayings of Lord Jesus: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy.' But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:43-45). Directing love and goodwill even towards those who are crude and inimical is

indeed super- normal. But unless one upholds this saintly ideal, he cannot rise beyond the normal level of human consciousness.

Do not develop an internal grudge when you are harmed. Revenge leads you nowhere. If someone has inflicted pain upon you and you have suffered, there is nothing you can do to undo that pain. Plotting to have the evil doer experience equal or greater pain does not remedy the pain you have already experienced. A nobler approach is for you to enable the person to understand his error through the higher power of love, endurance and patience.

In the Ramayana, Tulasidas says that a saintly personality is like a sandalwood tree. If you strike an axe against the sandalwood tree, what does the tree do to the axe? It simply makes the axe fragrant. Similarly, if a crude person comes to harm a saintly person, that saint radiates a fragrance that can turn the evil doer into a saint. This ideal of endurance, forbearance and compassion must always be held in view.

Flowers for Thorns

Saint Kabira has given the following profound advice: If a person plants thorns on your pathway, do not go to his home and do the same in return. Instead, stealthily go to his place and plant all the best flowers there. If you do so, a miracle will occur. The thorns that the person has planted to hurt you will become flowers of blessings, and the flowers that you sow for him will prick his heart in such a way that he will begin to repent for the evil he has done, and as a result, there will be a transformation within him. Thus, while crude people retaliate in a negative way, retaliation by a saintly personality is of a positive nature and has profound effects for the development of virtue. □

To be continued.....

Timeless Frames



Swami Satyananda and Sister Mangalam (now Mother) with visitors at the Pure Life Society, Puchong Road

CONFUCIUS AND HIS PHILOSOPHY

(China Society Annual-1955)

From the Founder of the Pure Life Society, Dr Swami Satyananda, JP

The fathers of all Chinese philosophies - Lao-Tzu, Kung Fu-Tzu or Confucius, and Mo-Tzu - flourished in China within a period of 100 years between the 6th and 5th centuries B.C., known as the Age of the Philosophers in Chinese history. It was the period when a protestant but reformed system of thought, a system that was to become one of the greatest civilising forces of the world, was formulated in India by Gautama the Buddha, and in Greece, Pythagoras instituted a Brotherhood to reform the moral life with the aid of religion and inculcated abstemiousness. While Lao-Tzu was a mystic and a transcendentalist, Confucius was an agnostic but a humanist and an altruistic moralist; Mo-Tzu, on the other hand, was atheist, a pragmatist and a utilitarian. The age in which these luminaries of China lived was given over to the forces of debauchery, disorder, militarism and intrigues, and the task of setting things right, at any rate reforming them, was regarded as so hopeless, that men of principle and high thinking usually retired from public affairs altogether and took either to the life of a hermit or to some passive employment for a living.

Confucius was born at a time when the feudal system established several centuries earlier by the founder of the Chou dynasty was showing unmistakable signs of disruption and decay. The various states that were earlier welded into a huge united family by Wu-Wang gradually became embroiled in perpetual feuds amongst themselves and not unusually clashed with the central government. Further, there were also frequent turmoils in the states themselves by the upgrowth of powerful family clans which attempted, either openly or insidiously, to wrest the ruling power into their own bands. In the state of Lu (modern Shantung) where Confucius was born circa 550 B.C., there were three such dons, the Chi, the Meng and the Shu of whom we hear so much in the Analects. These clans were not only at loggerheads amongst themselves in the race for power but even reduced the lawful prince, or Duke, of Lu to a virtual non-entity. The morals of the people too were at a low ebb.

Confucius was the product of his time, as is the case with all great men. He was a man of sterner stuff. He was no escapist, unlike most of his enlightened contemporaries. He faced his environment with courage through sheer force of character, fearlessness, patience and wisdom. He talked nothing about heaven, God, or the problems of life and death. On the contrary as is evidenced by his analects that have been bequeathed to posterity, his concentration was on virtue, social welfare, harmony, and peace in society, beginning from the individual and ending with the wider community or the state.

Confucius set himself to the task of reforming the state of human affairs that existed during his time. He spent his early life in a long course of study and calling upon the people to reform themselves and to tackle day to day problems in an ethical way. He did not shrink on occasions from condemning in unequivocal terms the vices whenever necessary. It is said that he gathered around as many as 3,000 disciples. He made education and learning the property of the common man for the first time; before Confucius higher learning was confined to privileged families alone. He sent his disciples and students far and wide to become officials, traders, teachers, etc, with the cardinal object of disseminating his ethical way combined with right learning to the prince and the pauper, by example and precept. His name spread as a great moralist and teacher. Confucius was no mere visionary, for at the age of fifty, when he took

office as the governor of a small town in Lu, he applied his ethical principles to the work of reform and reconstruction, and was eminently successful. The sage became the trusted adviser of Duke Ting and under his regime Lu became a state of plenty and prosperity. Unfortunately, the rivals of Confucius carefully manipulated matters by resorting to debauchery, to the temptations of which the Duke fell prey and the Master was compelled to resign his office.

A period of homeless exile, hardship and danger fell upon him, but in all his peregrinations he shone as the teacher and his fame spread as a reformer. It is during adversity suffering that a man's lofty principles are put to the test and Confucius proved by his serenity, patience and courageous bearing that the conception of the "higher type of man" ("chun-tzu") was for him no empty ideal but an object of practical endeavour.

The system of Confucius may be said to approach positivism and in this respect he was a forerunner of Comte. His philosophy is based on the intrinsic knowledge of human nature. The instincts of man are social and, therefore, fundamentally good, whereas egoism or selfishness is an artificial product and, therefore, evil.

His insistence on the altruistic way of life, the injunction to act socially, to live for others in living for oneself, and his principle of "*ta-t'ung*" or universalism are all tantamount to the tenets of modern socialism and in this respect he compares well with his South Indian counterpart, St. Thiruvalluvar - circa 2nd century B. C.

Traditionally, Confucius and his chief apostle and interpreter Mencius (circa 372-289 B.C.) belong to the Ju philosophical school of ancient China. Nevertheless they were the creators of a reformed system or Ju philosophy. Whereas the original Ju men were professionals who helped with expert advice on the rituals, and gave regular teaching on odes, music, history, etc., Confucius,

followed by Mencius, developed the cardinal principles of the old Ju school into a new system of thought giving a comprehensive social bearing to those principles suited to the changed social and political conditions. Confucius said. "I am a transmitter and not a creator; I believe in the past and I love it."

In transmitting the old principles of the Ju school, he gave a new orientation to that system, based on his personal experience. Did he not say, "The higher type of man is one who, acts before he speaks and professes only what he practices?" Speaking about the main stages of development through which he himself had passed, Confucius says, "At fifteen I set my heart on learning; at thirty I took my stand; at forty I had no doubts, at fifty I was conscious of the decrees of Heaven; at sixty I was already obedient to these decrees, at seventy I just followed my heart's desire, without overstepping the boundaries of the right." The "learning" which he refers is further explained by him as to hear the Tao in the morning and then at night to die, would be all right - Set your heart on the Tao."

The object of all learning, according to Confucius, was to enable a man to develop the natural goodness within him (the Principle of Tao, the Divine in man) so as to lead a virtuous culture.

Reading between the lines of the above quotation we perceive that early in life (at his fifteenth age, or in the morning), Confucius devoted himself to the learning of the Tao which is achieved through self-culture, analytical thinking and meditation. He realised the supreme values of life by forty or fifty when "subduing one's self," to quote his own words, his ego was literally killed (at night to die), and the Tao, the Divine, revealed Itself through him in Jen or human heartedness, or loving kindness to the Chih or wisdom of the One Existence (Tao) in all beings - "Unselfishness impregnated with fellow-feeling, this is Jen" says Cheng-yi. Because Confucius was established in Jen, he declared "What I do not desire for myself, I do not

apply for others" (this is called Shu); and "What I want for myself, I consider that others too want the same" (this is called Chung). The Indian conception of Ahimsa and Satya has the same fundamental idea. Jen is the very centre of Confucius' philosophy and Chung and Shu are the obverse and reverse aspects of Jen. The Jen principle is the cornerstone of Confucian ethics. Hence Confucius said "My Tao is to thread together into one" (i. e. Chung plus Shu).

Jen, in the Ju context, implies Yi or unconditional rightness, because it originates from absolute selflessness. It is same as the Karma Yoga (altruistic way) of the Bhagavad Gita and the 'Categorical imperative' of Emmanuel Kant. It is "virtue for virtue's sake" This is the main-spring of Confucius' own career. He says 'The noble-minded man comprehends righteousness, the low-minded man comprehends profit (selfish ends). The practice of righteousness demands a subordination of selfish impulses. In a family, for instance, the parents while carrying out the duty of protecting their children, though out of love, are consciously or unconsciously, subordinating their own interest for the good of their children.

Consequently, the children out of devotion or love to their parents, respect, obey, and serve them, which, in other words, is a subordination of their own selfish impulses. So we see that for the harmonious working of a family we need self-sacrifice on both sides. The same principle works in the administration of the state, i. e. that each part shall fulfil its own function in proper subordination to the rest.

This is the genesis of 'filial piety' which is emphasised so much in Chinese ethics. This is the foundation for the conception of Li (culture restraint) in the System of Confucius. The practice of Li necessitates rituals, for symbols are indispensable to give outward and visible expression to the inward sentiments of love, duty, gratitude, respect and loyalty, which should animate each member of the human aggregate. "Ritual is humbling oneself to pay respect to others; putting others first and one's self second", says the Chu Li. Confucius saw, indeed, the full importance of rites and ceremonies but he also knew that bereft of inward sentiments, they were meaningless and without value. Though variable according to conditions and circumstances, Li, as a human attribute equating sentiments and their external expressions, covers every department of human life, - from ancestor worship down to civics, ordinary politeness and good manners.

The fifth cardinal teaching is on "Hsin" (truthfulness). The Master said, "I do not know how a man without truthfulness is to get on. How can a large carriage be made to go without the crossbar for yoking the oxen to, or a small carriage without the arrangement for yoking the horses?" (Confucian Analects Chap. XXI 1 - translated by James Legge).

Thus we see that Confucius' conception of the 'higher type of man', who has the four fold attributes of *jen* (humanheartedness), *yi* (righteousness), *li* (ritual) and *chih* (wisdom), is the ideal of his system of thought that might be described as Ethical Socialism, for he said, "All men within the four seas are brothers" - which mankind urgently needs at this juncture as a panacea for its several ills. □

- Literary Works of Dr Swami Satyananda, JP, published in Dharma Essays (1956)



TOLERATING EVIL BEYOND OUR CIRCLES OF CONCERN

We may find it difficult to admit, but there is an inherent bias in our assessment of what constitutes good or evil. “Good” is when nice things happen in our circles of concern; “evil” is when nasty things happen within these circles.

Hearing news that some bad things have happened to people outside our circles of concern, we may feel no more than a passing interest. Whenever we exclude the “others” from our circles of concern we may have little or no compassion for them.

A case in point is the right in France to publish caricatures that are deemed offensive to one community. If a type of behaviour is considered objectionable to a community in your midst, then the right to exercise such freedom of expression is highly questionable.

Those who support total freedom of expression have no regard for people outside their circles of concern and how they may feel. This is why there is so much personal mud-slinging occurring in social media.

Likewise, freedom of action cannot be absolute. A smoker believes it is his right to throw a cigarette butt onto the walkway, and he doesn't consider his action to be rude towards non-smokers because they are outside his circles of concern.

The United States of America is another poignant example of hateful division when we limit our circles of concern. Americans are now split into two halves with opposing crowds rioting in the city streets and inflicting violence upon one another.

Once we allow our conception of ‘good’ and ‘evil’ to be influenced by partisan sympathies, we have opened a door to justify hostility against the “others” who we see as “evil” whereas we are “good” in our own estimation.

We are seeing this happening in Malaysia too, as chasms deepen with the unceasing political squabbling for power and position dividing the country into pockets of fragmented loyalties based on race, politics, and religion.

Instead of a unified Malaysian loyalty, we are now extolling the virtue of being loyal party members who demonstrate their fidelity by speaking bad of the outsiders whenever opportunity presents itself. We fall back on the familiar “us” versus “them” dichotomy and its characterisation of the “other” as wrong.

A duopoly of ethical norms is written in our genes: utter selfishness tagged with sacrificial altruism. The switches lay side by side in our brain.

China's great 4th century BCE Confucian philosopher Mencius observed: ‘Those who follow that part of themselves which is great are great men; those who follow that part which is little are little men.’ Mencius had perceived a truth that research scientists have now ascertained through studies on animal life: all species seem to be endowed with both selfish and altruistic genes.

Throughout the planet's biosphere all mothers, whether human or animal, behave altruistically as a genetic response — loving their offspring unconditionally and sacrificially risking their own lives if necessary to protect their young. Motherly love in animals may even extend to babies that are not one's own.

Japanese researchers in Tanzania's Mahale Mountains National Park studied a chimpanzee who helped her sister take care of its severely disabled infant. This startling discovery, made in 2015, has made scientists realise that social care for the disabled is rooted in animal nature.

In the same year at Monarto Zoo, near Adelaide city, a baby chimp whose mother died

shortly after it was born was adopted by a fellow chimp who was herself near to giving birth. The heavily-pregnant chimp was observed cradling the orphaned baby, grooming, supporting and nursing it as though the baby was her own child.

One day this author was passing by a pet store and spotted a struggling hamster kept in a transparent enclosure. The hamster was stuck upside down between a play wheel and a wall of the enclosure. It could not get free despite struggling vigorously. Then I saw a fellow hamster in the same enclosure rush up the play wheel and pulled both legs of the struggling hamster away from the wall until it was free. The Fire & Rescue Department would be proud.

Thanks to breakthrough naturalist research we are now aware that our good moral sense is an inheritance from the animal kingdom. Altruism lies embedded in the human genetic code. Love tags along with life, as does selfishness.

Since the part of us which is selfish and the part of us which is altruistic are both set in our genes, which gene will determine your actions? In April 2014 the South Korean ferry Sewol carrying 476 people to Jeju resort island sank with few survivors. Park Ji-young, a part-time and youngest crew member at age 21, gave her life jacket and her life to one of the passengers. She was completely altruistic and knew that she was giving away her life so that a ferry customer could live.

Contrast her self-sacrifice with the utter selfishness of the ferry captain who escaped from the sinking ship without issuing an evacuation order, an action that the judge at his trial said was equivalent to pushing passengers into water and letting them drown. Tragically the captain

lived only for himself and was sentenced to life in prison.

We have pointed out that there is an inherent bias in our assessment of what constitutes good or evil. If a tragedy happens outside our circles of concern, we may lose no sleep over it. Ferry martyr Park Jo-young, on the other hand, extended her circle of concern to all the passengers and died for them.

Mother Nature has endowed us with a gene for altruism so that selfishness needn't be the dominant mode.

The existence of these two opposing forces of altruism and selfishness within our own nature has been a mystery until now. Evolutionary geneticists have unravelled the mystery of good and evil by studying the development of life on earth. Along the way, life on earth found that both seemingly opposing forces are integral to the wellbeing of living organisms. We have to live for self, and we also have to live for others. The brand tagline of Mother Nature is to "Live for Self and Others."

Mother Nature has endowed us with a gene for altruism so that selfishness needn't be the dominant mode. We can switch off the selfish gene in our relationship with others if it is shown that turning on the altruistic gene provides greater benefit.

In the tussle between altruism and selfishness, a deciding factor is the size of our circles of concern. If our circles exclude the "others", we become susceptible to justification that they can be annihilated. Express the right gene in your life by expanding your circles of concern to include humanity in its entirety. □

- Joachim Ng



CHILDREN'S CORNER

The hospitality of the Pigeon

Once upon a time, there lived two pigeons. They were husband and wife. They spend their day looking for food. In the evening they would come and rest on their favorite tree in the forest.



One evening, the wife returned home early. As usual she was waiting for her husband, when suddenly it started raining. She started to worry. "Where are you, my dear? You never get so late," she whispered to herself.



Just then she saw a bird-catcher coming towards her. In a cage he had a pigeon. It was her husband. "Oh no, what shall I do now? I wish I can help my husband," she said. She desperately tried to distract the bird-catcher by flapping her wings, but all in vain. Soon, it stopped raining. "Brrr! It is so cold," said the bird-catcher. His clothes were wet. He decided to sit under the same tree where the two pigeons lived.

The poor wife sat by her husband's cage. And she started to cry. The husband said. "Do not feel sad, dear. We now have a guest. This man is shivering and hungry. He needs your help." Hearing this, the wife flew around getting dry twigs. She made a fire for the bird-catcher. Then she looked at the bird-catcher and said, "You are our guest, since I have no food to offer, I will jump into this fire. In few minutes I will become an edible item for you. You can eat me."



By now, the bird-catcher was overwhelmed by the hospitality of the humble pigeon couple. He at once stopped the wife jumping into the fire. He opened the cage and set the husband free. "I have been cruel and selfish. I will never trap any bird in my net again," said the bird-catcher and went away. The two pigeons were happy to be reunited.

- Web Source

DHARMA - A RELIGION?

Dharma is not a religion nor a dogma. It is the Law of Becoming, universal, all-pervading. Whoever does not follow it, is against it. Where it prevails, no bonds of race or clime or time exist. Where it does not, evil is, and has to be uprooted, there can be no compromise.

Dharma is not an airy nothing, without an instrument of effective outspread. In India, this Dharma is threefold: Yoga, the Law of Becoming, *Aryavarta*, the Base; and the Bhagavad Gita, the Word.

Man's attainment of Godhood in life is not a myth, nor a pious hope, nor even an accident. It rests on unalterable *Dharma*.

Man's real nature is clouded by his ego which drives his animal urges, attachment, wrath and fear, to covet, to hate and to fear.

These urges create cravings in the senses as also the illusion that their satisfaction is the only reality. They are the causes of the ego-driven life of hatred, strife and misery.

These cravings and illusions chain man to bondage and leave him weak, imperfect and unhappy.

If man can control his animal urges and transmute them into fundamental aspirations, he will realise himself.

Man can transmute his animal instincts only if he obeys the Law of Moral Causation. This Law supports the Spiritual Order of the Universe. It is ineluctable, like the Law of Gravitation. If the apple falls from the tree, it is drawn to the earth, not away from it. So it is with this Law.

If anyone achieves Truth, his work shall bear fruit,

If anyone achieves Non-Violence, men shall come to him shedding their hostility.

If anyone achieves Non-Stealing, wealth shall come to him.

If anyone achieves Non-Waste, he shall obtain the vigour that does not fade.

If anyone achieves Non-Possession, he shall know the end and meaning of his life.

When this Law is followed, however little attachments, fear and wrath begin to give way to truth, beauty and love.

In many ages and in many lands, mystics and seers have arisen, who have followed the twin laws of Moral Causation and of Becoming. But *Dharma* - the spiritual order of the universe - from which the laws derive their sanction, was first discovered in India when the Vedic *Rishis*, through insight and experience, saw and felt it and called it *Rita*.

Here, cultural values were shaped in its light-more than in any other country. Social values and institutions have been built with a view to making it easy for men to live up to it. And the values based on mere sense-satisfaction the basic stuff on which materialism flourishes has never been treated as reality by those who dominate the collective unconscious of the race.

And, generation after generation, gifted men have found self-fulfillment in living up to it.

Those who believe in the cravings of the senses as the guiding energies of man, deny this *Dharma*. They believe in sense satisfaction as the only reality. They deny the Eternal Law. Being God, they deny their Godhood. These men turn man into an insect and make the world hideous with squalor and strife. At all times they have to be cajoled, healed, educated, trained and, if need be, resisted in their mad career of de-humanising man.

To preserve and maintain *Dharma*, the mental content has to be first changed. This can only be done by reading, reciting and meditating and translating into daily action the Word of those masters who have known, lived up to and realised *Dharma*. There is no other way.

There have been many such masters who have left us the legacy of the Word. Some were Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims or Christians, others even of no denomination at all-

thinkers whose vision in life have not been blurred by materialism, which leads men back to barbarism.

The essence of the Word spoken by the masters all over the world is found in the Bhagavad Gita, the Inspired Word of Sri Krishna.

When the mind, word and deed become a unity, a mysterious stream of faith arises. The flame of spiritual enthusiasm rises sky high. The valour of the soul is roused by a heroic tumult. The Word, transmitted by faith, becomes a living force of *Dharma*, ever conquering, though ever unattainable, lifting the inert world towards God.

Our unity of thought and deed in pursuit of *Dharma* and created by the Word, should never be disrupted by a wavering will. The maelstrom of epidemic falsehoods will suck us in if we do not stand true to the *Dharma*.

for, Dharma is Life. □

- *K.M. Munshi, Bhagavad Gita and Modern Life, Bhavan's Book University*

UNKNOWN HERO

We have just read in a newspaper of Uttar Pradesh that a school boy, for two years, went every morning to fetch water from a well, twelve miles away from the village, for a poor woman driven away from society by untouchability.

Have you ever experienced the joy that comes from doing somebody else a good turn without expecting to be rewarded for it? Of course, you have. Everybody does such a thing occasionally.

Most of us have been wrapped up in ourselves so long that we can think of nothing else — can do nothing for anybody except ourselves.

Let us cultivate the habit of helping others of going out of our way to be of service to our fellow-men just because it makes us happy to help somebody else. I consider untouchability to be a heinous crime against humanity - **Mahatma Gandhi**

- J Maurus, from Just a Moment Please!

PARENTS AND CHILDREN

"If our children are ungrateful to us, who is to be blamed? May be the fault lies with us. If we have never taught them to express gratitude to others how can we expect them to show gratitude to us?"

Everyone is born in this world with an inheritance of certain qualities or habits. According to Buddhism, this is due to the experiences of his previous birth. It is, therefore the duty of the parents to pay particular attention to such gifted skills and encourage the child to develop it, if it is to serve a good purpose.

Some people through a sudden stroke of fortune receive a large sum of money or are endowed with some property, or they might inherit a large share of the property from their parents. But amongst them only a very few would know how to preserve and maintain such newly acquired property. Normally property that is easily acquired without their own effort and labour, has no real value to them. Therefore they will start to spend the money on unnecessary things and, no sooner, the whole property will be squandered. People must know how to handle their property without wasting it, and for that they must use a little bit of their common sense.

Many parents try to keep their married children under their control. They do not give due freedom to the children even after their marriage. Parents may be doing it in good faith due to love and attachment towards the children, but in doing so they only invite more troubles to themselves. Parents must allow their children to shoulder the responsibilities of their own lives and families. Some seeds are dropped under a tree, small plants might sprout up after sometime. But if you want those plants to be grown up independently, like the parent tree you must transplant them somewhere else separately.

Many parents are unnecessarily worrying today. Whenever they find that their grown up children are no longer controllable, they think that such children would spoil the good name of the family and bring disgrace to their parents. It is true that parents have to shoulder their responsibilities. However, there is an art of upbringing the children in a proper way. Most parents simply allow their children to behave as they like without giving them any moral instruction when they were young. Later on the same parents worry themselves when the children do not care for them. No doubt there are some incorrigible cases, and for such cases parents need not worry too much if they have done their parental duties expected of them. □

- K Sri Dhammananda, 'Why Worry?'

A FATHER'S GOODNESS IS
HIGHER THAN THE
MOUNTAIN, A MOTHER'S
GOODNESS DEEPER THAN THE
SEA.

JAPANESE PROVERB

MAN IS THE IMAGE OF GOD

He has many Names

There is only one omnipotent and omnipresent God. He is named variously and we remember Him by the name which is most familiar to us. Each person can choose the name that appeals most to him. Ishwara, Allah, Khuda, God mean the same.

God has a thousand names, or rather, He is nameless. We may worship or pray to Him by whichever name that pleases us. All worship the same Spirit, but as all foods do not agree with all, all names do not appeal to all. Each chooses the name according to His associations and He being the Indweller, All-Powerful and Omniscient, knows our inmost feelings and responds to us according to our deserts.

In my opinion, Rama, Rahaman, Ahurmazda, God or Krishna, are all attempts on the part of man to name that invisible Force. Man can only conceive God within the limitations of his own mind. What matters, then, whether one man worships God as a person and another as Force? Both do right according to their lights. One need only remember that God is the Force among all the forces. All other forces are material. But God is the Vital Force or Spirit which is all-pervading, all-embracing and therefore beyond human ken.

Daridranarayan is one of millions of names by which humanity knows God who is unnameable and unfathomable by human understanding. And it means God of the poor, God appearing in the hearts of the poor.

His incarnations

God is not a person. To affirm that He descends to earth every now and again, in the form of human being, is a partial truth, which merely signifies that such a person lives near to God. In as much as God is omnipresent, He dwells within every human being and all may, therefore, be said to be incarnations of Him.

But this leads you nowhere. Rama, Krishna, etc, are called incarnations of God because we attribute divine qualities to them. Whether they actually lived or not does not affect the picture of them in man's mind.

Spark of Divinity

We may not be God, but we are of God - even as a little drop of water is of the ocean. Imagine it torn away from the ocean and flung millions of miles away. It becomes helpless, torn from its surroundings and cannot feel the might and majesty of the ocean. But if some one could point out to it that it is the ocean, its faith would revive, it would dance with joy and the whole of the might and majesty of the ocean would be reflected in it.

Man is the image of God

Man alone is made in the image of God. That some of us do not recognize that status of ours, makes no difference, except that we do not get the benefit of the status, even as a lion brought up in the company of sheep, may not know his own status and therefore, does not receive its benefits; but it belongs to him, nevertheless, and the moment he realizes it, he begins to exercise his dominion over the sheep. But no sheep masquerading as a lion can ever attain the leonine status.

And to prove the proposition that man is made in the image of God, it is surely unnecessary to show that all men admittedly exhibit that image in their own person. It is enough to show that one man at least has done so. And will it be denied that the great religious teachers of mankind have exhibited the image of God in their persons? □

By Mahatma Gandhi

*Source: Pathway to God
The Vision, April 2005*

Remedies for Common Maladies-My Experience

By Mother A Mangalam

Herbal Brew for Cough and Phlegm (Chitharathei Kashayam)

Ingredients:

Black pepper seeds (milagu)	-	1 tbsp
Cumin seeds	-	1 tbsp
Omum seeds (carum / thymol seeds)	-	2 tsp
Fenugreek seeds (vendayam)	-	1 tbsp
Dried Lengkuas (chitharathei)		
(wild ginger)	-	3 pcs (size of thumb)
Liquorice (athimadhuram)	-	4 pcs (3" sticks)
Dried Ginger (chukku)	-	2 or 3 small pieces
Dried Turmeric Root (manjal)	-	3 pcs

Method:

1. Black pepper, cumin, thymol seeds and fenugreek seeds to be roasted in slow fire.
2. Add water to it and boil.
3. Wash well the smashed turmeric root and add to the boiling water. Slow boil for 30 minutes.
5. Strain and add palm sugar (jaggery).
6. Sip slowly.



Note: tbsp - tablespoon

Herbal Brew for stomach discomfort/pain and bloatedness

Ingredients:

Black pepper (milagu)	-	3 heaped tsp
Cumin (jeeragam)	-	3 heaped tsp
Thymol seeds / Carum seeds (omum)	-	1 heaped tsp
Fenugreek (vendhayam)	-	1 heaped tsp
Dried ginger (chukku)		
Dried turmeric (manjal)		

Method :

1. Roast pepper, cumin and thymol seeds.
2. Pour 3 cups of water.
3. Add smashed dried ginger and turmeric into water and boil.
4. Let it simmer for ½ hour and strain.
5. Add jaggery (brown sugar /vellam).



Note : *The residue can be boiled at least for 2 times more.*
 To be taken on empty stomach twice/thrice a day, according to the severity of the case.

Remedies for Common Maladies-My Experience

By Mother A Mangalam

Ginger and Garlic soup

Ingredients:

Ginger	-	To taste
Garlic	-	3 large pips
Soft Tofu	-	1 piece
Dried Mushrooms	-	3 large ones
Pumpkin (scrapped pieces)	-	2 handful
Carrot	-	1 medium size
Pepper	-	
Braggs Amino-acid kicap		To taste
Flax-seeds	-	2 tsp



Preparation:

1. Grind ginger and garlic. Keep aside.
2. Scrape carrot and pumpkin.
3. Slice mushrooms and soak in warm water. Roast.
4. Soak tofu with a bit of kicap. Blend.

Method:

1. Put scrapped carrot and pumpkin into boiling water. Add in roasted mushrooms and allow to simmer for 2 minutes.
2. Add the ground ginger and garlic, the blended tofu, pepper and flaxseeds.
4. Bring to a boil and serve hot.

Paaveka Pachchedi (Bitter Gourd Salad)

Ingredients:

Bittergourd	-	4 (small)	Juice of ½ lime	
Carrot	-	1	Salt	- To taste
Ginger	-	Thumb – size	Chopped onions	- Optional
Tomato	-	2	Chopped chillies	- Optional
Coriander leaves	-	A few sprigs		

Method :

1. Chop bittergourd, carrot, ginger and tomato into tiny cubes or fine strips.
2. Mix with lime juice and salt to taste.
3. Allow to marinate before serving.



‘Feed your body with what it needs
Don’t feed the body with what you like’

*Saying it
in Pictures.....
Activities @ Pure Life*

Gandhiji's 150th Anniversary
Celebrations by the children in the
Pure Life Society

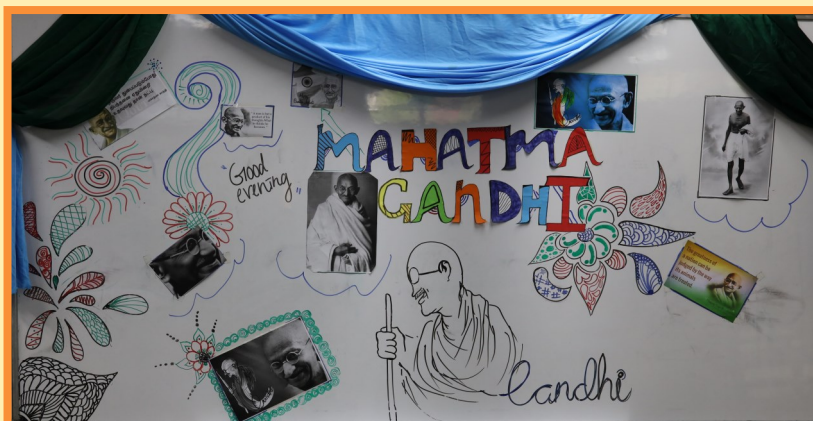


Gandhi Jayanti was celebrated by the Pure Life Society with various activities and a Drama by the children depicting Gandhi and his struggles for freedom.



Drawings of Mahatma Gandhi by the children of PLS

Gandhi's pictures and quotes



OM TAT SAT

Along I came
Along I go
My life is my own
My very own

Along I toil
To work it out
With love with wisdom
With strength with will
With power with peace
That none can withhold
For all such forces
Grow from within

This treasure cover
Pure in essence
But defiled by ignorance
That darkens the chambers
Which enshrine the light
The lustre from which
Attracts and repulses
Its kindred beings of myriad hues
That tease
That bewilder
That tantalize
Until I discover
My roots
And delve within
And find that
I am that
I Am

- Mother A Mangalam, 1991

Reflections

Salient Thought for the Day

Because we refuse to let go, we bar our way to happiness.

Lines to Memorize

What makes thee so lonely, friend?

One is always lonely in the crowd ; yea, and more lonely alone, with thought of self.

But when one's thought is lost in the Beloved,

One is never lonely in crowd or alone.

Lesson

To whom comes the light? Not to one who is aggressive, who puts himself first always. If we only can remember what we are, what our relation with the foundation of life is, we are safe; then whatever we do will be in accord with our higher intuitions. Not by thinking of the world shall we solve the problems of the world. We must step aside. We must step out of ourselves. Man himself prevents the solution of his problems.

Prayer

Unchanging eternal Deity, lift my hands from changing things

And fasten them to Thy eternal treasure.

Free my thought from attachment to the perishable

And tie it to the everlasting.

Cure me of the ever of struggle for the finite,

And teach me to find all my happiness and peace in Thy infinitude.

- Swami Paramananda



The Malaysian Speaks

We're all in a hurry to avoid, ignore or distract ourselves from whatever we feel is uncomfortable and unpleasant. We become so busy in these pursuits that we lose sight of what really matters. For this reason, spiritual teachers and writers encourage us to slow down, open up, and experience life as it is, not as the fantasy we would like it to be.

- Sandy Clarke, Sunny Side Up, 'The true goal of mindful living', StarLife-Style, 18th October 2020

Once we learn to become silent and to reflect on our inner self, we start feeling satisfied with what we find inside and there is a deep sense of contentment.

- Bridget Menezes, Good Vibes, 'One can make a difference', The Sun, 19th October 2020

Teachers must stay passionate and professional in doing their job by turning the worrisome-school mindset into an awe-some one. Instead of focusing on never-ending worries of Covid-19, teachers should make students switch their attention to the other end of the continuum where the light at the end of the tunnel awaits.

- Muhamad Solahudin Ramli, 'Teachers must remain positive', Letters, NST, 27th October 2020

The Hall of Harmony

*In the stillness of the heart,
My Soul slipped into the shining
Hall of Harmony,
Where the floor was studded
With the precious stones of Purity
Reflecting the multicolored beauties
Of the Divine Love.*

*The roof was constituted of
The glimpses of Eternity,
The pillars were of Truth,
The walls were of Peace,
The Hall was redolent with
The fragrance of bliss.*

*And on the luminous throne of wisdom,
I communed with my own Self,
The Self-effulgent beloved of my heart.
What peace, what order, what
harmony!*

*What security and fullness
Lie beyond the veil of multiplicity,
And dark delusion of the world-process!*

- Sri Swami Jyotirmayananda,
International Yoga Guide, January 2018



Great minds of Yesteryears

No one can suffer for all time, No one will spend all his days on this earth in suffering.
Every action brings its own result, and one gets one's opportunities accordingly.

- Sri Sarada Devi, wife of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa

இன்சொலால் ஈரம் அளைஇப் படிநிலவாம்
செம்பொருள் கண்டார்வாய்ச் சொல் - குறள் 91

The words uttered by enlightened scholars will
only be kind words carrying love and no malice.

- Thirukkural

Service without humility is
selfishness and egotism.

- Mahatma Gandhi

Be a part of Dharma....

Dharma Quarterly
published by the Pure Life
Society, to encourage inter-
religious and inter-racial har-
mony. We would love to
have your contributions,
whether ideas or articles.

Come, be a part of us.....



Dharma QUARTERLY

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RIGHTEOUSNESS &
CULTURE

ONE GOD
ONE WORLD
ONE RACE

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