



Vol 52:1

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DHARMA

In this issue...



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

- ∞ Dawn of a new era
- ∞ Danger of religion minus spirituality
- ∞ SSML 2019
- ∞ Children's corner
- ∞ Remedies for Maladies
- ∞ Karma!
- ∞ Religion - A two-way experience
- ∞ Towards a harmonious society
- ∞ And many more.....



Selamat Hari Merdeka

31st August marked 62 years of independence for Malaysia, attained from the British Empire in 1957.

The Independence Declaration was read by the first Prime Minister of Malaya, Tunku Abdul Rahman, at the Merdeka Stadium, to the joy of thousands of people. Thus, began the journey of a beautiful multi-religious, multi-cultural and multi-racial Malaysia.....

WHAT IS RELIGION

The word religion has its root in Latin which reads as *re ligare* meaning to bind back. 'To bind back' to what? - to the Source from which one comes and that is the Divine principle. And the human body is a sacred instrument with all its intricate machinery, that will have to be kept undefiled in order to facilitate this 'binding back'.

This process of keeping it undefiled is a science in itself. Therefore, religion and science cannot be placed in separate compartments, for the practice of religion lies in the area of toning up the body, mind and spirit and the culturing of the vital forces from which arise emotions, good and bad. The whole process encompasses the science of effective living at all levels.

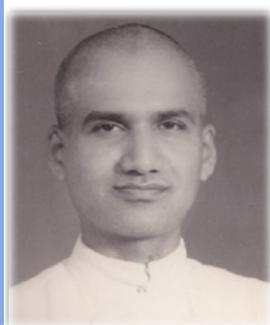
But it must be remembered that the co-ordination and culturing of the integral parts of the human form, would result in perfection only if the human being could lend himself in totality to the Divine Principle, which is all harmonious. Here, permit me to give a quote in support of perfection, '*Become ye perfect as the Father in heaven is perfect*' says the Bible. In simple language, it is the giving up or 'surrendering' or *Saranaagadhi* (in Sanskrit), recommended by all scriptures, while we are at our daily tasks.

It is more easily said than done because of the desires and volition embedded in the human psyche, resulting in action—whether it be acquisition of wealth, achievements or status.

When one moves away from the Spiritual Centre of one's being, i.e. the Divine Principle, the mind can run wild, and with uncontrolled desires and volition resulting

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Cover page photo: The National Monument, is a sculpture that commemorates those who died in Malaysia's struggle for freedom principally during World War II and the Malayan Emergency, which lasted from 1948 until 1960.



From The Founder

'All life being one, to injure any life is to injure oneself, to injure God, and to love others is to love oneself, to love God'

- Dr Swami Satyananda, JP, 1958



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Merdeka ~ Month of Joy

*Rest the differences
Celebrate the Similarities
Adore the Achievers
Welcome the Varieties*

*Add more unity programs
TriPLICATE Games,
gatherings & special
broadcasts
Colour our schools with
jubilation
Rejoice Malaysians with
adoration*

*Merdeka is a celebration
With tons of adulation
Filled with loads of
admiration
Bringing Malaysians
together in affection*

*Let's fill August with joy
Let's celebrate with pride
For there is no other joy
Than to cherish the birth of
our national pride!*

- Ravindran Raman Kutty

**We are all Malaysians.
This is the bond that
unites us. Let us always
remember that unity is
our fundamental strength
as a people and as a
nation.**

- Tunku Abdul Rahman

EDITOR'S NOTE

Our nation has celebrated its 62nd birthday and, like all birthdays, even as we enjoyed a holiday, there was an echo that reverberated throughout the nation of a call for unity that underpins our continued wellbeing. It's imperative we re-dedicate ourselves individually and collectively to upholding all that we have enjoyed as a multi-ethnic nation of many faiths.

In the dynamics of progress, we are reminded every now and then that we cannot take anything for granted. Especially when it comes to religion and race relations. We have had to come to terms with realities of our own making, it must be said, on gaining our independence from British rule to forge our own destiny. So far, so good, despite hiccups that have made us uncomfortable at times along the way.

There's no denying some concerns we now have as a result of sea change in our political landscape, impacting our lives in all its economic, social and even religious underpinnings.

How we react, tackle and cope with them as individuals and as a pluralistic society, will have a direct bearing on the quality of life we are charting for ourselves. The time span in which we have built our reputation as a nation has been marked with things we can be proud of and, at the same time, that which we may be tempted to sweep under the carpet...but shouldn't.

We have to face up to reality of life we are shaping with value judgements in a changed and changing set of circumstances, again of our own making. We have history and experience to guide us and no one, but ourselves to blame if anything goes wrong.

If we care to admit it, there are tears in our social fabric that have always been there, but have not been allowed to get the better of us. In all of this, it's what we say that's at the root of our problems.

"Whatever besides you leave unguarded, guard your tongue, otherwise errors of speech and the consequent misery will ensue." It's a quote from Thirukkural, the universal Tamil perspective of ethics of life we need to uphold.

As a nation, we can consider ourselves fortunate in that we have various faiths that should translate into a belief system that accommodates and promotes cohesion without loss of identity. Live and let live is a basis that has served us well in the past. We may be separate racially, but we are one as Malaysians. We have to say it, believe in it and act accordingly.

Clearly, it's politics that's behind any divide and rule sentiments being expressed. We have to recognise them for what they are. Leadership is called for, without fear or favour. History will judge us down the road. Each generation must pave the way for the next to move the country to the Utopian levels our country and peoples are reaching for.

Our religious leaders, like all other leaders in the multifarious spheres of human activity, have a bounden duty to uphold the principle of oneness, if we are to move forward as a nation. It's a message that must constantly be imparted in all our places of worship with sensitivity that's becoming in all faiths in their pristine form.

'Do unto others what we want others do unto us' is a Golden Rule that must be borne in mind. *Let's have a profusion of such stickers displayed on cars, in our malls, schools, colleges and even corporate offices to be in our faces all the time.* Success hinges on us individually and collectively. It's not somebody else's task, but OUR task. We at Pure Life have to play our part and re-dedicate ourselves to what Swami Satyananda so admirably set in motion. 

WHAT IS RELIGION

Continued from front page cover

in actions that can become disastrous.

The chaotic mind can blur our vision and give in to negative desires which, in turn, can bring about deterioration in the quality of life.

This is where we see the world in a mess today. Man's amorous desires, blurred vision without a thought for his neighbour, has brought about chaos amongst men so much so that the young of today are finding it very hard to fit into the system created by the adult in his many roles in life. The co-ordination and balanced development of the integral parts of the human being is at the mercy of three entities, i.e. desire, volition and action (*Muruga Tatvam*) contained in man.

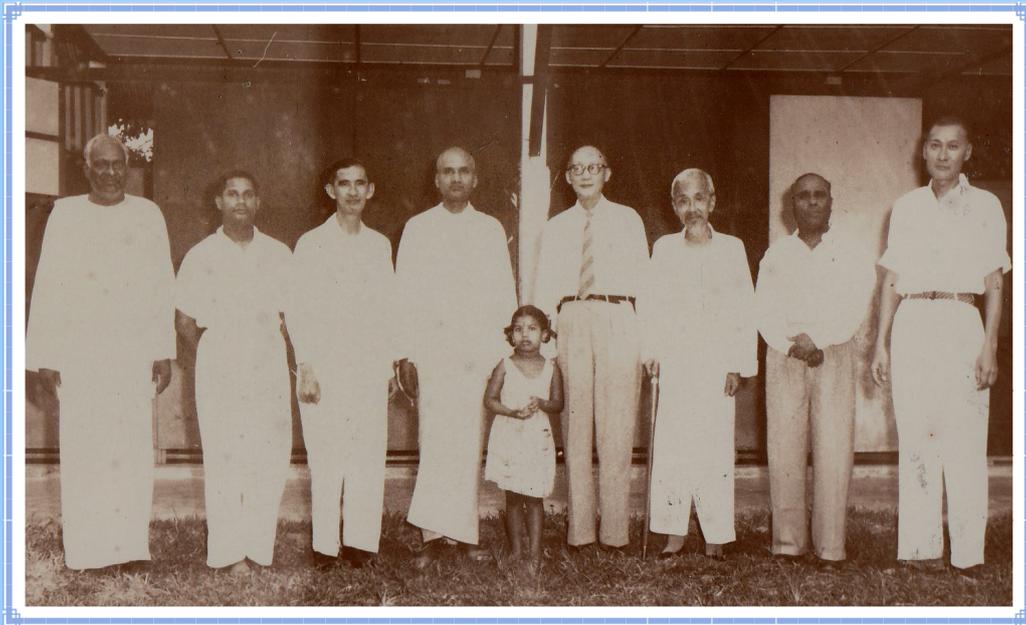
Now, how do we go about directing this body and its integral units composed of the mental energy, the emotions and the vital energy towards wholesome development? □

To be continued.....

- Datin Paduka Mother A Mangalam, 'A Discourse on good governance from the perspective of science and religion' at World Religion Day 2010, organized by the Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'i of Malaysia



Timeless Frames



Swami Satyananda with a scholar from Singapore in the 50's of the last century.

DAWN OF A NEW ERA

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

“Everything changes” is a famous maxim of Heraclitus as also of ancient Eastern Teachers, and Bergson who adopted and elaborated this principle as the central theme of his philosophy came to the conclusion that 'we change without ceasing, and the state itself is nothing but change'. This change or motion is always going on in human affairs as in everything else.

In the field of sociology if we make a survey of theocracy, monarchy and aristocracy, plutocracy and lastly modern socialism and communism, we cannot but arrive at the generalisation that human society is governed in turn by the priest-class (Brahmana), the warrior-class (Kshatriya), the trader-class (Vaisya), and the labourer-class (Sudra).

In each of these classes, we find both good and bad sides. The bright side of the priest-rule, was that it laid the foundation of all spiritual and secular knowledge, but it had the evil of upholding the exclusive rights and privileges of the priests for the achieving and imparting of knowledge. The rule by the warrior-class was oppressive and tyrannical but not exclusive, for during their period, the culture was shared by them with other classes. Under the rule by traders and capitalists, the masses have been exploited and dominated, but the good aspect of this rule, is that the accumulated culture of the preceding periods has been widely disseminated throughout the

world during the course of their commercial enterprises and activities.

That we are now in an age of transition from trade-period to labour-period should be as clear as daylight to us. During this rule, physical comforts, and amenities of life will be distributed widely and there will be a breaking down of social, religious and political barriers and the consequent fusion of cultures and races. But, it is very probable that culture and learning will be lowered. An ideal society would be one in the scheme of which the knowledge of the priest, the sharing of culture of the warrior, the broadcast spirit of the trader and the equalising impulse of the worker could all be kept intact, bereft of their evil elements.

The upheavals that we notice in the different parts of the world today are dominated by the equalising impulse of the worker. But this impulse of the age, due to lack of insight, right understanding, proper direction and manipulation, is expressing itself in violent and destructive ways. If man can realise the spiritual basis of this equalising impulse and become conscious of his divine nature and the oneness of human beings and manifest that unity of consciousness in his daily life then alone can uniform harmony and peace reign in society and true socialism be established. □

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

Our greatest ability as humans is not to change the world; but to change ourselves.

- Mahatma Gandhi

DANGER OF RELIGION MINUS SPIRITUALITY

Is it correct to believe that your religion has been chosen by God as the true faith that must triumph over all other religions, and that non-believers should abandon whatever path they are now following? No it is incorrect, and the proof lies in the fact that more than one religion is contending for world dominance.

However, the debate is between rival faith communities and not between the scriptures. We choose to interpret scripture in a combative manner, when it is abundantly clear from a deep reading that the true faith is like oxygen in the air and the ocean. The true faith is also within you.

Here's a verse from the Upanishads that makes it clear what the true faith is: it's Dharma. What is Dharma? That is also explained in the verse from Brihadaranyakopanishad (1:4:14).

There is nothing higher than Dharma. Therefore even a weak man rules a stronger with the help of Dharma, as with the help of a king. Thus Dharma is what is called the true.

Brihadaranyakopanishad makes it abundantly clear that it is wrong to make an exclusivist claim to the truth, for the same verse continues with the assertion that *'when anyone speaks the truth, he is speaking the right religion.'* Of concern in an age of violence against non-believers is the continuing dominance of exclusivist scriptural interpretations that miss the crucial point.

If you miss it you miss living a life of true faith, the complete self-surrender required equally by all the faiths.

Religion without spirituality is like a truck driven by a blind man speeding down a crowded highway. In full throttle, it rams into people and speeds on. With a dozen runaway trucks careening down the same highway, you have unstoppable mayhem.

The clash of religions was never a clash of fundamentally differing values or truths.

All fundamentals are universal; otherwise they shouldn't qualify to be regarded as fundamentals. Is plutonium fundamental to life? It is a primary element in the production of nuclear fuel, but is it fundamental to life? If it were, you will find plutonium in your blood.

Any time you hold the belief that your scripture prescribes the only way of salvation for all humanity, or the final way, and it's a way that can't be found in any other scripture, you are already admitting that your belief isn't fundamental to salvation. It may be a primary belief of your crowd, but it is not a fundamental truth since it isn't universally found.

Renowned 20th century interfaith mystic Frithjof Schuon aptly put it that 'a universal Reality cannot have only one manifestation to the exclusion of any others, for in that case it would not be universal.'

Is there a way of illustrating the relationship between religion and spirituality, a way of understanding the deeper meaning embedded in the seemingly exclusivist pronouncements of diverse scriptures — pronouncements that have led believers in rival camps to persist in thinking that they have the greatest truth? Yes, if we think

out of the box and abandon it. The box of conventional religion shapes our paradigms and our beliefs.

You may have encountered this logic puzzle: Is the letter four contained within 5? Logically no. But that's because you are being led to think of 5 as a numeral. If you keep looking at the numeral 5, you can't see the letter four. Abandon the box and this is what you see: F (IV) E. Abandon conventional religious thinking, as it blinds you to the spirituality within.

If you have just gotten engaged and are now wearing a diamond ring, borrow a pencil and hold it. Which item has real value and which has false value? The diamond, of course — but what about the pencil? You may be confused by appearances and visible differences — in reality you've got carbon in both items, 100% carbon in the diamond as well as in the pencil. That is all they are. Fundamentally they are the same. The expensive diamond and the cheap pencil are only superficially different.

None of us has done enough chemistry in school; otherwise we would have

realised the implications for religion. Understanding chemistry helps us to unravel mystery, granting insight into hidden reality. No matter how glitteringly truthful is our own religion and how cheapfully fake the other religions appear to be, don't

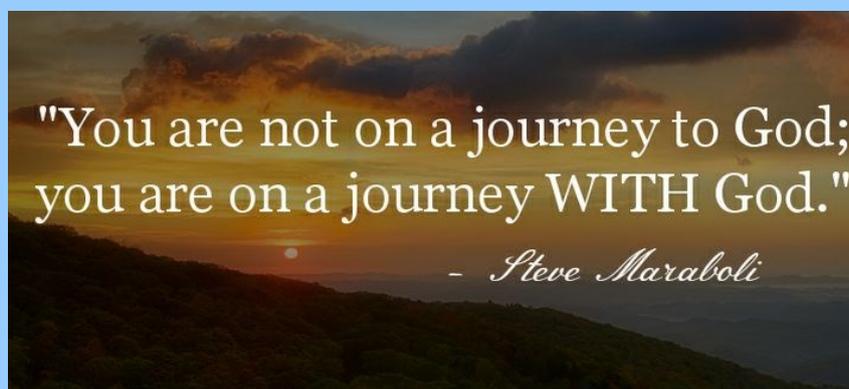
No matter how glitteringly truthful is our own religion and how cheapfully fake the other religions appear to be, don't scorn the humble graphite (the black soft lead at the tip of the pencil that you write or draw with).

scorn the humble graphite (the black soft lead at the tip of the pencil that you write or draw with).

With smugness, and of course without meaning to be offensive, we deprecate other religions as mere human creations; at best they are 'has been' paths of salvation long superseded by the magnificence of your religion with its final God-bestowed truth.

Frozen in this combative mindset, the armies of God remain in battle formations to this day squaring off against each other, operating with deep rivalry and occasional bloodshed as global extremism traps believers in a deceitful struggle for truth against the alleged falsehood of other religions. □

- *Joachim Ng*



12th Swami Satyananda Memorial Lecture 2019

Theme : “Is Multi Culturalism A Challenge to Religion, Faith and Unity”?

Two hundred guests attended the 12th Swami Satyananda Memorial Lecture. Special guests included Professor Dr. Mohd. Tajuddin Bin Mohd. Rasdi, The Most Ven Datuk K Sri Dhammaratana, HH Maha Saraswathi SwamiGuru Sri Dr. Kriyathasa Sekar, Rev. Fr. George Harrison Anthony Samuel, Dr. Amir Farid Isahak, Datin Poonam Kukreja, Dato Vaithilingam, Professor G. Suresh Kumar Govind, Mr. Tan Siang Chye, Ms Shanthini Venugopal, Mr. Richard Ho Kok Leong, Prof Dr Ong Puay Liu, Tuan Hj. Anver Hussain, and Mr Nithi Nesadurai.



The event started with the national anthem. Mr P.K.Moorthy led the audience with a universal prayer, followed by a live video message from Datin Paduka (Dr) Mother A Mangalam.

Dr Amir Farid Isahak in his welcome address touched upon the great legacy of our revered Founder-President, Dr. Swami Satyananda. Multiculturalism is a constant theme in his lifelong socio-religious works. We must acknowledge that as the world societies become increasingly globalised and heterogeneous, peace-keeping discourses become ever-more relevant; thus giving birth to our theme, “Is Multiculturalism a Hindrance to Peace, Harmony and Unity?”



Mr. Tan Siang Chye has observed that we have different ways of viewing multiculturalism. It conveys a different meaning under a different context. Often it occurs as a result of migration, talent flow and globalisation in general. Some people, (especially in the West), have viewed this as a threat to society, in terms of inequality as nurturing a diverse nation may cause separation and power struggle among classes, victimising either the majority or the minority of the community at large. However, it is also a strength to countries like Canada and Malaysia which sees multiculturalism as a source of national identity.

Mr. Tan continued that although Buddhism recognises diversity, it values inclusiveness. It has embraced the many cultures it comes into contact with. The two core values in Buddhism are compassion and wisdom. He emphasised the importance of dialogue to foster better understanding.



Father George Harrison highlighted how learning different languages namely English, Malay, Tamil, Mandarin has helped him improve interpersonal communication and



relationship between the different races. This has also aided him to serve and connect better with those in need, further promoting harmony and peace. He expressed that a true Christian would have no qualms serving in a multicultural society, for all are created in the image of God, regardless of culture, religion, borders, and politics. Adhering to the Golden Rule (“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” - Matthew 7:12) this pursuit of selfless service makes all Christians “bridge builders” for peace, unity, and goodness.

Ms. Shantini Venugopal believes that within a multicultural society, one can teach and learn from each other through our various cultural narratives. Through storytelling, she demonstrated the practical approaches of utilising perspective to deal with our daily life, as she led all attendees on an entertaining, theatrical journey of the mind. For her, meditation and prayer are important. With well-told stories of relatable anecdotes and applicable life lessons, one can find catharsis and uplift the soul, based on one’s personal experiences.

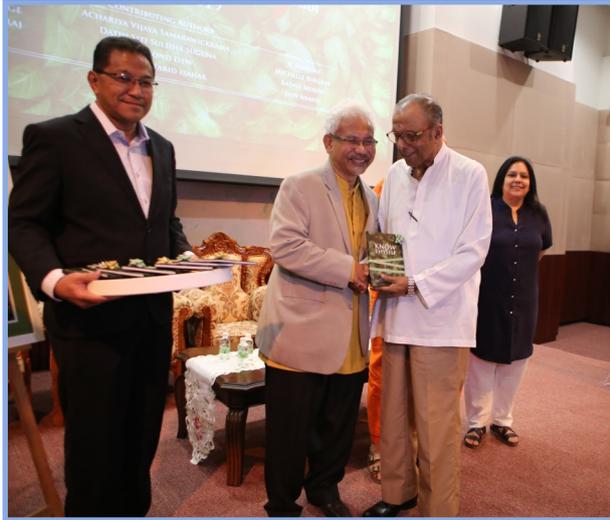


HH Maha Saraswathi Guru Sri Dr Kriyathasa Sekar described top companies and new technology companies as "multi-cross industry providers" and "multi-industry ecosystem players" in what he called an "orchestrated ecosystem" that is human society. According to him, if computers are like people, and religion, a programming language, then *love* is the power that connects and energises the entire circuit to keep things running well. So life's winning formula is as simple as how we stay within our principle of living, while we bring value to society and humanity. As intermediaries, we need to play a supportive role in engaging the community, to see and reap the symbiotic benefit of this ecosystem.

Prof. G Suresh Kumar Govind concurred, expressing that every race has the capacity to give different strengths based on their cultural identities. Living in a multicultural society would also push us to think beyond our usual capacity. Furthermore, as we seek to live authentically for our own happiness, we will look towards a higher purpose for living, moving away from self-absorption, and finding unity in the diversity of our social environment.

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Reflecting the genuine selflessness of Dr. Swami Satyananda who had thrived in serving a multicultural society, living an authentic life is akin to living a spiritual life, for "love and authenticity is timeless and spaceless, and they're what will keep you connected, [pushing] society forward in life."

Therefore, the moment we are authentic, we would also not be bothered by diverse cultures because it's all about the spiritual service in the bigger picture. In a plural society, the ways to achieve and maintain harmony, unity and peace may differ, but the intentions for the outcome are the same.

As keynote speaker Professor Dr. Mohd. Tajuddin Bin Mohd. Rasdi summarised, conflict arises naturally due to the differences which make up life. To resolve conflicts of faith between races, we need to rethink our objectives in education, both formal and informal. Its sole purpose currently concentrates on worldly gains and vested interests, with religious rituals, rejecting the diversity which comes with multiculturalism, thus overriding the importance of the spiritual essence of faith.



To counter that, education worldwide ought to



move past its materialistic concerns, and concentrate on our common goal to uplift society with humanitarian and spiritual values. The concept of 'differences complementing a meaningful existence' is the key to harmonising people and economies amid life's challenges. Should we be able to live with "willful ignorance" (self-acknowledgement that we know only a fraction, based on our limited understanding of the other culture), looking beyond our socially-constructed self-identity to acknowledge the dignity of the other, we can easily rebuild loving, empathetic relationships with all around us, and confi-

dently engage in mutual cooperation for nation-building. Thus, we can appreciate multiculturalism to be a positive force of development as it reflects nature's way of growth.

A Q&A session ensued, before the event concluded at 1pm with a commemoration of these wonderful, inspired speakers, as well as the creative winners of the event caption contest. The organising chairman, Dr. C.D. Siby, expressed his heartfelt gratitude towards all contributors and participants before inviting all guests to enjoy a sumptuous vegetarian buffet. ■

- Dr C D Siby, Chairperson, Organising Committee, SSML 2019

Children's Corner

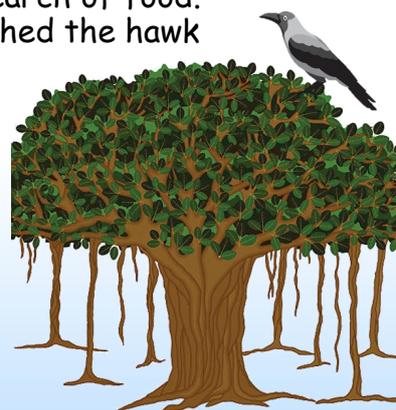
Foolish Imitation



Long ago, a hawk lived on the top of a hill. At the foot of the hill there was a banyan tree on which a crow used to perch every-day. The crow was very foolish. He would imitate everyone.

The hawk atop the hill would fly down every day in search of food. The crow watched the hawk circling in the

air for long hours and swooping down when he saw his prey. The hawk gifted with eyes that could see long distances would spot his prey from the hill top and then fly down to pounce upon the prey.



The crow watched the hawk thinking, "Huh! If the hawk can do that, I too can. What does he think? One day, I will show the hawk that I can do the same thing."



A few days later, as the hawk was circling in the air, the crow decided to do the same. Suddenly a baby rabbit came out of the bushes. The hawk saw it and the crow too saw the rabbit.

Before the crow could move, the hawk swooped down, caught hold of the rabbit in his strong sharp talons and flew away. "Swoosh!" was all the crow heard as the hawk disappeared in the sky with his prey. "Hmhmh! That is no great skill," thought the crow, angrily.

Next moment he spotted a big fat mouse coming out of a hole. Without wasting time, the crow swooped down. Like the hawk he tried to catch the mouse in his claws. But the mouse saw the crow and moved away, the crow crashed against a wall. "Eeeaaa!" cried the crow in pain.



Just then the hawk came flying down. "I hope, now you know it is not easy to hunt and it is not easy to imitate, either," said the hawk and flew away.

Thereafter, the crow never imitated any one in its life. It lived happily with the god-given abilities.

Moral: Better to be yourself than to mimic others.

- Web Source

KARMA!

Energy manifested as actions

Karma in simple terms means action. In the spiritual sense, karma is the outcomes of actions and how we are affected by those actions. In modern understanding of physics, we know that for every action there must be an equal and opposite reaction. And while the action and reaction cycle continues, there are also impressions created, however subtle they may be.

It is like how if a car applies brakes on a surface, it will inevitably leave a mark on the surface whether the car stops or not. To act, energy is required. Hence, every act or Karma and the resulting outcome is a manifestation of energy.

Energy (or action) by itself is neither good nor bad - it is the impact of the energy that leaves a mark or an impression which is labelled as good or bad. Heat as an energy source can help to keep someone warm in a cold environment, but also can burn and destroy if used differently. The energy emitted during an action has to be returned (or transformed). It cannot be avoided.

Impressions and desires

As actions return as reactions, the cycle continues with actions leaving behind a memory or an impression. This impression through repeated actions gets embedded in our system or being and tends to create a behavioral pattern (or a desire).

For example, let's say we learn to play soccer, which depending on our level of involvement will draw the attention of the public and also give us an adrenalin rush to excel in the game. Playing the game itself is simply an action. In effect, winning or losing the game is also merely a result if viewed as an outcome without emotions.

But, if we are driven by the emotions of

victory, loss, recognition, awards, camaraderie, trust, strategizing to win, gloating in the loss of the other, etc, then they all drive us to get more and more involved in the game, leaving impressions that develop into a desire to become soccer crazy.

Whether it is sportsmanship, leadership, a persevering nature, a 'win at all cost' or an obsessive attachment to a club, these are all behavioral patterns that develop and begin to mold our personality. This invariably creates the desire to the level of obsession in soccer causing a pattern of behavior to set in place.

Whether it is an excessive desire to play soccer or a change in personality because of the competitive training you get, they leave an indelible mark in your character or your being. This happens very subtly, due to conscious or subconscious messages taken from the games. Once driven by the emotions of the games you are intrinsically caught up in the karmic cycle.

Similarly, karma in every aspect of life creates memories and desires, which then determine how you live. Actions, memories, and desires are the Karmic "software" or "blue print" that then determine how you run your life, or how life impacts your day-to-day existence.

Karma repeats

The subtle energy created by your actions is stored within your memories and desires and is activated - sometimes immediately, but more often at some future time. To use the earlier example, your addiction to soccer may become latent while you perform other duties during the day or when you go on a trip to an area where they don't play soccer.

The moment, you return to your familiar environment, the impressions of the past trigger the compelling desire again to get hooked on to soccer again. You remember your past experience stored in your subconscious, which

Actions, memories, and desires are the Karmic "software" or "blue print" that then determine how you run your life, or how life impacts your day-to-day existence.

triggers the desire to repeat your indulgence.

Karma transcends a life time

Believing in Karma and reincarnation, based on scriptures of the East, makes it easier to understand why seemingly "good" people are affected by bad tidings or those who appear to be "bad" enjoy all the privileges in a society. Good and bad are emotional experiences based on the circumstances at the time. What may be seen as bad at present may be interpreted as good at another time, or vice versa.

What is good for one society may be evil for another. It is the cultural and surrounding traditional values that define good and bad. In each of these circumstances, it is the prevailing positive or negative energy that determines your emotional wellbeing. Since, our scriptures teach us that impressions or vasanas transcend the experiences of one lifetime.

Everything in your life is the result of the transcended energy created by actions from multiple reincarnations. Remember, energy is never destroyed but is only transformed. Every situation that happens to you and to everyone you come in contact with has a Karmic significance. Everything happens for a reason and is pre-destined.

Karma and free will

If living out the effects of karma that transcends a life time is inevitable, the question arises as to whether we have any chance at all to break out of this karmic cycle. While we don't have an option to step out of the path of the impact of the energy we triggered from our action, we do however have the option to use our intellect to either remain emotionally attached or be detached from the impacts of the actions.

We have very little control of how external and internal factors impact on us daily. However, we do have the "choice" to react positively, negatively or neutrally to those factors and how they impact on us. Our ability to discern is a predisposition we have as a higher being with six senses. The ability to discern is unique to humans.

Karma is action, not fate. Karma is an energy created by willful action, through thoughts, words and deeds. As we create and are impacted by karma every minute, we do have the ability to use our discerning capacity to engage in acts and be emotionally detached from the "fruits" of our labour.

We can change the course of our life now by changing our deliberate and intentional acts and self-destructive patterns. Through supplication and by surrendering the outcomes of our actions to the Supreme we have the option to not "own" the outcomes. This act of offering prevents attribution of good or bad tidings to ourselves and negates the accumulation of impressions and vasanas in life.

Although we do have the ability to discern and choose, unfortunately, many of us allow ourselves to remain imprisoned in the Karmic impressions, conditioned by our memories and desires, performing the same habits over and over and wondering why our lives are miserable.

Through spiritual maturity, we have the option to break out of these cycles and consciously choose the life we want to lead. Being free of the impact from Karmic acts does not mean we lose our memories, impressions and desires. It simply means we lose our attachment to them and are no longer held under their influence. □

- Sadhu Kailayar



Remedies for Common Maladies-My Experience

By Mother A Mangalam

On vegetarianism, there are many who have converted into vegans, but I observe that those who convert, often get 'glued' to tofu products (soya bean) and mock meat, which more than often, robs the body of its balanced nutrition.

Being a vegetarian, one must know the quality of the vegetables that they consume and adopt the 'hot' and 'cold' theory which plays an important part in preserving one's health, because the body gets affected by the temperature in the environment.

Vegetarian diets are said to produce more 'gas' in the system and the use of a liberal amount of ginger in our recipes should be encouraged. In Indian recipes, asafoetida, fennel seeds and fenugreek are used in addition to ginger. The recipes which have been traditionally used in an Indian menu had been passed on from generation to generation, and specific names like kootu, avial, pittalai, rasavaangi, sambar, kuzhambu, are amongst Brahmins, who are vegetarians by heritage.

While on the subject of menus, we have to be aware of the toxins that gets accumulated through improper mixture of the ingredients and clearance of toxins through effective elimination and urination (internal drainage) is important. Below are some recipes that would help maintain good health.

Raw Papaya Avial

Ingredients:

Raw papaya	-	1 (medium-sized)
Potatoes	-	2
Green Chilly	-	1
Grated Coconut	-	2 cups
Cumin seeds	-	2 tsp
Mustard seeds	-	1 tsp
Yoghurt		
Curry Leaves	-	3 sprigs
Coconut Oil	-	2 tbsp
Salt	-	To taste



Preparation:

- Skin papaya and potatoes and cut into small cubes.

Method:

- Cook papaya with salt in pressure cooker for 5 whistles. Off the fire.
- Grind coconut, green chilly and cumin seeds into a fine paste. Add suitable amount of yoghurt.
- Add it to the cooked papaya and allow to simmer for 3 minutes. Put off the stove and keep contents aside.
- In a wok, pour coconut oil. Once the oil is hot, add mustard seeds and curry leaves.
- Once it sputters, pour the whole thing into the cooked papaya. Serve hot.

Note: This will help in bowel movement.

Remedies for Common Maladies-My Experience

By Mother A Mangalam

Celery Pachidi

Ingredients:

Celery	-	2 stalks
Ginger	-	3 thumb-size
Almonds/walnuts/ cashewnuts	-	5
Skin of limau kasturi	-	½ (ripe)
Salt	-	to taste
Yoghurt		



Preparation:

- Wash and remove the fibre that runs through the celery stalk. Chop fine.
- Wash the limau kasturi, cut into half, de-seed it, remove juice and cut the skin into slices. Use half the skin.

Method:

Blend all the ingredients. Mix yoghurt into it. Add salt to taste. Serve.

Mint Leaves Chutney (Pudina Thuvaiyal)

Ingredients:

Mint leaves and stalks	-	2 handfuls (tender)
Tomato	-	2
Grated coconut	-	1 cup
Shallots (small onions)	-	4
Ginger	-	2 thumb-size
Green Chili	-	according to taste
Split Bengal gram (kadalai paruppu)	-	2 tsp
Black Gram sabut (ulutham paruppu)	-	1 tbsp
Cashewnuts/walnuts	-	5



Method:

- Roast the split Bengal gram, black gram sabut and cashewnuts.
- Heat up the grated coconut.
- Stir lightly shallots, green chilly, tomatoes and ginger in a little oil, add the coconut. Stir for a while.
- Put in the mint leaves. Close pan for 2 minutes. Off the stove.
- Blend all. Add salt to taste. Serve.

Feed your body with what it needs. Don't feed the body with that you desire.

TOWARDS A HARMONIOUS, LOVING & MERCIFUL SOCIETY

The Malaysian government has announced that it will adopt a policy of being a merciful government, and is committed to building a merciful society.

The concept is based on the Islamic teaching that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH, peace be upon him) was sent as “A mercy to all the worlds” (Qur’an 21:107). This means that all his true followers must also be merciful. However, having a good character is applicable to all good people, not just Muslims. So, all of us should be merciful.

In fact all the great religions teach their followers to be merciful, compassionate, kind, loving, just, forgiving and peaceful. So the concept should be easily embraced by people of all religions and even atheists.

In this article, I will explain the concept from an Islamic perspective.

We must appreciate and understand one another

The Qur’an says that we were created in diversity so that we can appreciate and understand, and not despise one another:

"O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know (understand, appreciate) one another (and not hate one another). Surely, the most honored of you in the sight of God is the most righteous amongst you. And God has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things)." (Qur’an 49:13)

An important reminder in this verse is that the best among us is not determined by our race or nationality, but by our righteousness in the sight of God.

We must love all of all humanity, and all of creation

The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) elaborated further that we must love everyone, and everything, including animals, plants and

nature:

Abi Musa al-Asyari said "I heard the Prophet PBUH said 'No one of you is a Believer until you love one another'. The companions said 'O Messenger of God, indeed we do love one another'. The Prophet PBUH said 'Not just loving your friends, but loving all of humanity and all of creation'".

(Hadith as reported in Tobrani/13671; al-Haythami in Majma' al-Zawaid 8/189; al-Hakim in al-Mustadrak/7418 and al-Albaniy in Sahih al-Targhib wa al-Tarhib/2253)

We must uphold justice for all

There can be no peace, harmony and order in any society or nation if there is no justice. Justice means respecting the rights of everyone, in every aspect, including the freedom of conscience.

We must uphold justice in our daily affairs and also uphold justice in the society at large.

In any country, there are the majority and minority races and religions. Usually the majority holds political power and the government. The majority often scream about establishing their rights, often at the expense of the minority. Islam teaches that we must ensure our obligations to others first, before we claim our rights.

Whoever is in the majority and holding power is more likely to cause unfairness to the minority than the reverse. Therefore the one in power should take special care not to deprive the minorities of their rights. That is just and merciful governance.

"O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to God, even against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be (against) rich or poor: for God can best protect both. Follow not the lusts (of your hearts), lest you swerve, and if you dis-

tort (justice) or decline to do justice, verily God is well-acquainted with all that you do.” (Qur’an 4:135)

“... Indeed, God loves those who act justly.” (Quran 60:8).

Muslims should not be unjust to non-Muslims

This injunction is clear in Islam. Many Quranic verses speak about justice, and justice in Islam is justice for all, not just for Muslims, as exemplified in this warning from the Prophet PBUH to the Muslims:

"Beware! Whoever is cruel and hard on a non-Muslim minority, curtails their rights, burdens them with more than they can bear, or takes anything from them against their free will; I (Prophet Muhammad) will complain against the person on the Day of Judgment." (Hadith reported by Abu Dawud)

Other versions of this Hadith say that the Prophet PBUH will be the advocate, or the witness, for the non-Muslim.

We must be kind and helpful to all

One of the teachings that is common to all religions is The Golden Rule, which in the positive version says “Do unto others what you wish upon yourself”.

Islam embraces this teaching. The Prophet PBUH confirmed this is his saying:

“No one is a Believer until he wishes for people what he wishes for himself”

(Hadith reported, with minor variations, in Sunan al-Nasā’ī 5017; Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān 238; Musnad Aḥmad 13463, also in Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim)

Certainly all of us wish to be treated with kindness, respect and fairness. When we are down or in need, we would wish some kind soul come to our assistance with compassion and mercy.

And if we have done wrong, we certainly would seek forgiveness and hope that whoever is wronged is compassionate, merciful and forgiving enough to pardon us.

Therefore, we should always treat others fairly and nicely, be compassionate, loving and merciful, and be ever willing to assist others in whatever way within our means. And we should also be ready to forgive others for their mistakes towards us.

Towards a harmonious, loving and merciful society

The principles and guidelines shared above are universal and can be adopted by all. If we can try to live by these guidelines, I believe there will be less tension and disharmony in our society.

Right now, there is so much disharmony (although mostly vocal and in the social media, and not yet exploded into physical fights) because of the discordant views between the Muslims and non-Muslims over so many things that affect us as a nation. If not contained, it may snowball into chaos and physical conflicts that will break our once-harmonious nation.

Even if we have disagreements, we can discuss, negotiate and compromise for the sake of mutual benefit. But we must first learn to understand, respect, honour and empathize with the others (who disagree with us). The best is if we can first love and be compassionate and merciful to them, and then we take it from there! □

- Dr Amir Farid Isahak, Chairperson, INSaF

Weak people revenge
Strong people forgive
Intelligent people ignore

- Albert Einstein

RELIGION IS A TWO-WAY EXPERIENCE

The steps by which a Hindu generally prays is known as *Praarthana Kramam*. Correctly speaking, he does not pray but sings praises. These steps were initiated by the rishis and seers of old. They were great psychologists who had studied the mind of man through introspection and intuition. The praises are arranged in an order that guides the individual in his destiny, will, intellect and action.

Every man wants happiness but he encounters obstacles while he works towards achieving the object of his happiness. So, the starting prayer is in praise of the spirit of God in the form and name of Ganapathy, which very name, means the Lord of all the Astral Forces that govern our life known also as Vigneswaran, remover of obstacles.

The spirit of God in the name of Ganapathy, also suggests to the mind that God is capable of removing the obstacles in our way of progress, if we can only surrender wholeheartedly to Him. This is a fact. God also has the power of giving us the Spiritual strength necessary to overcome any obstacles. No planets can influence us if we hold on to His Holy feet. We need not succumb to astrology. In other words, anything is possible with God.

The next is in praise of the spirit of God in the name and form of Lord Muruga or Lord Subrahmanya. When God, the One Holy Spirit, becomes the many in the course of its multiple creations, He is known as Muruga which name means the most beautiful. What else can there be more beautiful than the beautiful colours, shapes and the variegated beings in creation?

What else can be more magnificent than the Intelligence that has brought forth this creation? What wondrous beauty! At this stage He is also known as Subrahmanya:

Su – Pristine purity
Brahma – All pervading self
Mani – Gem

The Gem that resides in the cave of

one's heart as Guha Ananda waiting to be discovered and felt. The Lord Subrahmanya is pictured with a trident. The trident is a symbol of will, wisdom and action known as Ichcha Sakti, Jnana Sakti and Kriya Sakti. All these three put together are qualities of the Cosmic mind which are also present in the individual mind which urge creation.

Recitals in praise of Subrahmanya are said to act as a psychological aid to the devotee to merge his will (desire), wisdom and action with God's will; wisdom and action which in simpler words mean "Thy will be done".

Here a continuous struggle between the self and the Overself, the mind and the Cosmic Mind, goes on until the individual is spiritually mature enough to realise that it is God's will that matters and thus begins to have 100% trust and faith in God's will.

Now, within this field of creation emerge the great saints, saviours, sages, prophets and seers who represent God the Guru, the Teacher of all teachers. They are beings in their perfected state who are spiritual magnets in human form.

Therefore, the prayer that ranges next, are in praise of all the perfected Gurus of the world invoking their blessings. Here, if the devotee wishes to say prayers in praise of his own Guru, he is at liberty to do so. However, the time will come when he realizes that Jesus is not different from Buddha and Buddha is not different from other prophets.

The conclusion in this series is invoking the spirit of God in the form of a Divine Mother, praising her as a personification of vitality, prowess, energy, beauty and profundity, knowledge and wisdom which man is also seeking. She is hailed by suitable names such as Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswathy.

Life in its variegated forms pregnant with vitality, beauty, profundity and wisdom are the many aspects of the one powerful, energy personified as the Divine Mother or

Parasakti. As the tendency of a mother is to give whatever a child asks, therefore these much needed gifts that man thirsts for are put forward to the Spirit of God in the form of the Mother.

Here the mind of man confidently approaches the Mother, positively feeling She will grant his requests. This is another psychological aid which helps positive thinking, the confident approach to the Mother.

Following this, the Spirit of God is invoked in the form of Mother and Father as Shiva Sakti. The Shiva and Sakti in us represent reason and feeling, the head and the heart, which must develop in balance for peace and progress. Certain selected verses in salutation of God is repeated with the aid of a rosary. This is known as Mantra repetition done to 108 or 1,008 counts.

At the end of all these praises in the form of mantras and hymns, the mind of the devotee becomes impregnated with holy vibrations; and having been infused by the beautiful vibrations of the mantras and hymns, the mind gets elevated to a high level of mind is then in the mood for concentration and deep meditation.

As a grand finale, the camphor lights are lit, to symbolise that the hearts of the devotees are lit. The fire that is emitted by the camphor is to symbolise the burning of our past karmas to nothingness by the efficacy of prayer. Having gone through this *sadhana*, (spiritual exercise) of prayer, our spiritual batteries get charged.

Now it is necessary that we translate the spiritual strength that we have derived from prayer into positive actions (useful to others). And that is Karma Yoga, that has been stressed in the Bhagavad Gita.

Karma Yoga or unselfish service that we are involved in becomes reinforced with **Bhakti** or devotion derived from prayer. This combination becomes Dharma. As we repeat this cycle of Sadhana daily there will come a time when **Jnana** i.e. right knowledge

or wisdom or Truth (Satya), will dawn on us by the Grace of God. Our understanding would become clearer and we will be in a position to KNOW ourselves and our neighbours.

Love (Prema) which is a heartfelt, expressing itself as loving-kindness, becomes a natural pattern of behaviour. A state of desirelessness is born and this is true *Sanyasam* which means the renunciation of the fruit of action and not the renunciation of action. At this stage the devotee will not be affected by gain or loss, beauty or ugliness, wealth or poverty. Feelings such as jealousy, anger, vengeance, despair, all disappear and we feel the peace ('*Shanti*') within us.

Therefore, a follower of any religion should not follow the religion with the intention of receiving graces only but be prepared to give.

The spiritual exercise described earlier is not to be aimed at with selfish cravings. It is a process by which man cleans himself of all mental pollution and becomes a pure receptacle to receive God's grace, which in turn, the devotee has to distribute freely in the way of service towards humanity. In this way, Man becomes a channel of God's grace. Manimekalai, a woman-saint of India, is said to have received the *Achchayya Paathira*, i.e. the vessel out of which one could dish out perennially to those who hunger and thirst. Jesus of Nazareth had multiplied the fishes and the bread for the multitudes.

Such instances in religious history cannot be taken literally. Though these miracles are possible yet this phenomena is a revelation of a higher truth which confirms that Grace received from God is meant to be shared. The more we give, the more we receive.

Therefore, a follower of any religion should not follow the religion with the intention of receiving graces only but be prepared to give. "Blessed are those who give" is what the prophets and saviours have said. This makes religion, a two-way experience. □

- Mother A Mangalam

VANQUISH YOUR WEAKNESSES

As a human being you have within yourself a fount of inexhaustible strength and joy, because you are essentially the supreme Self. But due to wrong ways of thinking and seeing, you acquire various weaknesses that do not allow you to develop your own inner potentiality.

An iceberg has a greater part beneath the water and a very small part above the water. Similarly, the greater part of human strengths and capacities is hidden in the unconscious in a latent state. Only a small portion is revealed in day-to-day life. This is the cause of all one's weaknesses and miseries.

Therefore, it is important to remember always that you are the architect of your destiny. As you think, so you become.

Find your weaknesses. Egoism, hypocrisy, jealousy, greed, lack of mental concentration, lack of inner strength to overcome the temptations of the senses, bad associations and evil habits - these are the general weaknesses that you must endeavor to remove in order to awaken within yourself the glorious vistas of spiritual unfoldment.

Remember this saying: "You sow a thought and reap an action. You sow an action and reap a habit. You sow a habit and reap a trait. You sow a trait and reap a character. And you sow a character and reap a destiny." Change your way of thinking, and you will change your destiny.

Swami Sivananda once told an interesting parable. A saint asked a woodcutter, "Why do you cut wood?" The woodcutter replied, "I cut wood to maintain myself and to obtain food." "And why do you eat food?" "Well, if I do not eat food, how can I cut wood?"

Similarly, the lives of the majority of people are bound up in a vicious circle. One eats to live, and lives to eat. One lives to enjoy the pleasures of the senses, and allows one's life itself to be wasted over trifles.

You are born to break this vicious circle. Do not think, "I have so much impurity in me that it would take many, many years and births to attain God-realization and perfection." Resolve to attain perfection even in this birth. You will be able to do it.

A person with a small flashlight in his hand thinks, "This flashlight illumines only four yards of the road. How am I to go four miles with the help of this lamp? That is foolish. If he continues his march, the flashlight will illumine the path ahead as he goes along.

Even so, however feeble your will may be, if you take recourse to good association, study elevating scriptures, practice selfless service of humanity, and enquire, "Who am I?" you will be able to remove the weaknesses of your heart.

You are a fountain of strength. Be positive. Vibrate with power and confidence. You have within you the cosmic fount of truth, beauty and auspiciousness.

You are not this mortal personality. You are the immortal Soul.

Even while the waves surge in the ocean, you must plunge in it to refresh yourself.

You need not wait for all the waves to subside. In the same way, even while pleasure and pain surge in day-to-day life through the various ripples of worldly conditions, you must turn your vision to the Self to enjoy endless bliss. □

- *Swami Jyotirmayananda, International Yoga Guide, July 2019*

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

Visit by members of The National
Volunteers Association of South Korea



Visit by the Girl Guides of
R.E.A.L International
School at the Peace Pole
behind the Temple of the
Universal Spirit of the PLS

Sports Carnival
at the PLS



SPREADING SUNSHINE

One of the most important qualities to be cultivated in domestic life is cheerfulness. As sunshine brings out the flowers and ripens the fruit, so does cheerfulness develop in us all the seeds of good—all that is best in us.

Cheerfulness is a duty we owe to others. There are some people whose heart-warming smile, the sound of whose cheerful voice, whose very presence, seems like a ray of sunshine bringing happiness to others.

We must all have our trials, and times will come when we feel clouded out of life but others likewise must endure some clouds. "Why should I help to cloud out their sunshine?"

Constant cheerfulness can only be acquired by constant unselfishness, and arises from the determination to make ourselves "all things to all men".

Just as a flower opens its petals to the rising sun, so does the human heart expand and respond to kindness. If you wish to find your neighbour at his best, be kind to him. Even alarming people turn out to be nice if they are approached in a friendly manner.

A kind, smiling face and a sunny temper scare away sadness and disarm criticism. They radiate happiness and win friendship wherever they go.

A selfish person is always a lonely person.

- J Maurus, from 'Just a moment please!'



Reflections

Salient Thought for the Day

We are never safe until we have found our foundation in Truth.

Lines to Memorize

The shower of Thy blessing
Fell on this parched ground,
Which was barren as a desert.
At first I did not believe
That aught could soften it;
But Thy miracle hath changed
This waste to a flower land.

Lesson

If we only learn to have a steadfast hold on the Supreme, all our outer actions can be easily regulated and sanctified and be made a part of the inner consciousness. True devotees hold fast to Divinity and because of that they are always able to maintain their balance. They feel secure, no matter how many times they are whirled round and round by the outer circumstances of life. This is a secret we learn through the practice of holiness.

Prayer

May the infinite all-abiding Spirit give me inspiration, strength and courage that will sustain me in all my thoughts, words and actions.

May I lean on Him and depend on Him alone.

May I look up to Him alone for protection and safety.

May I find all my peace in Him.

- Swami Paramananda

I have been a seeker and I still am, but I stopped asking the books and the stars. I started listening to the teaching of my Soul.

- Rumi

The Malaysian Speaks

History has proven that Malaysia is able to overcome any challenge if its people are united. Our diversity is our strength and it is the recipe of success in achieving development and socio-economic progress, as is our ability to conquer all sorts of adversities.

- Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye, Views, The Star, 20th August 2019

The future of Malaysia should not be taken for granted by politicians initiating short-term, ill-conceived policies just to pander to select pressure groups. It does not bode well for the long term.

- Walter Sandosam, Views, The Star, 26th August 2019

But even as there are voices that seek to amplify our differences, even if the race card is continuously played, and even as the rhetoric reaches incendiary levels, more often than not, it is the ordinary Malaysians who bring us back from the edge.

- Brian Martin, Proud to be Anak Malaysia, On Your Side, The Star, 23rd August 2019

Starting from today, I promise to respect the freedom of each and every person to practise his or her own religion according to the teaching of that religion. I will respect everyone's right to do this.

- Anak Malaysia, Views, The Star, 3rd September 2019

Great minds of Yesteryears

Knowing that I am different from the body, I need not neglect the body. It is a vehicle that I use to transact with the world. It is the temple which houses the Pure Self within.

- *Adi Shankara*

What's Life

Life is not a plaything
To be abused or cajoled with
It is precious and has
To be guarded well.

Life is a sacred journey on earth
To be nurtured
So that it's useful to us and to our
fellowmen.

Life is couched in a body
With Mind and Spirit as a guide
Full of vital forces and emotions
To be controlled and well directed
By the power of our Will
Towards constructive uses
In a Spirit of total surrender
Guided by Divine Will.

O' Lord!
We seek thy blessings
To realise
That life is worth living
To realise
That life is beset with sacrifices
Just to give us moments of joy

To realise
That life is full of struggles
To realise
That life is full of challenges
To keep our brain ticking
To realise
That we have to use our
will-power to overcome

To realise
That it is in overcoming
That we gain strength, satisfaction
And joy everlasting.

Thy Will be done, O' Lord
Thy Will is ever gracious.

- *Mother A Mangalam, 2013*

ஒழுக்கம் விழுப்பந் தரலான் ஒழுக்கம்
உயிரினும் ஒம்பப் படும் - குறள் 131

Propriety of conduct leads to eminence, it should
therefore be preserved more carefully than life.

- Thirukkural

Our own self-realisation is the greatest
service we can render the world.

- Ramana Maharishi

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