

A CHANGE WITHIN WILL CHANNEL A CHANGE IN SOCIETY

ਮਨ ਸਿਉ ਮਨੁ ਮਿਲਾਇ ਸਭੁ ਜਗੁ ਜੀਤਾ ॥
ਇਨ ਬਿਧਿ ਕੁਸਲੁ ਤੇਰੈ ਮੇਰੇ ਮੀਤਾ ॥

(ਅੰਗ ੨੩੧)

Merging their minds into the mind, they conquer the entire world. In this way, you too shall find happiness, O my friend.

In today's day and age, people are surrounded with issues affecting the world and not individual alone. To solve the crisis, people should change themselves to make a difference in the world. This can only happen when individuals think for the betterment of society at large.

Today, the need of the hour is to integrate value education at all levels that will equip people to live a positive social life.

People with greater awareness can then contribute to destroying social negative traits including corruption, bribery and nepotism as part of life. Such enlightened attitudes can also boost the confidence of socially underprivileged individuals

and encourage them towards a respectful life. This form of embedded knowledge empowers people to resist greed, selfishness and violence in thought, word and action.

Simple living and high thinking:

ਮਤਿ ਹੋਦੀ ਹੋਇ ਇਆਣਾ ॥ ਤਾਣ ਹੋਦੇ ਹੋਇ ਨਿਤਾਣਾ ॥
ਅਣਹੋਦੇ ਆਪੁ ਵੰਡਾਏ ॥ ਕੋ ਐਸਾ ਭਗਤੁ ਸਦਾਏ ॥

(ਅੰਗ ੧੩੮੪)

If you are wise, be simple; if you are powerful, be weak; and when there is nothing to share, then share with others. How rare is one who is known as such a devotee.

The world we live in today has become so fashion conscious, that everyone, be it poor or rich is out there to make a signature statement. We were taught by our forefathers to live a simple life and allow others to live in simplicity. Simple way of living was the way for many cultures in the past, both in the east and west. People used to live in harmony with nature and its cycles and took from the earth only that which was absolutely necessary for sustenance. Before we delve into the wisdom of simple living, it is appropriate to first define an essential factor that

hinders our way to live a simple life. That factor is primarily “wasting”. Waste normally is defined as something that in excess. We tend to forget that a simple life is all about learning the true meaning of contentment, humility and self-confidence. Hence, one must realize whether surplus is really serving my actual need and adding to my peace and happiness or is it just greed. To have more than what we need is definitely not better for our life.

Be Honest to be With Your True Self:

ਬੰਦੇ ਖੋਜੁ ਦਿਲੁ ਹਰਿ ਰੋਜੁ ਨਾ ਫਿਰੁ ਪਰੇਸਾਨੀ ਮਾਹਿ ॥
(ਅੰਗ ੭੨੭)

O human being, search your own heart every day, and do not wander around in confusion.

Decades ago, a sign behind the cash counter of a traditional shop has drawn my attention. It read ‘Honesty Is the Best Policy’. Does that line really matter to people of this generation? Why is being honest difficult today? Is it greed, fear or ego or simply the desire for an easy life that prevents us from being honest?

Young children are never afraid to speak their mind. We get touched by their innocence because it

resonates with purity of the inner-self we all long for. In fact, honesty is one of our deepest qualities. Many of us have spent our lives searching for it, only to find that it resides within us. How did we lose this quality along our journey to maturity?

To maintain integrity while facing life’s challenges, we have to be honest with ourselves first. Honesty is primarily about acknowledging our strengths and weaknesses. We can then build trust and faith within ourselves and develop quality relationships. Honesty with others is a sign of respect towards them. It helps people trust us and that is the greatest reward in life.

Learn to be benevolent:

We have so many wishes for ourselves, but we don’t bother to harbor good wishes for others, as we do not think there is a need for it. One does not know that good wishes for others can work wonders for us as well. Good wishes are like vitamin injections that energize one almost instantly, generating vibrations of pure feelings into the atmosphere and creating instant happiness.

One must feel benevolent towards everyone.

Through the power of benevolent feelings, one can serve the whole world from anywhere. We must keep in mind that our feelings are created from thoughts and our thoughts determine our attitude. Hence when we extend pure love to everyone without any selfish motivation. It is considered an act of kindness. Similarly, to send good wishes and pure feelings to those who are in deep sorrow is an act of mercy and compassion, to bless and uplift someone even as they defame one, is an act of forgiveness, to remain tolerant under a stressful situation and to extend cooperation even when not appreciated is an attitude of humility.

Speak the language of love

ਜਿਤੁ ਬੋਲਿਐ ਪਤਿ ਪਾਈਐ ਸੋ ਬੋਲਿਆ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ ॥

ਫਿਕਾ ਬੋਲਿ ਵਿਗੁਚਣਾ ਸੁਣਿ ਮੁਰਖ ਮਨ ਅਜਾਣੁ ॥

(ਅੰਗ ੧੫)

Those words are acceptable, which, when spoken, bring honor. Harsh words bring only grief. Listen, O foolish and ignorant mind !

Science had added to our comforts in innumerable ways, but has also taken away some of the simple, yet fulfilling pleasures of our lives. One of them is the joy of face-to-face communication.

We have all gotten so addicted to communicating with the tools of modern technology that we have lost the art of connecting with each other from heart to heart, of conducting an exchange of feelings. The youngsters of today are wary of getting into any kind of direct communication. This is because they are scared of getting hurt or let down by the other person.

Real communication is not superficial; it can touch another person's soul and fill it with love and joy. Such communication is not possible if we keep shrinking away from interaction. In order to maintain healthy relationships, we need to be aware of how we conduct ourselves while communicating with someone. If we don't respect the person we are talking to, will unconsciously betray it through our body language, and the conversation won't be fruitful. To prevent that, we must challenge those of our beliefs and attitudes that create obstacles in our ability to create healthy relationships.

An enlightened soul communicates from the heart with love and speaks words that can uplift others. So, let us embark upon a new journey full of positivity and unconditional love.

Help, don't censure the weak:

Since our childhood, we are taught to be polite to others. If we want others to be nice to us, our behavior towards them should be similar. A well-mannered person always wins love and appreciation.

But if our nice behavior is a façade to mask our real feelings, the pretense will not win us any goodwill. Hence, it is very important to harbor genuinely good feelings towards others. When our feelings are pure, good nice behavior comes naturally. We don't have to force ourselves to be nice to someone or suppress negative thoughts when we meet them.

We usually feel a pure love towards our near and dear ones. But that is not the case with those outside the circle of our family and friends. We react differently when the same mistake is made by a loved one or by someone else. To one we show sympathy and understanding, and to other we may show irritation and anger. But with just a little effort, we can try to be nice even to those who consistently made mistakes and annoy us.

The error we fall into is that instead of being merciful, we immediately judge the person for his mistake and condemn him. We should keep in mind that the person is succumbing to some inner weakness and should help him overcome that flaw.

If we make it a habit to look at every person with compassion, not only will our feelings towards all remain pure, we will also be able to help weak souls, who are rejected by all, to overcome their weaknesses and transform their lives.

Learn to forgive and move on:

ਖਿਮਾ ਗਹੀ ਬੁਤੁ ਸੀਲ ਸੰਤੋਖੰ ॥ ਰੋਗੁ ਨ ਬਿਆਪੈ ਨਾ ਜਮ ਦੋਖੰ ॥

(ਅੰਗ ੨੨੩)

To practice forgiveness is the true fast, good conduct and contentment. Disease does not afflict me, nor does the pain of death.

People from all cultures and traditions consider love and forgiveness as values central to the fabric of humanity. But is forgiving as easy as it sounds? The ability to forgive others depends on how honest we are with ourselves.

All of us commit mistakes. As we become aware of where we are going wrong, we start the

process of making amends. However, if this process is to progress, we have to forgive others first. We cannot condemn others and excuse ourselves.

Forgiving removes the indignation we feel at an injustice. If we do not learn to forgive, resentment will poison us. Forgiveness means to move forward with what is good, towards what is better. Our forgiveness, at first, may puzzle others. They may even think of us as naive, but eventually they will appreciate our act of kindness. We should also learn to forgive ourselves, which means not making the same mistakes again, not inventing ways to excuse ourselves. A person who has hardened his own heart against others cannot feel God's forgiveness and love. Hence, if we want to be forgiven, then we must be willing to forgive first.

Wish well for all:

ਹਰਿ ਗੁਨ ਗਾਵਤ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰ ਨਿਤ ਤਿਸੁ ਰਸਨਾ ਕਾ ਮੋਲੁ ਕਿਛੁ ਨਾਹੀ ॥
(ਅੰਗ ੮੨੪)

He continually sings the Glorious Praises of the Lord, and always does good for others; his tongue is priceless.

We live in an era that boasts of a generation, which is much more intellectual and influential.

But in spite of all the developments, we are still a generation looking for peace. Peace has eluded us in spite of our material and intellectual enrichment.

However, our endeavors to attain that peace are limited by certain human constraints, of which the first is the human body. We neither know about our past lives, nor about our future. The only thing that we know is what we are in our present life. Hence, we do not understand the implication of the laws of karma to discipline us in the present. To ensure peace, we need to understand that peace is a composite phenomenon.

Hence, one cannot hope to live in peace without wishing well for others. Our positive actions can generate and sustain peace. With divine knowledge, the road to spiritual endeavor and attainment of a peaceful state of mind opens up. Unless we take peace with ourselves, we cannot be peaceful beings. So, make yourself peaceful to see the world around you naturally turning calm.

Love yourself to love others:

We are born with our set of likes and dislikes

that shape our personality from childhood. It will not be exaggerating to say that one of the greatest causes of conflict in our life is the feeling of dislike for others. There is a saying—a **person disliked is a person remembered**. Many of us ponder over the faults and mistakes of others. Why do we allow ourselves to waste time over such a fruitless experience? We should change our perspective of people from negative to positive.

When we are dissatisfied from within, we are inclined to be dissatisfied with everyone and everything. We do not know the real cause of dissatisfaction. It's proven fact by modern day psychologists, people are generally unhappy with who they are, which means they do not like themselves. So, if we are not positive from within, then on what basis can we be positive about others? Therefore, the only way out of this problem is to ensure that we have a positive visit within us.

LIVE IN HARMONY WITH NATURAL ORDER

ਮਨੁ ਤਨੁ ਅਰਪੀ ਆਪੁ ਗਵਾਈ ਚਲਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਭਾਏ ॥

(ਅੰਗ ੬੮)

I offer my mind and body, and I renounce my selfishness and conceit; I walk in Harmony with the Will of the True Guru.

We live in a society where everyone pretends to be straight forward. But humans, as a species, are highly unpredictable. However, humans who are considered to be the most developed and evolve species of living forms on earth are a class apart. The most critical faculty that distinguishes us is our intellect.

But a thorough research conducted over the years shows that in the course of human journey through interaction with other human beings, the original power and purity of human intellect gradually diminishes. The slow decay manifests itself in the form of weakness or vices such as lust, anger, greed and ego. The same intellect, which exalts us to the status of divine beings, when wrongly used, can turn us into the most fearsome, terrible and destructive being on this earth.

So what is the solution to this mass degradation of human intellect? It is to cure human nature, without which there cannot be harmony. We

all have the seed of all goodness and the potential to become pure beings who live and let everything on this earth exist in its natural order. Returning back to our true identity of being peaceful, pure and blissful souls playing our part as human nature will restore everything in this world to its original harmonious order, bringing enlightenment to humanity.

With all these virtues and a positive attitude, we empower ourselves and at the same time empower others. So let us all open a **‘SAVINGS ACCOUNT IN A GOOD WISHES BANK’** and start depositing good wishes daily to make our future happy, peaceful and prosperous.

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