

Of course, leadership is always challenged to “obsolete itself”. A mission well-performed often means the organisation will require a new skill set. I find my role is frequently to support the courage required on the part of executives engaged in such decisions. I try to help them remain in touch with a belief that when a particular mission is accomplished, their skills will be well used in the future, however differently their gifts may be expressed’ (refer Footnote #39).

There are numerous examples wherein business organisations and citizens work towards the greater common good. In another instance, during the first week of January 2009, Nokia India announced an initiative where the company would plant a sapling for every old mobile handset/accessory deposited by customers at any of its dealers or service centres. Within 45 days the company had collected 60,000 items, which would have otherwise been three tonnes of electronic waste. This responsible practice from Nokia, which added surplus to the ecology, is an extension of the responsible practice followed by Nokia in other parts of the world.

5. Yogah Karmasu Kaushalam

*buddhi-yukto jahatiha
ubhe sukrta-duskrte
tasmad yogaya yujyasva
yogah karmasu kausalam*

The Meaning: Dexterity and excellence in action are yoga, according to this verse from *Bhagavad Gita* (2.50). Once, a student asked his spiritual master on how progress could be measure while practicing spiritual *sadhana*. The master replied, ‘Once one takes to *sadhana*, one should regard everything as spiritual. A spiritual aspirant should not give in to bifurcation of work into God’s work and his own personal work. Such discrimination would only result in confusion. Regarding *pooja* (worship) as God’s work and taking food as personal work is also wrong. It is the highest *sadhana* to consider everything that one does in daily life as God’s work. His work in the workplace is also the work of God.’⁴⁶

Thus, giving complete attention to one’s work and striving for excellence in that action holds the potential to make one a *yogi*. Yoga refers to a communion with the Divine, and not just to physical exercise. Yoga also refers to the means by which this unity/union occurs (*yujyate anena iti yogah*). In *Yogasutra*, Patanjali refers to yoga as the control of the tendencies of the mind (*vritti-nirodha*).

6. Satyam Naasti Paro Dharmah

Meaning: No *dharma* is higher than the truth. Sri Sathya Sai Baba adds, ‘Never go back on your word. All worship, meditation and sacrifice are a waste if you renege on your word. God does not go by one’s external actions but only by one’s heart. God is *bhaava priya* – He delights in the internal feeling. Humans are *baahya priya*, they crave for what is external.’

The concept of truth has intrigued business leaders as well. Dr Govindappa Venkataswamy, founder of Aravind Eye Care System, says, ‘...there is a lot of energy in the higher levels of consciousness. See, that consciousness sees the truth as such, mind doesn’t see the truth, and, it can organise things in a better way than what the mind can do...’⁴⁷

⁴⁶ *Man Management: The Gita of Management*, Sri Sathya Sai Students and Staff Welfare Society, Prasanthi Nilayam, 2005. Excerpt used with permission

⁴⁷ Aravind Eye Care System, www.aravind.org/ivisiongoogle.htm; accessed on April 27, 2010

Isha Upanishad (15) states:

*Hiranmayena pâtrena satyasyâpihitam mukham
Tat tvam pûsann apâvrnu satyadharmâya dristaye*

Sri Aurobindo translated the above as ‘The face of truth is covered with a brilliant golden lid; that do thou remove, O Fosterer, for the law of the truth, for sight.’

At the worldly level, truth will also have a relationship with truthfulness and righteousness.

JRD Tata exemplifies this relationship. Says RM Lala, who wrote JRD Tata biography, with reference to the license quota raj, when there existed the non-idealistic nexus among politicians, business people and bureaucrats⁴⁹: ‘When I pointed out to him (JRD Tata) in 1979 that the Tatas had not expanded as much in the 1960s and 1970s as some other groups had, he replied: “I have often thought about that. If we had done some of the things that some other groups have done, we would have been twice as big as we are today. But we didn’t, and I would not have it any other way”.’



*Sri Aurobindo*⁴⁸

7. Sva-dharme Nidhanam Sreyah

*sreyan sva-dharmo vigunah
para-dharmat sv-anusthitat
sva-dharme nidhanam sreyah
para-dharmo bhayavahah*

The Meaning: No duty is ugly, no duty is impure. Performance of one’s duties in the right manner, and at any station in one’s life, without any attachment to their outcome, can lead one to the highest realisation.

This refers to when Arjuna, during the war at Kurukshetra, told Sri Krishna that he wanted to lead a saintly life and that he would rather not fight. Yet, looking at Arjuna’s life-history, there are various instances when he was unsuccessful in leading a saintly life.

In *Vyadha Gita*, an angry monk was humbled by the lady householder and a butcher (who prove to be spiritually senior to the monk). Together, they teach the monk that ‘no duty is ugly, no duty is impure’⁵⁰. (Also refer to section ‘What is Duty?’ in Chapter 8, to know more about *Vyadha Gita*.)

When management schools graduates step into business organisations, they join as subordinates. While they have spent considerable amounts of time learning and dreaming about ‘leadership’ in their classes, they are rarely trained in follower-ship. This expectancy-reality gap creates disillusionment among graduates when they start working and, soon, they look for greener pastures. However, grass only seems greener on the other side of the fence – it is only after going onto the other side, that the graduate realises his/her folly. With work pressure, the allurements of money/power is no longer attractive. Similarly, we should also understand all that which is natural to us. Taking on a

⁴⁸Image source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Sri_aurobindo.jpg; accessed on February 10, 2010

⁴⁹‘The business ethics of JRD Tata’, RM Lala, *The Hindu*, July 29, 2004

⁵⁰In the words of Swami Vivekananda

role not aligned to one's real self will only lead to diversion. One can be said to be at the highest levels of inner growth if one can transform a seemingly mundane and unexciting chore/assignment into a creative and richly satisfying work.

8. Na hi Kaschit Ksanam Api Jatu Tisthaty Akarma-krt

*na hi kascit ksanam api
jatu tisthaty akarma-krt
karyate hy avasah karma
sarvah prakriti-jair gunaih*

The Meaning: Due to the influence of the latent qualities, we cannot – even for a moment – remain without doing work. *Bhagavad Gita* (Chapter 3.5) says that, at any given moment, we are engaged in some work – be it physical or mental. In order to elevate ourselves from grosser activities, we ought to choose to engage ourselves in wholesome activities.

Let us summarise as follows⁵¹:

Why work?

To purify the mind and the heart (*chittashuddhi*)

What is work?

A sacrifice, *yagna*. It is a mode of worshipping the Divine.

How to work?

With renunciation and service (*tyaga* and *seva*)

What is the spirit of work?

Excellence and perfection.

From a contemporary standpoint, empirical substantiations have facilitated employees to find such meaning and purpose in their jobs that can positively impact their service performance.⁵² The principles of Indian management and work ethos may also act as guidelines for the same. Furthermore, it appears that workers desire workplaces perceived as exuding spiritual values, even if the workers themselves are not personally spiritual.⁵³

Indian scriptures dispel the myth that people who attained the zenith of perfection were not just the renunciants, who left to meditate in forests, in the very literal sense. Swami Bodhananda, chairman of Sambodh Foundation⁵⁴, says, 'Indians believe that the world is to be enjoyed and it can be enjoyed only if the enjoyer develops dispassion and detachment.' Those rulers and leaders who the people of India respect display a combination of kingly and sagely (*raja* and *rishi*) character e.g. Ashoka, Janaka, Milinda and Harshavardhana. The scriptures also suggest that the purest knowledge was accessible to even the householders (Vashishtha–Arundhati, Agastya–Lopamudra, Yajnavalkya–

⁵¹<http://himadri.cmsdu.org/documents/IndianEthos.pdf>; accessed on April 27, 2010

⁵²'Spiritual Climate of Business Organisations and its Impact on Customers' Experience', by Ashish Pandey, Rajen Gupta, AP Arora, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 2009

⁵³'Workplace Values and Outcomes: Exploring Personal, Organisational, and Interactive Workplace Spirituality,' by Robert Koldinsky, Robert Giacalone, Carole Jurkiewicz, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 2008

⁵⁴As quoted in the conference material given to participants of the International Conference on 'Indian Management for Global Effectiveness: Insights from the *Mahabharata*' held at Indian Business Academy, Bangalore on February 19 and 20, 2010

Maitreyi, Uddalaka–Swethakethu, Vidura, etc.). Who is not inspired and elevated to spiritual heights by the guidance of Mother Sarada, wife of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa? Goes to say, all of them were people of deep insight and wisdom. It is this wisdom that has inspired Keith Critchlow, an architect known for his works on sacred geometry and also a former professor of Islamic Art at the Royal College of Art in London. He says, ‘I learned that Bharat is the most ancient source of living wisdom (spirituality) and that it has always generated its revelations world-wide.’⁵⁵

Classroom Exercise

1. Who is considered to be ‘truly free’?
2. It is said that one should go or delve beyond one’s senses to free oneself. What can you do to go beyond your senses?
3. Who, among the following, enjoys freedom? Give your reasons for both ‘yes’ and ‘no’.
 - (a) A person who spends a substantial amount of money on shopping
 - (b) An individual who becomes uncomfortable if her/his cellular phone is not working for three days
 - (c) An individual who refuses to take an accident victim to a hospital
 - (d) A daily visitor to a food and beverage outlet that sells alcoholic products
 - (e) An accountant who receives a bribe of one lakh from a company to fudge the company accounts
4. Have you come across that group/species/clan in Indian epics which had all kinds of material comfort but displayed mental imbalance due to anxiety, fear, jealousy, lust, etc.? If yes, can you now imagine what this group/species represents in our ourselves?

Introspective Exercise

1. From the ten quotations cited in this chapter, which one did you find most intriguing, challenging, and/or appealing?
2. What is the significance of this quotation vis-à-vis your life?
3. What are some possible implications of this quotation vis-à-vis your work?

⁵⁵As told to one of the authors.

Key Concepts

1. Bharat not only refers to a geographical landmass. 'Bha' refers to God (*Bhagawan*) and 'rata' refers to love. Thus, Bharat refers to that place where exists the love of God; and Bharatiyas are people who love God.
2. Man cannot be happy with just external comforts.
3. The quality of life is based on 'interiority'.
4. Some tenets from Indian scriptures that influence the Indian work ethos can be enlisted as follows:
 - *Paropakaaraartham idam sareeram* (The human body is intended to do only good and serve others)
 - *Atmano mokshartham jagat hitayacha* (For the liberation of the self and the good of the world)
 - *Yagnayacharatah karma* (Work has to be done in the spirit of yagna or sacrifice)
 - *Parasparam bhavayantah sreyah param avapsyatha* (Serving together to attain the highest good and welfare of all)
 - *Yogah karmasu kaushalam* (Dexterity & Excellence in action is Yoga)
 - *Satyam naasti paro dharmah* (There is no *dharma* higher than truth)
 - *Sva-dharme nidhanam sreyah*, (That duty which arrives natural to one is the most important)
Na hi kaschit ksanam api jatu tisthaty akarma-krt (It is impossible to remain without doing work, even for a moment)
5. Organisational spirituality relates positively to job involvement, organisational identification, and rewards satisfaction; and is negatively associated with organisational frustration. Empirical substantiations state that facilitating employees so as to find meaning and purpose in their jobs can positively impact their performance at work. It also appears that workers desire those workplaces that are perceived as exuding spiritual values, even if the workers themselves are not personally spiritual.

Key Words

Bharat,
Bharatiya,
freedom,
truth,
spirituality,

spiritus,
religion,
Arthashastra,
Kautilya,
rajarshi,

ethos,
character,
chittashuddhi,
work ethos,
Indian management,

Ramakrishna Mission, sacrifice, dharma,
lokasamgraha, vasudaiva kutum-
yagna, bakam,

Review Questions

1. What does *Bharat* mean?
2. What – if any – is the distinction between spirituality and religion?
3. Which principles can be used as guidelines for Indian management?
4. Explain the meaning of '*paropakaraartham idam sareeram*'. Explain – giving an example – the reason why you think business leaders should practice this ethos.
5. '*Atmano mokshartham jagat hitayacha*': Comment.

Choose the Correct Answer

1. _____ culture is where there is independent co-existence of multiple streams which take various paths but flow towards the same destination.
 - (i) Bharat
 - (ii) Kutumb
 - (iii) Sangam
 - (iv) Bharatavarsa
2. _____, the author of *Arthashastra*, is one of the world's finest management thinkers.
 - (i) Chandragupta Maurya
 - (ii) Kautilya
 - (iii) Narayana guru
 - (iv) Jaggi Vasudev
3. _____, the fundamental psychological function of work, means purifying the mind of the dross of ego, greed, impatience, anger and so on.
 - (i) Chittasuddhi
 - (ii) Dharma
 - (iii) Rajarshi
 - (iv) Ahimsa
4. *Satyam naasti paro dharmah*, means, there is nothing higher than the _____.
 - (i) Truth
 - (ii) Non-violence
 - (iii) Anger
 - (iv) Joy

5. According to *Vayu Purana*, _____ is the one who conquers the whole of *Bharatavarsa*.

- (i) Bharatiya
- (ii) Bharatha
- (iii) Samrat
- (iv) Bharatam

6. *Ethos*, a Greek word, means _____.

- (i) Character
- (ii) Values
- (iii) Forgiveness
- (iv) Morale

7. In *Yogasutra*, Patanjali refers to Yoga as the control over the tendencies of the mind, also referred to as _____.

- (i) Vritti-nirodha
- (ii) Karma
- (iii) Asana
- (iv) Pranayama

8. Aakashath patitam toyam

Yatha gachati sagaram

Sarvadeva namaskaram

Keshavam prati gachati

The meaning of this verse is that:

- (i) Just as all the rain water falls that from anywhere in the sky finally reaches the ocean, similarly, the worship of any divine aspect ultimately reaches the Supreme Being.
- (ii) The rain water flows down and moves towards the ocean. Before your neighbor Mr Keshavan takes that water, you take it for yourself.
- (iii) The rain water flows down and moves towards the ocean. Mr Keshavan wants to collect that water. Why should you bother? Let him collect it.
- (iv) The water falls down in rain from sky is going to the ocean. Let the God named Keshavan collect it.

9. What does *spiritus* – the Latin root of the word ‘spiritual’ – mean?

- (i) Talk
- (ii) Thought
- (iii) Breath
- (iv) Work

10. Which of the following conveys the meaning of ‘*yagnayacharatah karma*’?

- (i) It is impossible to remain without doing work, even for a moment

- (ii) Work has to be done in the spirit of *yagna* (sacrifice), making the act of work sacred
- (iii) Work should be done towards the highest good and welfare of all
- (iv) Work should be done with dexterity and excellence in action

Answers: (1) *Sangam*; (2) *Kautilya*; (3) *Chittasuddhi*; (4) Truth; (5) *Samrat*; (6) Character; (7) *Vritti-nirodha*; (8) Just as all the rain water falls that from anywhere in the sky finally reaches the ocean, similarly, the worship of any divine aspect ultimately reaches the Supreme Being; (9) Breath; and (10) Work has to be done in the spirit of *yagna* (sacrifice), making the act of work sacred.

State whether True or False

1. Sacrifice, from its Latin roots, meant, to give up something with anguish and pain.
2. Brahma Yagna, one of the 5 yagnas was to study and assimilate the sacred teachings in one's life and convey the experiential knowledge to others.
3. *Arthashastra* is a book that may be referred to as the world's first management treatise.
4. The scriptures suggest that the one who stands above the slavish dependence on the world of objects is the one who is independent.
5. The scriptures dispel the myth that people who attained the zenith of perfections were not just the renunciants, who left for forests, in the literal sense.

Answers: (1) False; (2) True; (3) True; (4) True; and (5) True

Recommended Reading

1. *Autobiography Of A Yogi*, Paramahansa Yogananda, Jaico Books, 1946
2. *In Indian Culture... Why do We?*, Swamini Vimalananda & Radhika Krishnakumar, Chinmaya Mission
3. *Management in New Age: Western Windows Eastern Doors*, Subhash Sharma, New Age International, 2006

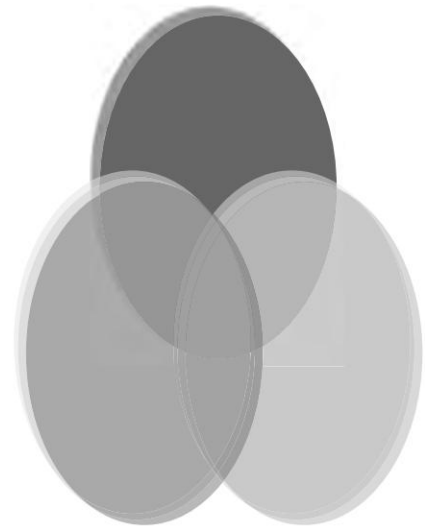
Chapter 2

Indian Heritage in Business and Management

Learning Objective

This chapter aims to convey and clarify the following:

- The philosophical tenets that have guided materialistic pursuits in Indian society
 - The goals of life, as spoken by the scriptures from India, and their priorities in life
 - Guidelines for wealth creation, distribution and consumption
 - The relationship between giving and economic development
 - Quality ethos in India – respect for every creation, the transformation of baser instincts to subtler aspects
 - Alignment of thought, word and deed as the foundation of quality management
 - Limitations associated with current economic paradigms
 - Introduction to Buddhist economics
 - Introduction to Biblical economics
-
-



'Of the 49 civilisations existing in the world prior to the Christian era, ours is the only one which is living and vibrant. Why? Everything is conceptualised as a mother – *Mathrutva bhava*. In every century, in every part of India, great saints and evolved souls and Avatars were born... *Loka samastha sukhino bhavantu*

(Let all beings everywhere be happy)... No other country says it; we are the only people to say that all religions lead to the same God. *Akashat patitam thoyam, yatha gachati sagaram...*

We are the only civilisation in the whole world to give highest praise, highest pedestal to women... Our civilisation has continued for 5000 years because of the sacrifice, suffering, modesty, chastity, sympathy, empathy and service of the women of India.

The world is divided into two kinds of people – the haves and the have-nots. In India there exists a third category – those who have, but do not want. Buddha, Mahaveera and Janaka belong to this exalted category.¹

~ Prof N S Ramaswamy
National Research Professor in Management
and Founder Director, IIM Bangalore

Ancient India has been rich, in terms of both spiritual and material wealth. The philosophy of ‘simple living, high thinking’ ensured that ancient India was relatively free from ecological catastrophes and famines. There is a story of how Portuguese navigators who landed near Kozhikode (almost 500 years ago) were awestruck by the glory and splendor of the place. It could be this wealth that motivated navigators like Christopher Columbus to explore a path towards India. India would not have suffered countless invasions resulting in loot and plunder, had she not been wealthy. India was the richest nation for over 75 percent of the world’s counted calendar of history.² In the 1st century, India contributed 32.9 percent of the global GDP (gross domestic product), thus being the leading contributor. China/India continued to be the leading contributors to global GDP till early 1800s.³ This suggests the possibility that practicing spiritual values and material prosperity are not mutually exclusive.

The existence of professional organisations in India can be traced back to 800 BC. A complex organisational entity termed *Sreni* (guild) was widely used in municipal, community and other spheres from around 800 BC up to around 1000 AD.⁴ Islamic influence on trade and commerce could be seen in the later period. *Sreni* evolved its own vocabulary, monetary systems and rules and regulations. The ancient corporate forms were termed variously as *gana* (group), *pani* (sector), *poga* (entity), *vrata* (service), *sangha* (organisation) and *rigarna* (trading). These forms had *karya chintak* (managerial leader), *sresthi* (managers) and *jetthaka* (employers).⁵ The existence and growth of *Srenis* (refer Exhibit 2.1) indicated that there was not only widespread and deep public aware-

¹http://media.radiosai.org/Journals/Vol_04/01SEP06/CoverStory_Army.htm, as accessed on July 27, 2010

²*Hidden Horizons: Unearthing 10,000 years of Indian Culture*, David Frawley and Navaratna Rajaram, Swaminarayan Aksharpathi, April 2006

³[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_regions_by_past_GDP_\(PPP\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_regions_by_past_GDP_(PPP)); as accessed on April 27, 2010

⁴*The Economic History of Organisational Entities in Ancient India*, V Khanna, Michigan Law and Economics, Research Paper No. 05-014, University of Michigan Law and Economics, November 15, 2005

⁵‘Managerial Ethos of the Indian Tradition: Relevance of a Wisdom Model’ by S R Chatterjee, *Journal of Indian Business Research*, 2009

ness about the necessity of organised teamwork for business and trade in the Indian tradition, but such organisations had also smoothly enmeshed into the liberal-democratic culture of the successive epochs.⁶

Exhibit 2.1 Historical overview of the evolution of the professional and community practice in India

7,500 BC – 4500 BC	No reliable evidence in spite of an advanced civilisation
4,500 BC – 1900 BC	Extensive and vigorous trade and commerce; Evidence available with controversy surrounding dates
1,900 BC – 800 BC	Sophisticated SRENI system of managerial tradition
800 BC – 300 BC	Inter-Sreni arbitration enacted in 'Bhandagarika'
300 BC – 100 BC	Maurya dynasty – impetus to corporate entities through the development of codes, rules and professionalism; Buddhism encourages <i>Arthashastra</i> and King Ashoka's 'Human Rights' movement
100 BC – 250 AD	Increase in trade and commerce; Trade with Romans; Structured, governed and regulated business organisations
250 AD – 550 AD	Gupta dynasty encourages rules and regulations to guide managerial systems, accounting, etc
550 AD – 1,000 AD	Decline in international trade; Disappearance of Sreni codes
1,000 AD – 1,750 AD	Islamic influence on the sector ideas of trade and commerce
1,750 AD – 1,900 AD	British system of corporate organisation introduced

Source: 'Managerial Ethos of the Indian Tradition: Relevance of a Wisdom Model' by S R Chatterjee, *Journal of Indian Business Research*, 2009

Let us consider the presence of *Sangha* as an organisational entity as mentioned in the preceding paragraph. The word '*sangha*' can be associated with the Buddhist prayer: *Buddham saranam gacchami, Dharmam saranam gacchami, Sangham saranam gacchami*. Participation in the activities of a *sangha* was meant to channelise an individual towards Buddha/Enlightenment. An organisation, in its ideal state, has the potential to facilitate the highest self-growth. The scriptures offer guidelines on how ordinary human life can be channelised to a life of purpose. Referred to as *Purushartha*, these guidelines facilitate an individual to reach the pinnacle of self-growth.

PURUSHARTHA: GOALS OF LIFE

From the perspective of the life sciences, every organism goes through physical growth. While rapid growth can be witnessed in the initial phases, it is followed by maturity and then decline and death. Every being in nature follows this law. Nature also acts as a guide to the unsustainability of

⁶*Foundations of Managerial Work: Contributions from Indian Thought*, S K Chakraborty, Himalaya Publishing House, Delhi, 1998

unrestricted growth. For instance, the rapid growth of cancer cells will result in self-destruction (i.e. death of the host organism). Or, for that matter, growth in the population of lions can bring about a reduction in the deer population, which will result in the lions having lesser resources (food) and, thus, a reduction in the lion population. Thus, nature provides interesting examples of checks and balances. It is as if entropy and equilibrium were two sides of the same coin.

However, the business world is one segment which has yet to embrace the acceptance of this rule. In business organisations, successful leadership/management is determined on the basis of record levels of growth. Driven by the need to grow at meteoric levels, companies operate in situations wherein they need to *exploit* their respective environments. This, in turn, leads to the exploitation of customers, employees, natural environment, etc. According to Peter Senge, Director of the Center for Organisational Learning at the MIT Sloan School of Management, and author of *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organisation*: 'One industrial age belief is that GDP or GNP (gross national product) is a measure of progress. I don't care if you're the President of China or the US, if your country doesn't grow, you're in trouble. But we all know that beyond a certain level of material need, further material acquisition doesn't make people happier. So you have a society predicated on the idea that you have to keep growing materially, and yet nobody actually believes it.'

Hiten Bhaya⁷ states that a capitalist approach will not be able to usher in the distributive justice.⁸ For distributive justice to occur, intentions and actions of individuals need to be directed towards higher good. The biblical sins/*shad ripus* corrupt these intentions and actions, resulting in a situation where justice is not meted out to those who require them. Rajiv Gandhi captured that sentiment in the oft repeated quote that, for every rupee spent only 14 paise reach those people for whom that rupee is targeted. Mahatma Gandhi, speaking about the necessity to keep divinity and morality as the basis of all work related efforts, said, 'we have had no system of life-corroding competition. Each followed his own occupation or trade and charged a regulation wage. It was not that we did not know how to invent machinery, but our forefathers knew that, if we set our hearts after such things, we would become slaves and lose our moral fibre. They, therefore, after due deliberation decided that we should only do what we could with our hands and feet.'⁹ Perhaps it was Mahatma's focus on the aspect of the heart that led Nandan Nilekani, former CEO and MD of Infosys Technologies Limited now chairman of the Unique Identification Authority of India to comment, 'His concern for sustainability was both visionary and central to his thinking, but his views, when juxtaposed with the village-industry model for the economy, seemed quaint in the eyes of other Indian leaders.'¹⁰

In the name of 'healthy' competition, a new generation has been created which competes and fights in the name of gender, class, nativity and everything else. Recently, on the eve of Women's Day, while watching the telecast of a quiz show for children, two kids – incidentally girls – won the contest and the second place went to a team, which incidentally happened to be boys. After the contest, the show's anchor – a known face on TV today – commented that the girls had thrown out the boys. Nowadays, media slogans indicating the superior performances of girls in state board examinations are as much in vogue as they are for boys who excel in competitive exams for

⁷Former Director of IIM Kolkata, former member of Planning Commission and former Chairman of Hindustan Steel

⁸'Manage the Self: The Indian Ethos of Management', by Hiten Bhaya, *Journal of Human Values*, 2000

⁹*Hind Swaraj*. Mahatma Gandhi, Chapter XIII, 1909

¹⁰*Imagining India: Ideas for The New Century*, Nandan Nilekani, Penguin Books, 2008



The parables of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa

Once upon a time conceit entered into the heart of Narada and he thought there was no greater devotee than himself. Reading his heart, the Lord said, "Narada, go to such and such a place, a great devotee of mine is living there. Cultivate his acquaintance; for he is truly devoted to me." Narada went there and found a farmer who rose early in the morning, pronounced the name of Hari (God) only once, and taking his plough, went out and tilled the ground all day long. At night, he went to bed after pronouncing the name of Hari once more. Narada said to himself "How can this rustic be a lover of God? I see him busily engaged in worldly duties and he has no signs of a pious man about him." Then Narada went back to the Lord, and spoke what he thought of his new acquaintance. There upon the Lord said, "Narada, take this cup of oil and go round this city and come back with it. But take care that you do not spill even a single drop of it." Narada did as he was told, and on his return the Lord asked him, "Well, Narada, how many times did you remember me in the course of your walk round the city?" "Not once, my Lord," said Narada, "and how could I, when I had to watch this cup brimming over with oil?" The Lord then said, "This one cup of oil did so divert your attention that even you did forget me altogether. But look at that rustic, who, though carrying the heavy burden of a family, still remembers me twice every day."

(Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teachings_of_Ramakrishna, Accessed on June 25, 2010)

engineering and medicine. In that, instead of being looked at as a noble endeavor, education has probably become a means to establish the dominance of one gender over the other. In such an environment, it is no wonder that students sometimes resort to all sorts of unethical practices. Speaking about how competitiveness is taking us away from who we really are, Phyllis Krystal (*Reconnecting the Love Energy*) elaborates: 'Too many children are compared with their brothers and sisters in a vain attempt to persuade one child to succeed in some area where he or she appears to be lacking in qualities or abilities where the others have no such problems. If a lack is so severe that the child fails to compete successfully with a more accomplished sibling, the child may feel so hopeless that he or she will give up and cease trying to learn.'

One can only imagine the levels of ethical practices that individuals of a generation bred in this manner will adhere to when they foray into their respective fields of work or business, especially in the face of the constant competition and pressure to achieve – brought upon them not only by the shareholders/stakeholders, but also by the media (in the guise of ratings which elevate companies that have higher revenues, profits, market capitalisation, etc.).

In this context, let us explore what spiritual leaders say about wealth generation and distribution. The scriptures of Bharat speak about the four goals of life: *dharma*, *artha*, *kama* and *moksha*. *Dharma* – living in consonance with creation and society; *artha* – generating wealth (of good education, health, character and material wellbeing) for oneself and others; *kama* – satisfying basic desires (a life of comfort, health, enjoyment and respect for one's family and community) and *moksha* – attaining spiritual fulfillment or liberation.

Spiritual literature speaks about the necessity of guiding these goals harmoniously. The Jain text *Uttara-Dhyayana Sutra* cautions, "The more you get, the more you want; your desires increase with your means." You would have noticed that the goals of *Artha* and *Kama* are within the tenets of *Dharma* and *Moksha*. Sri Sathya Sai Baba speaks about these four goals in such a manner, "Man

should earn wealth through right means, and direct desires towards spiritual liberation. But man ignores righteousness and liberation and struggles to direct desires towards wealth. His sense of values has become topsy-turvy. Let righteousness dominate wealth, and liberation dominate worldly desire. Then your life will be a success". *Moksha* is considered as the *parama purushartha* or the chief goal.

EXPLORING QUALITY, IN THE INDIAN CONTEXT

Total Quality Management (TQM): Detached Involvement

TQM, in the Indian context, also stands for total quality of mind. Contemporary TQM models seem to be oriented towards tools/practitioner's perception/international standards with an aim to achieve materialistic results. However, the same models seem to have missed out the moral and ethical means of reaching these goals.¹¹ It is obvious that the focus of the original TQM philosophy is on areas of improvement rather than on framing an individual when things go wrong or on adopting a temporary 'fix it' approach. In *The New Economics for Industry, Government, Education* (1993), Dr. J. Edward Deming, the American statistician who laid the foundation for the TQM movement in Japan, states: 'The first step is transformation of the individual. This transformation is discontinuous. It comes from understanding of the system of profound knowledge. The individual, transformed, will perceive new meaning to his life, to events, to numbers, to interactions between people. Once the individual understands the system of profound knowledge, he will apply its principles in every kind of relationship with other people. He will have a basis for judgment of his own decisions and for transformation of the organisations that he belongs to. The individual, once transformed, will: Set an example, Be a good listener, but will not compromise, Continually teach other people, Help people to pull away from their current practice and beliefs and move into the new philosophy without a feeling of guilt about the past...' Deming also observed that profits are a byproduct of offering good products and services to customers.¹² Interestingly, he also observed that 'the most important things cannot be measured' and 'the most important things are unknown or unknowable'.¹³ These two observations are closer to the philosophy of 'detached involvement', where an individual focuses on the action rather than becoming attached to the results of the action.

Not surprisingly, concepts like 'appreciative inquiry', which focus on building organisations around winning practices in the organisation, rather than on trying to fix the regressive practices, are becoming more popular. These approaches work in contrast to the philosophy of problem solving. Detached involvement can thus contribute to the 'quality of work-life', thereby increasing the effectiveness of practices like TQM, appreciative inquiry¹⁴ and Kaizen.¹⁵

¹¹Classical Approach to Contemporary TQM: An Integrated Conceptual TQM Model as Perceived in Tamil Classical Literature, by T P Mani, N Murugan, C Rajendran, (previously published as *Total Quality Management and Business Excellence*, 2003)

¹²*Out of the Crisis*, Edwards Deming, MIT Press, Massachusetts, 1982

¹³Refer <http://deming.org/index.cfm?content=653>; accessed on April 27, 2010

¹⁴Appreciative inquiry is an organisational development process that employs the assumption that organisations change in the way they inquire. A practitioner of 'appreciative inquiry' believes that an organisation which inquires into problems or difficult situations will keep finding more of the same, whereas an organisation which appreciates what is best in itself will find/discover more of what is good.

¹⁵Kaizen is a Japanese word which refers to 'improvement' or 'change for the better'; it is a philosophy/practice that focuses on continuous improvement of processes.

Presenting a new TQM model that takes wisdom literature into consideration, Mani, Murugan and Rajendran (refer Footnote #11), state that Thiruvalluvar, a saint from Tamilnadu, who authored *Thirukkural*, had dealt with the subject of making profit in a righteous manner. While wealth earned through virtue and morals would bring prosperity to an individual and society, lack of it would create trouble (Kural 31, 32). Furthermore, property acquired by fraud would perish (Kural 283).

Given that work has been considered to be an endeavor to purify oneself, one is warned not to be obsessed with the results of one's action(s). Does it mean one is not expected to care for one's work? Certainly not. Scriptures speak about *nishkama karma* and *sakama karma* – meaning, 'detached involvement' and 'attached involvement' (refer Exhibit 2.2).

Exhibit 2.2 Attributes of Detached involvement and Attached involvement

<i>Detached involvement</i>	<i>Attached involvement</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Psychological energy conservation ■ Reactionless actions ■ Inner autonomy – Self-efficiency – Abundance mentality ■ Be in the world, but not of it ■ Work commitment ■ Life enrichment ■ Work is an offering to divine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Psychological energy dissipation (burnout) ■ Reactionful action ■ Dependence on external anchors – Comparison – Lack mentality ■ Be in the world and also of it ■ Reward commitment ■ Job enrichment ■ Competitive rivalry

In 2009, *National Geographic* and GlobeScan (an international opinion research consultancy) found that Indians follow the greenest lifestyle among the 17 major countries where they conducted their study based on 17,000 responses taking into account factors like energy usage and conservation, attitudes towards the environment and sustainability, transportation choices, food sources, the relative use of green products, and knowledge of environmental issues. Western observers are intrigued by the extent to which people in India recycle the product, both out of choice and compulsion. While intelligent people in the west are aware of the negative effects of



*Be in the world, but not of it: Although a swan plays in the water, its feathers do not get soiled by it.*¹⁶

¹⁶Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:SwansCygnes_olor.jpg; accessed on July 17, 2010

over-consumption, some Indians in recent times are acquiring similar wasteful habits, prompted, perhaps, by media-driven ethics.

A production philosophy oriented in Indian ethos is aimed at creating a product/service that provides the consumer with the maximum benefit. The creative process was meant to be carried out using the least amount of resources, reducing the waste to the maximum, and rendering the least harm to the environment. Similarly, the consumption philosophy was oriented around consumption of only those that was needed, and not what was desired. Mahatma Gandhi has been quoted as saying, 'There is enough for every man's need, but not enough for every man's greed'. This quality ethos has been ingrained in the Indian psyche. One of the authors' mother used to say, 'There are three aspects to consuming – that which is essential, that which is necessary, and that which is desirable. We should have that which is essential, have second thoughts on that which is necessary and avoid that which is desirable'. Top quality product/service was considered primarily a function of the quality of the mind or consciousness of the doer, and only secondarily of quality circles and statistical quality control.¹⁷ Peter Senge, Director of the Center for Organisational Learning at the MIT Sloan School of Management, and author of *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organisation* offers an example to bring about the importance of conviction: 'We've done a lot of work with companies in Detroit,¹⁸ and when the Prius¹⁹ came out, I asked them what they thought of it. Everyone said the same thing: "It's a niche product". They said: "In focus groups, we ask people how much they would pay for a 10 percent improvement in fuel efficiency, and it's always a small number". But you're never going to learn latent demands from focus groups. Toyota didn't introduce the Prius because of a focus group. They were convinced that cars needed to change'.²⁰

Ramana Maharshi, the saint from Arunachala, would pick grains of rice off the ashram floor. Seeing this, his disciples understood the necessity to appreciate every produce of nature. Such respect can be seen in other people too. Philip Gröning, the director of the documentary *Into Great Silence*, was living with the Carthusians monks at the Grande Chartreuse monastery in the French Alps. He narrates: "...I remember that I once threw something away; I don't recall what. The tailor immediately came looking for me to ask me why I had done that. Did I have no respect for the fact that this had once been made through the work of someone's hands? Why did I think this was worthless? This has nothing to do with thriftiness, but with care. The care with which one deals with everything here: with things, with time, with oneself, with the soul."²¹

Quality in the products and services offered in the objective world will be ensured only when quality is there in the mind of the people. Quality, as it relates to organisational performance, is not just related to its products or services but is rather a multifaceted concept wherein all the resources and processes are deeply intertwined. An emotionally and spiritually intelligent organisation recognises that quality management is a holistic concept, which stimulates commitment, integrity,

¹⁷*Management by Values*, S K Chakraborty, Oxford University Press, 1993

¹⁸The city of Detroit is located in the US state of Michigan and is considered as the world's traditional automotive centre.

¹⁹Prius is a full hybrid electric mid-size car manufactured by Toyota Motor Corporation. The most fuel efficient gasoline car currently sold in the US, this hybrid car has won the top rankings in 'The Hybrid Scorecard' released by Union of Concerned Scientists in May 2010.

²⁰Refer http://www.businessweek.com/innovate/content/jun2008/id20080611_566195.htm, *Businessweek*; accessed on April 26, 2010

²¹<http://www.zeitgeistfilms.com/films/intogreatsilence/intogreatsilence.presskit.pdf>; accessed on April 27, 2010



A message communicated by Denver Water²² suggesting moderation in the usage of resources.

work-life balance, individual and organisational learning, and which leads to sustainable performance improvement and quality enhancement for the entire organisation.²³

Cradle to Cradle Design

Cradle to cradle (C2C) design is a biomimetic approach popularised by Michael Braungart, a chemist from Germany, and William McDonough, an architect from the US. In this approach to the design of systems, materials involved in industrial/commercial production are viewed as nutrients circulating in healthy, safe metabolisms. This phrase was coined by Water R Stahel in the 1970s. The C2C design model seeks to eliminate dangerous materials like heavy metals, harmful chemicals, etc. from manufacturing processes. In this design model, all materials used in an industrial/commercial process are seen as either technical or biological nutrients. Non-toxic, non-harmful synthetic materials that have no harmful effects on the natural environment fall in the category of technical nutrients; they can be reused instead of being 'downcycled' to lesser products, finally becoming waste. Biological nutrients are materials that are organic in character; once used, they can be disposed of in any natural environment without harming the natural environment. This organic waste also provides food for smaller life forms during decomposition.

The C2C model often lowers the financial cost of systems. An example is the redesign of the Ford River Rouge Complex by William McDonough, who co-authored *Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things*, with Michael Braungart. It is said that Ford saved \$35,000,000 on mechanical treatment plants by planting native grasses (sedum) on assembly plant roofs which resulted in the cleansing of rain water – thus, also moderating the internal temperature of the building. The roof is part of a rainwater treatment system designed to clean 20 billion gallons of rainwater, annually.

²²Image source Denver Water, 2010. Used with permission

²³'Linking Quality Management and Emotional Intelligence to Workplace Spirituality', by Joan Marques, Eugene Allevato, and Svetlana Holt; *Organisation Development Journal*; Winter 2008



A Greenpeace advertisement²⁴ shows how waste is being thrown into the ocean. Cradle to Cradle Design eliminates 'junk' as part of any industrial processes.

The greened 10 acre roof decreased the energy cost by 7 percent and improved air quality by 40 percent.

An example of a C2C Design Model – The Cow In the *Anusasana Parva* of Mahabharata, Section LXXVI, it is said, 'The cow is my mother. The bull is my sire'. Lord Krishna is also known as Govinda – protector of the cows. Shiva is said to ride on Nandi. In ancient rural India, every household had a few cows which provided a constant supply of milk, and a few bulls which helped as draft animals. It is a habit in rural households to feed cows with leftover food. Cows also consume seemingly trivial food items such as grass, and transform them into products that are healthy and wholesome for human and other beings.

Cow dung is often used as manure and has insect repellent properties. It is also an important component in low input agricultural practices and organic farming. Organic farmers like Subhash Palekar, Shanta Ramaswamy and P Gomathinayagam vouch for the use of cow dung and cow urine in sustainable farm practices. Subhash Palekar opined that the dung generated by one cow is enough to manure 30 acres of land.²⁵

The cow can thus be seen as a symbolism for the transformation of *Nikrushta* (baser instincts/inferior aspects of human personality) into *Utkrishta* (the finer/subtler aspect of human personality). Cows are an emblem of selfless duty and, in modern parlance, probably an example of

²⁴Image released by Greenpeace in 2006. Used with permission

²⁵Refer The Hindu: <http://www.hinduonnet.com/2006/03/16/stories/2006031616430300.htm>; <http://www.thehindu.com/thehindu/mp/2009/07/18/stories/2009071851650600.htm>; <http://www.hinduonnet.com/seta/2004/03/11/stories/2004031101521400.htm>; and <http://www.hinduonnet.com/2008/03/22/stories/2008032250220200.htm>; accessed on April 27, 2010

C2C designing. It is said that people learn by observing; the very presence of cows in households can make people appreciate the nuances of selfless service. Similarly there are several possibilities of engaging in cradle-to-cradle design our life.²⁶

Sages (wise men) were always focused on quality rather than quantity. This quality came about from the alignment of thoughts, words and deeds. Ananth Raman, Chairman of Graphtex Inc., a manufacturing company in the US, shares his experience of introducing ISO procedures. His thoughts communicate the connection between quality standards and the alignment of thought, word and deed. Presented here is one such anecdote:



"There was a time when we were introducing ISO 9000, which was a system of quality control measures for our company. One of our companies was a job shop where we do specialty items for our customers. Since these products are made for specific applications it is extremely difficult to standardise things and is a very complicated process. This made it a difficult environment to introduce these types of quality measures, since it involves a lot of rigid procedures."

"The expert said, 'This is all very simple. All you need to do is write down each of the procedures that you are already doing. You don't have to make any improvement; you don't have to say anything else except exactly the way you are doing it. This has nothing to do with right or wrong, you simply say what you are doing and do what you say.' Even after he said all of this my fellows were still completely worried."

"One evening I was thinking about this while attending a study circle with my spiritual group. I saw that all of this was simply talking about unity of thought, word, and action. So, I called in my employees and gave them a talk about unity of thought, word and action. I told them, "This is nothing but the concept of having what you feel, what you write and how you act be the same. This is all that ISO 9000 is about."

"So we went all over the company and said, 'The company's objective with ISO 9000 is to have unity of thought, word and action.' If I had used the word spiritual to describe the basis of this concept, I would have probably gotten some negative reaction. To me I didn't feel that I needed to tout this as spiritual. It was just truth and honesty, that's all. When I explained what unity of word, thought and action meant, they understood the concept very easily."

"Sometimes they would even come back with an example such as this: 'If a customer wants us to deliver a product the next day and we know it is going to take one week, usually we tell them it will be the day after tomorrow so we can buy some time. Can we do that? If we do, then it disturbs the unity of thought, word and action. So, what do we tell them? Do we tell them the truth?'"

"They started raising all of these questions throughout the departments; I was amazed at the chain reaction that began. So I told them, 'Let's not go mad about this unity of thought, word and action. Let's have a monthly meeting where we can discuss these problems where you find it difficult to be totally truthful.' I tried to help them see the difference between telling a customer, 'no, it won't go tomorrow, we are having difficulties,' which is the truth, versus 'it will go day after tomorrow,' which is a lie. In this way they could still buy some time without promising something which was not going to happen. We continue to have these monthly meetings where we examine these difficult situations and look to see how we can solve them with a unity of thought, word and action."²⁷

QUOTATIONS FROM SPIRITUAL LEADERS/SCRIPTURES, ON WEALTH CREATION, DISTRIBUTION AND CONSUMPTION

Sri Sri Ravishankar²⁸

"The term for spiritual practice, *sadhana*, is evolved from money. 'Dhana' means money and 'Sa'

^{26v}For interactivities on C2C Thinking refer to: (i) <http://www.bigpicture.tv/?id=3209>; (ii) <http://www.bigpicture.tv/?id=3230>; and (iii) http://www.ted.com/index.php/talks/william_mcdonough_on_cradle_to_cradle_design.html.

²⁷Quotations extracted from the public knowledge base of the 'Spiritual Based Leadership Research Programme' © 2006 by the Global Dharma Center (GDC). GDC retains the copyright to all excerpts from this knowledge-base

²⁸<http://www.srisri.org/content/sadhna-real-currency-you-can-use-anywhere>; accessed on June 28, 2010

means true wealth. That is the real currency you can use anywhere. Money is important in life but keep money where it belongs to. Do not keep it in the head or in the heart. We often misplace money. We keep it in our head while our pockets are empty. Keep money in the pocket but don't keep thinking about money."



The following is an excerpt from an article on JRD Tata, by Maneck Dalal (MD, Tata Limited 1977 to 1988).

'JRD was a bit thrifty and never gave in to ostentatious displays of wealth. I recall going to his place for dinner in an office car, which happened to be of American make. JRD used a homegrown Fiat those days, one that he himself drove. I joked that we couldn't have our chairman driving around so shabbily; he replied that he felt embarrassed to drive in those grand affairs. Fact is, he did have a bigger car – but it was mostly used to ferry his servants' children to the park and the beach.'

Source: <http://www.tata.com/article.aspx?artid=yBD8XWKZJgk=>; accessed on April 28, 2010

Sri Sathya Sai Baba²⁹

'Money is of the nature of manure. Piled up in one place, it pollutes the air. Spread it wide, scatter it over fields – it rewards you with a bumper harvest. So too, when money is spent in all the four quarters for promoting good works, it yields contentment and happiness in plenty. But today, such deeds of renunciation and such holy thoughts are absent. Today, we pride ourselves as being "modern". Does modernism involve giving up morality and justice? Or, allowing the senses to run amok? Or, blindly running after countless desires? No. Modernism means self-control and self-confidence.'

'Man has been enslaved by money. He lives a superficial, hollow, artificial life. This is indeed a great pity. Man should seek to possess only as much money as is most essential for his living. The quantity of riches one must own can be compared to the shoes one wears; if too small, they cause pain; if too big, they are a hindrance while walking. Money too has to be with us only just enough for a life of physical and mental comfort. When we have more, it breeds pride, sloth and contempt for others. In pursuit of money, man descends to the level of the beast.'

'Youth is the stage in life when the slightest turn towards wrong will spell disaster. Thoughts shape the career. You plan to earn much wealth, because you imagine that rich people are very happy. The rich have plenty to eat, but they have no appetite. The rich wield power over others but they are held down by disease. The rich can have many servants but they cannot live in peace. So, plan to be rich in virtue, in devotion and in dedication to good causes. Be rich in sovereign character. Steady adherence to truth, renunciation, genuine *prema* (love), self-less service – these are the essential components of character. Follow the dictates of your conscience; you will never be wrong.'

'Our ancients laid down four avenues for the utilisation of wealth or earnings. One fourth should be used for personal use and for supporting the family. Another fourth should be used for charitable

²⁹Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 15; <http://www.sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume15/sss15-15.pdf>, accessed on April 28, 2010. Used with permission.

and religious purposes. A third quarter should be spent on other living things like animals, birds, etc. The remaining fourth should be offered for supporting the State. It is only when one's wealth is utilised in this manner will it be really beneficial and meaningful.³⁰

Swami Chinmayananda³¹

'...we often meet the allegation that Hinduism is an "out-of-this world religion" meant only for the recluse. The spirit of Hinduism is not understood by those who say this. Wealth is not taboo for the seeker, but the constant craving for wealth is. Property is not prohibited, but one is enjoined to use it in the service of society.'

'The vedantic concept of renunciation has nothing to do with have or have-not, in a physical sense; it means the attitude of non-attachment. The classical example of our ancient lore is that of Emperor Janaka, living in the luxury of a palace, but still considered such a great saint and sage that great aspirants went to him for guidance.'

'The greatest master who lived and worked for the cause of religion in India, Adi Sankara, has laid down the prescription: "*Bhagawad Gita* and *Vishnu Sahasranama* are to be chanted; always the form of the Lord of Lakshmi is to be meditated upon. The mind is to be led towards the company of the good. Wealth is to be shared with the needy".'



Swami Sivananda (fourth from right) and Swami Chinmayananda (third from right) on the day of initiation of Swami Chinmayananda to monastic order (February 25, 1949, Mahashivratri Day)³²

³⁰http://media.radiosai.org/Journals/Vol_07/01OCT09/quiz2.htm; accessed on June 28, 2010; and <http://www.slideshare.net/ELDES-PERTARSAI/dharmakshetra-the20-seed20is20-sown-divine20-mission20in20-mumbai20-begins>; accessed on June 28, 2010

³¹http://chyk.net/Chinmaya_works/chinmaya_articles_Spiritual.asp; accessed on June 1, 2009

³²Image Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Swami_Chinmayananda_on_his_day_of_Sannyas_initiation,_with_Guru_Swami_Sivananda_and_other_disciples,_Feb_25,_1949,_Maha_Shivratri_Day.jpg, Accessed on July 17, 2010

‘Now, many people wait for retirement to take to religion. They will never take to it, because they will have new problems in the way.’

Sri Aurobindo³³

‘Money is a sign of universal force, and this force in its manifestation on earth works on the vital and physical planes and is indispensable to the fullness of outer life. In its origin and its true action it belongs to the Divine....

The seekers or keepers of wealth are more often possessed rather than its possessors; few escape entirely a distorting influence stamped on it by its long seizure and perversion by the *asura* (demon). For this reason most spiritual disciplines insist on complete self-control, detachment and renunciation of all bondage to wealth and of all personal and egoistic desire for its possession. Some even put a ban on money and riches and proclaim poverty and bareness of life as the only spiritual condition. But this is an error; it leaves the power in the hands of the hostile forces. To reconquer it for the Divine to whom it belongs and use it divinely for the divine life is the supramental way for the *sadhaka* (devotee).

You must neither turn with an ascetic shrinking from the money power, the means it gives and the object it brings, nor cherish a *rajasic* attachment to them or a spirit of enslaving self-indulgence in their gratifications. Regard wealth simply as a power to be won back for the Mother and placed at her service.

All wealth belongs to the Divine and those who hold it as trustees, not possessors. It is with them today, tomorrow it may be elsewhere. All depends on the way they discharge their trust while it is with them, in what spirit, with what consciousness in their use of it, to what purpose....

Be entirely selfless, entirely scrupulous, exact, careful in detail, a good trustee; always consider that it is her possessions and not your own that you are handling....

Do not look up to men because of their riches or allow yourself to be impressed by the show, the power of influence...’

The Holy Bible³⁴

‘Do not gather and heap up and store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust and worm consume and destroy, and where thieves break through and steal...where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.’



The Holy Bible³⁵

³³*The Mother*, Sri Aurobindo, 1928

³⁴Matthew 6:19-21, The Amplified Bible

³⁵Image Source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bibbia_con_rosa.jpg; accessed on February 10, 2010



Narendranath Dutta, as a college student in the early 1880s and not yet Swami Vivekananda, had knocked at the doors of every great and learned stalwart of Calcutta with just two sharp 'inquiries': 'Sir, have you seen God? If yes, can you show God to me?' Consumed by sacred hunger, this haunted soul had probed every possible corner, only with disappointment in store. Then at last the near-illiterate Sri Ramakrishna shot these straight answers at Naren, 'Yes, I have seen God. If you want, I can show to you too.' These emphatic answers to the two 'inquiries' were proved to the hilt instantly, and also over five relentless years of merciless scrutiny. The rest is history.

Aurobindo Ghosh had spent fourteen years of education (from the age of seven to twenty one) in England – Manchester, London and Cambridge. He too was far away from Sri Aurobindo when he returned to India in 1893. He hardly knew much Bengali or Sanskrit then. In a long letter (August 1905) from Baroda to his wife Mrinalini he wrote about his 'three madnesses'. He pleaded with her to be a true Hindu *sahadharmini* (co-spiritualist) in his pursuit of these madnesses. The second of these is germane for the present. He wrote to this effect: 'If God exists, I must become one with Him'. Indeed, this 'Inquiry' was consummated in the dark and suffocating 100 square feet cell of Alipore jail (1909) through his yogic *darshan* (vision) of Vasudeva. (His two other madnesses were: to give back to society seven-eighths of his earnings and resources, retaining only one eighth for his needs, to avoid the sin of theft; and to love India as his Mother, not treating her as merely a geographical landmass.) Here too the rest is history.

~ An excerpt from *Spirituality in Management: Means or End?*,
SK Chakraborty, Debangshu Chakraborty, Oxford University Press, New
Delhi, 2008. Used with permission.

Swami Vivekananda³⁶

'...At the same time, he (householder) must struggle hard to acquire these things — firstly, knowledge, and secondly, wealth. It is his duty, and if he does not do his duty, he is nobody. A householder who does not struggle to get wealth is immoral. If he is lazy and content to lead an idle life, he is immoral, because upon him depend hundreds. If he gets riches, hundreds of others will be thereby supported.'

'Going after wealth in such a case is not bad, because that wealth is for distribution. The householder is the centre of life and society. It is a worship for him to acquire and spend wealth nobly, for the householder who struggles to become rich by good means and for good purposes is doing practically the same thing for the attainment of salvation as the anchorite does in his cell when he is praying; for in them we see only the different aspects of the same virtue of self-surrender and self-sacrifice prompted by the feeling of devotion to God and to all that is His.'

'If money helps a man to do good to others, it is of some value; but if not, it is simply a mass of evil, and the sooner it is got rid of, the better.'³⁷

³⁶http://www.ramakrishnavivekananda.info/vivekananda/volume_1/karma-yoga/each_is_great.htm;; accessed on April 27, 2010

³⁷http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Swami_Vivekananda; accessed on April 28, 2010

Swami Sivananda³⁸

‘Sins can be destroyed by charity.’

‘Lord Jesus says, “Charity covereth a multitude of sins”. The Gita says: “*Yajno danam tapaschaiva pavanani manishinam*: Yajna, charity and austerity are purifying to the wise”.’

‘Doing abundant, spontaneous and unrestrained charity to relieve the pains of suffering humanity is an effective means to destroy evil nature; give money like water. If you give, the whole wealth of the world will be yours. Money will come to you. This is the immutable, inexorable, unrelenting law of nature. Therefore give, give.’

Sadguru Jaggi Vasudev³⁹

‘Does economic, material progress bring unhappiness? Not necessarily. Money doesn’t bring suffering, stupidity does. Money will bring comfort but it cannot bring joy. Why should comfort and convenience become suffering? We wanted it, so why should what we want become the source of suffering? Just because we have one thing, we completely forget about the other; that’s the problem. Let’s say you went for a South Indian meal, and you ate only pickle, pickle, pickle. It tastes wonderful, but by evening you’ll have problems! So money and affluence is like that. It’s beautiful, if it comes in proportion.’

THE ECONOMICS OF GIVING

In the *Mahabharata*, Bhishma said to Yudhishtira, ‘Rulers should be like good householders. If householders are like trees planted in compounds, rulers are like huge trees that grow at the crossroads. A common householder should extend hospitality to his guests; a ruler should provide protection and support to the poor, the homeless, the destitute, the old and the widowed.’⁴⁰

In the November 2007 issue of *Portfolio*,⁴¹ Arthur Brooks, Professor at Syracuse University’s Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs and Whitman School of Management, states that increase in GDP and charitable giving reinforces each other. Additionally, in a lecture delivered by Brooks on October 16, 2007, he interestingly comments that the return on investment to a dollar given to charity is \$3.75.⁴² Of course, Brooks refers to the US when making these suggestions; we are yet to come across a similar study pertaining to India, considering similar thoughts can possibly be applied to even the Indian context.

Shubh Laabh

The words *shubh* and *laabh* are the first to be written on the financial accounting registers of almost all commercial establishments; this happens just before Deepavali, the time when the commercial year starts as per the Indian calendar. *Shubh* stands for auspicious/good and *laabh* means gain/profit. *Shubh laabh* can thus be termed as profit attained in a righteous manner e.g. profits accrued through the sale of appropriate goods to customers at appropriate prices.

³⁸Swami Sivananda, Light Power and Wisdom, <http://www.dlshq.org/download/lightpower.htm>; accessed on April 27, 2010

³⁹<http://spirituality.indiatimes.com/articleshow/1425256.cms>; accessed on June 28, 2010

⁴⁰*Bhishma@Management and Governance: Traditional Roots of Modern Ethos*, Prayaga Ramakrishna, 2007

⁴¹www.portfolio.com/views/columns/2007/10/15/Charity-Makes-Wealth; accessed on April 27, 2010

⁴²http://marriottschool.byu.edu/marriottmag/winter08/features/speeches1.cfm?page_number=2; accessed on April 27, 2010

Interestingly, *laabh* means accrual, and is somewhat similar to *lobh*, which means lack or greed. *Shubh laabh* applies to both owners and employees. The laws of *Karma* are very much in effect even in the context of *laabh*. On the one hand, it implies that an employee should earn his salary by working hard and not through underhanded means. If an employee earns money through unfair means, the prevalent idea is that he will have to spend the same on curing his family and himself of diseases, etc. Furthermore, actions driven by greed may make an individual extremely preoccupied with such actions that may render him unable to enjoy even the simple pleasures of life. He may be affected by anxiety and worries. And, on the other hand, if an establishment is engaged in unfair business practices, it may have to face sufferings in the guise of tax raids, court hassles, etc. In *Bhaja Govindam* (Verse 18), Adi Shankaracharya exhorts: *Oh, Fool! Give up your insatiable desire for earthly possessions; be sensible and develop serenity and contentment. Be satisfied and happy with whatever you may earn by the sweat of your brow and whatever has destiny marked for your lot.*⁴³ In India, industry/enterprise is referred to as *udyog*. *Udyoga* is also a word used by many to refer to a job that has to be done – thus, indicating that, by engaging in actions with a sacred feeling, and towards the greater common good, *udyog* is meant to take one towards *yoga*.

The use of wealth for a greater common good has been intrinsic to the culture of places of worship; the concept of ‘giving’ has been intricately linked to the ethos of a temple (*Kshetra*). Of the five activities that should be part of a regular practice of a temple, two are related to giving – the giving of knowledge (*jnana daanam*) and the giving of food (*anna daanam*). A project that introduced railways services to the people of Kochi makes for an interesting example of temple property being used to achieve greater common good. It was on July 16, 1902 that the first passenger rail traffic was introduced to this city. The ruler of Kochi funded this project by selling 14 gold elephant caparisons that belonged to the family temple of Lord Poornathreseya⁴⁴ in Tripunithura. *Bhagavatha* states that God would not accept/receive valuable offerings made by people who are devoid of love and compassion for others.

Speaking about the concept of giving, NS Raghavan, founding director and former joint managing director of Infosys in India says: ‘I was addressing a group of Rotary Club members a couple of years ago and I was talking about sharing. You share because you derive happiness by sharing. You do not have to have a lot of possessions before you can share. A wonderful example in real life was narrated to me by my wife. This event occurred in Mumbai. A gentleman, who was passing by with some fresh food from a restaurant in his bag, was approached by a young urchin, all of ten years, with an extended hand. The gentleman looked at the emaciated boy and without too much thinking took out a food packet from his bag and gave it to the beggar boy. The boy, obviously delighted at the prospect of a fresh meal, after God-knows-how-long, was eagerly opening the packet as he walked along.

The boy then came across a very old beggar lying on the roadside with extended hands. The old beggar looked very weak as if he had not eaten any food for days. The young urchin had one long look at the old man and quickly passed on the food packet, of which he had been a recipient just a

⁴³http://www.s-a-i.info/self_trans/verses_18.html; accessed on April 27, 2010

⁴⁴The family temple of Lord Poornathreseya is where the idol of Lord Vishnu is seated under the shade of the five royal hoods of the Divine serpent, *Ananthan*, whose folded body acts as the throne for the Lord.

moment before, and walked off with a smile on his face. This, according to me, is the true spirit of sharing.⁴⁵

All religions speak about tendencies that misdirect man from his innate sense of perfection. The scriptures from India state *ShadRipus* (six enemies) – *kama* (desire), *krodha* (anger), *lobh* (greed), *moha* (delusion), *mada* (pride) and *matsarya* (envy). These scriptures also speak about *asuri sampat* (demonic traits). On the same lines, Christian tradition speaks about the seven cardinal sins – lust, gluttony, greed, sloth, wrath, envy and pride; and Buddhists speak about the 17 mental defilements.

Niran Jiang, born and raised in China, former senior trends' manager at Coca Cola, and marketing manager for SC Johnson in the US, now CEO for the Institute of Human Excellence in Australia says: 'I think finance is a very strong spiritual vehicle, because it touches our own personal interests. I believe in financial sufficiency for everyone that our business touches. I am not going to cut cost from what I give others in order to make more profit, because they need to make a decent living and equitably share the financial abundance we created. Also, I am not going to give in to greed from others; it's that fine balance of the two, of financial sufficiency and greed. In our business we look at each other as partners. We know that we will always be provided for in the way that the universe always has provided for us as successful businesspeople, but we also need to watch out for scarcity and greed. I don't see us as totally clean from that; it creeps in from time to time in different "costumes". We have to stay aware and to rise above such our own desires and attachments' (Refer Footnote #45).



One evening an old Cherokee (indigenous people from the regions of North America) told his grandson about a battle that goes on inside people.

He said: *My son, the battle is between 'two wolves' inside us all.*

One is Evil. It is anger, envy, jealousy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego.

The other is Good. It is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, and faith.

The grandson thought about it for a minute, and then asked his grandfather: *Which wolf wins?*

The old Cherokee simply replied: *The one you feed.*

Law of Karma

Fusilier and Durlabhji⁴⁶ stated that the concept of *karma* influences a number of Indian managers. In Sanskrit, *karma* refers to action or deed. Hindu, Jain, Sikh and Buddhist philosophies speak about the law of karma. References to this law can be found in other religions too, though they are expressed in different ways – 'As you sow, so shall you reap' (*for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap* – King James Version of *The Bible*, Epistle to the Galatians, 6:7). The karmic law holds that our actions are responsible for the experiences we undergo in the present as well as in the future.

⁴⁵Quotations extracted from the public knowledge base of the 'Spiritual Based Leadership Research Programme' are © 2006 by the Global Dharma Center (GDC). GDC retains the copyright to all excerpts from this knowledge base.

⁴⁶'Cultural Values of Indian Managers: An Exploration through Unstructured Interviews', by Marcelline Fusilier and Subhash Durlabhji, *International Journal of Value-Based Management*, 2001

The Buddhists narrate a story related to the life of Gautama – the Buddha. This particular incident depicts the law of *karma*. In one of his previous lives, Gautama was born as the youngest among three princes. One day, while playing in a forest, the princes found a cave where a wounded tiger was lying along with her five cubs. The mother tiger was wounded and weak, and unable to feed her cubs. Seeing this, two of the princes start searching for some food for the tigress and her cubs. While staying near the mother tiger, Gautama had a thought – he could offer himself as food, it would be improper to harm other beings or give their flesh as food to the tigers. He then found some thorns from the forest and pierced them into his body; blood oozed out of Gautama's body was offered to the tigers. Out of compassion, he offered his entire body to the tigers. The karmic connection between the tigers and Gautama was so strong that the tiger and her cubs were reborn as human beings, during exactly the same period when Gautama was also reborn. Following Gautama's enlightenment, it was to these five tigers, reborn as human beings, that Buddha gave his first teachings. Thus, they were the first five disciples of Buddha.



A wall-painting in a Laotian temple showing Gautama in extreme ascetic practices, on the banks of river Phalgu in Bodhgaya, Bihar. The five people to his right are said to be his first five disciples.⁴⁷

As per *Sanathana Dharma*, there are three types of *karma*: *sanchita karma*, *aagami karma* and *prarabhdha karma*. '*Prarabhdha karma* is that which we are experiencing in the present; *sanchita* means all the past *karma*; and *agami* refers to *karma* that will follow in future. *Prarabhdha* is between the *sanchita* and *agami*; we experience it on account of (previous) *sanchita karma*; in that, the result of what we do now will be experienced in the future. Let us consider an example from daily life.

⁴⁷Image Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Ascetic_Bodhisatta_Gotama_with_the_Group_of_Five.jpg, Accessed on February 15, 2010

We stock rice in our storeroom, let us call it *sanchita*. When we want to cook, we bring out some rice from the storeroom to cook, this is called *prarabhda*. What we cook and what we eat will pass out of our body the next day; at times it may be released in the form of a belch – thus, we cannot escape *parabhda*, we must experience it in this very life. While In the storeroom there is only rice, we can transform it into many preparations (recipes)... we can make “pulihora”, “chakrapongal”, “idli”, “dosa” and suchlike – all of which are the names of different preparations of rice. The base does not change, it is always rice; any and every preparation would have to begin with some or more rice. However, if one tries to follow the *satwic* way (a pious and good habits), one can change even *sanchita*. Then, one can find some stones amid the grains of rice – these can be interpreted as the result of bad actions. As they are mixed with rice, one tries to remove these stones from the rice. Thus, it is quite necessary that – when we experience *sanchita* – we can overcome the bad effects to some or great extent, just as we rid the rice grains of the stones’, says Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Thus, the law of *karma* ensures accountability. An individual is responsible for whatever happens to her/him. If one is responsible for a positive action, the fruit will be positive too. Similarly, if one is responsible for a negative action, the result will also be negative. While the law of *karma* holds us accountable for our past doings, it also gives us an opportunity to shape our future. Swami Vivekaanandha said, ‘This misery that I am suffering is of my own doing, and that very thing proves that it will have to be undone by me alone. That which I created, I can demolish; that which is created by someone else, I shall never be able to destroy. Therefore, stand up, be bold, be strong. Take the whole responsibility on your own shoulders, and know that you are the creators of your own destiny. All the strength and succour we want is within ourselves.’⁴⁸

ENFORCING A WORK ETHIC THAT IS ALIEN TO THE ETHOS OF THE LAND

Narrated here is a story that illustrates the result of enforcing work ethics that are alien to the company’s culture. This particular incident relates to Amber Chand, co-founder of the former Internet-based company Eziba in the US, which marketed the products created by artisans from around the world.

There was a tremendous sense of excitement and enthusiasm from all our stakeholders when we established our company in 1999 – for what we all collectively experienced as an innovative, Internet-based, socially responsible model of business that sought to “change the world by hand”. But there was also an accompanying sense of intoxicated exuberance! When launched, the company was surprisingly valued at \$100 million without having sold one object! Forrester Research, an influential research organisation, touted Eziba as one of the most influential Internet companies to watch along with Amazon and Ebay. *Forbes* magazine voted ours as one of the best websites. The accolades were overwhelming and were based on the promise for what we aspired to accomplish and not on any particular reality of accomplishment – we had as yet not even proven our business model.

During this era of heady dot-com exuberance, especially thanks to venture capitalists who often recklessly poured money into new start-up Internet companies which held great promise, armed with a profusion of cash, Eziba was quickly able to build itself into a marketing

⁴⁸http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Swami_Vivekananda#Pearls_of_Wisdom; accessed on April 27, 2010

phenomenon, with billboards on buses in San Francisco and New York, ads in major national publications and a management team of heavyweights from companies such as FAO Schwartz, LL Bean, etc. Money flowed from the company's coffers; the promise to grow into the world's leading retailer of global crafts supporting millions of artisans continued to be projected. But therein lay the seeds of the company's ultimate demise.

I have come to believe that an over-capitalised company can be just as vulnerable as an under-capitalised company – for, unless an organisation is firmly rooted in its unique mission, confident in its innovative and visionary leadership and willing to grow through its own merits and performance, it will not be able to create an enterprise of lasting change. No matter how much money it has! And just as a plant cannot be forced to grow quicker than it can – no matter how much fertilizer it is given – similarly, a business cannot be forced to grow quickly, no matter how much cash is thrown into it. There is an implicit impatience and unsustainability in models of business that set out to grow exponentially within a short period of time.

Excessive money can breed arrogance and a false illusion of stability. And unless it is managed carefully and responsibly and there to support the company in taking its next steps, it can easily turn into a devouring monster. Because Eziba already had \$40 million in investments in its early days, it felt compelled to spend it and to build large operational infrastructure. Big is Beautiful became the aspirational vision.⁴⁹

This business enterprise, Eziba, soon failed.

WESTERN MANAGEMENT DISCIPLINES, ON THE FOUNDATION OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

Many researchers have endeavoured to study the possibilities of integration between Indian ethos and western management disciplines. A lack of such integration and insensitivity towards the cultural paradigms has resulted in the failure of management concepts like 'marketing mix', 'consumer behavior', etc.⁵⁰ While developing a philosophical view of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Muniapan and Das⁵¹ have found that *Arthashastra* provides an inside-outside approach – the development of an individual leader's self-conscience – which is contrary to the outside in perspective of many conventional CSR initiatives. According to an article in *Life Positive* magazine, 'As materialism, consumerism and an I-centric mindset spread their tentacles through the Internet and satellite channels, the spiritual eastern response spearheaded by India is inculcating traditional values and work ethics'.⁵² While, in yesteryears, there was a confronting approach between the oriental and occidental approach to management, there is now a new awareness of balancing the

⁴⁹Quotations extracted from the public knowledge base of the 'Spiritual Based Leadership Research Programme' are © 2006 by the Global Dharma Center (GDC). GDC retains the copyright to all excerpts from this knowledge base

⁵⁰*The Challenge for Indian MBA: Bridging the gap between Philip Kotler and Countryside India*, Sumit D Gupta, The Brand Channel, February 2004

⁵¹'Corporate Social Responsibility: A Philosophical Approach from an Ancient Indian Perspective', by B Muniapan, M Dass, *International Journal of Indian Culture and Business Management*, Vol.1, No. 4, 2008

⁵²Life Positive, <http://www.lifepositive.com/Mind/work/corporate-management/business-spirituality.asp>; accessed on April 27, 2010

two approaches – from the ‘West versus East’ to ‘WE’ approach.⁵³ These integrative approaches try to create a holistic perspective where theory meets practice. It has been suggested that the practice of spirituality in the workplace should be unconditional,⁵⁴ else it becomes yet another technique to justify non-holistic behaviors, and soon that practice may also turn out to be a fad. Says Peter Senge, ‘If the larger context does not change, spirituality becomes yet another technique to keep doing what we have always been doing’.⁵⁵



Mining the Gold

After living in India for several years, we became aware of the enormous wisdom that is inherent in the Indian ethos. When asked to write a short article for *Management Next*, we felt compelled to express our deep gratitude for this wisdom in the following words:

‘Imagine a time before gold was considered to be the most precious metal - when instead, silver was the metal-of-choice for jewellery and other items. Imagine also that India was importing most of its silver from the west where it was more abundant.

Then one day, an Indian businessman realised that gold was superior not only to silver, but also that India had the largest reserves of un-mined gold in the world. Seeing the foolishness of letting such a rich resource remain untapped, he began an intensive effort to bring this precious gold to the world.

From our past experience as business executives in America, the silver we’re referring to here is the set of western leadership/management disciplines that have enabled success in the global marketplace, though at a great price to the health of many societies and the environment. And the gold we’re speaking of is the ancient Indian spiritual heritage that has guided kings, sages, leaders, business people, and everyday workers to create wealth in a righteous manner for the benefit of all.

Like silver, western disciplines have their own value and can certainly play an important role in all business endeavours. However, Indian ethos can provide the pure, wholesome spiritual foundation from which the ultimate health of all business endeavours can spring forth.

Comparing the two is like comparing technologists with strategists. Technologists have the resource management skills to develop unbelievable manipulations of creation; but strategists are the ones who determine the purpose and meaning for what will be developed, and how.

With Indian ethos providing a foundation of spiritual purpose and meaning, western disciplines can take on their proper roles in developing enterprises that serve the ultimate good of society... which then nurtures the ultimate good of the enterprises themselves. This would also be fulfilling the advice of the Hindu scripture, *Yagnavalkya Smriti*:

‘Leaders should be pure in body and mind and free from avarice... and should do what is in the welfare of the society and the organisation.’ (*Yagnavalkya Smriti* 2. 191)

The business environment in India and around the world sorely needs the active presence of Indian spiritual ethos. The Enron scandal in the US and the levels of bribery and corruption in India as well as in many other countries – all point to the same problem: the lack of a deeply felt spiritual foundation from which to conduct all government and business activities.

Herein lies the opportunity for India to mine its rich spiritual heritage and to become the spiritual leader of the global market place. Just like gold, this heritage has the power to transform the very nature of business and all of its activities within India and around the world. From this, we can all reap the benefits of a business environment that is grounded in spiritual and moral principles, while having the skills to produce efficient and effective products and services.

⁵³Indian Ethos, Indian Culture and Indian Management: Towards New Frontiers in Management Thinking, Subhash Sharma, Conference Proceedings of the ICSSR and COSMODE Workshop, 2005

⁵⁴‘Technical Spirituality at Work: Jacques Ellul on Workplace Spirituality’, by Cathy Driscoll and Elden Wieb, *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 2007

⁵⁵http://www.compassionate-economy.de/loekospirit/Peter_Senge_on-Spirituality.pdf; accessed on May 3, 2010

So, where do we start? It all begins with being willing to embody what the Hindu scripture *Brihaspati Smriti* says:

'The businessman must be a person of character and integrity with self control... and be an example to others for the practice of ethical values.' (*Brihaspati Smriti* 17.9)

To begin with, individuals can start 'mining the rich, bountiful reserves of spiritual gold' in their own organisations, no matter what country or culture they may belong to:

- Strengthen personal spiritual foundation and draw from it in the course of day-to-day work;
- Make spiritual principles the foundation for all relationships;
- Embody spiritual principles in daily business transactions; and
- Build communities of like-minded people who genuinely desire to mine this gold and employ it within organisations.

Ultimately, these steps will naturally 'export' the gold of spiritual heritage to others and will ensure that spiritual-based business practices lead us toward a prosperous and sustainable future for the entire planet.

Now, let us ask how we can mine the rich spiritual heritage of our culture and put it into practice in everyday leadership?

~ From *Put Your Spirituality to Work: Spiritual-Based Leaders*

Here is what Sri Sathya Sai Baba says about the artificial integration of another set of values and management practices that are incongruent with the culture of this land:

'There is no meaning for one country to naively imitate or copy the management practices of another. Such imitation often leads to wastage of resources and many undesirable results. This is happening in many countries, including India. What is good or suitable for one country need not necessarily be good for another. While evolving policies and procedures, we should have regard for the circumstances, the individual attainments, and the specific requirements of our country. The culture and values of India are different from those of others; these differences cannot be treated alike. The artificial integration of different sets of values may result in the erosion of values of a less developed country.

There is a story that illustrates how, by listening to the views of all and sundry, one makes oneself a laughing stock and consequently suffers loss in the deal. A fruit vendor put up a signboard over his stall: "Fruits are sold here". A passer-by told the shopkeeper that the word 'here' in the signboard was superfluous. The vendor therefore erased the word "here". Another man came along to say that there was no need to announce that fruits were being "sold" as that was self-evident. So, the word 'sold' was also erased. A third man said that there was no need to mention that "fruits" were being sold; what was being sold in the shop was obvious to everyone. Ultimately, all that remained was a blank signboard. The fruit vendor realised the folly of acting impulsively upon the slipshod advice of every passer-by without relying on his own judgment.'⁵⁶

Academics have drawn attention to the need for a holistic frame in overcoming fragmented viewpoints of contemporary management by strengthening the reflective domains of the managerial world.⁵⁷ Inquiries have been made as to how oriental religious thoughts/philosophies can be connected to economic development. EF Schumacher is one such notable economic thinker, known for his book *Small is Beautiful: Economics As If People Mattered*, considered among the 100 most

⁵⁶ *Man Management: The Gita of Management*, Sri Sathya Sai Students and Staff Welfare Society, Prasanthi Nilayam, 2005. Excerpt used with permission

⁵⁷ 'Managerial Ethos of the Indian Tradition: Relevance of a Wisdom Model', Samir Ranjan Chatterje, *Journal of Indian Business Research*, 2009

influential books published since World War II by Times Literary Supplement. His book speaks about concepts like Buddhist economics.

In the sections that follow, we will deal with concepts that link religious thoughts with economics and/or finance.

NON-VIOLENT ECONOMY: BUDDHIST ECONOMICS AND GROSS NATIONAL HAPPINESS⁵⁸

Bhutan's interest in developing a gross national happiness index (GNH) reflects great wisdom. GNH is intended to be a more accurate measure of wellbeing than gross national product (GNP), the primary indicator of wellbeing in most nations. GNP is a crude measure that takes into account many negatives as positives (e.g. incarceration, illness). In addition, it fails to account for services that enhance wellbeing (e.g. parenting, volunteering), degradation of critical assets (e.g. forests, water, air), and intangible factors such as happiness (the ultimate goal of most people).



Happiness cannot be pursued; it must ensue, and it only does so as the unintended side effect of one's personal dedication to a cause greater than oneself or as the by-product of one's surrender to a person other than oneself.

~ Viktor Frankl

Probably, it is no coincidence that most economies are rapidly degrading environmental life-support systems, ultimately resulting in growing obesity, use of anti-depressant drugs and so on. What does not get measured does not get managed.

Developing GNH provides an opportunity for Bhutan to clarify economic and social priorities, even as the nation considers greater use of western products and technologies. Developing countries often pay a high price for integrating with western economies. Bhutan has many assets, one of the most important being a strong culture based on respect for families, communities and the elderly. It is one of the few regions where humans live in a sustainable or near-sustainable manner. It also appears to have a high level of happiness (as is indicated by the lack of violence and other factors).

The process of developing GNH can help Bhutan protect its strong culture by clarifying trade-offs involved with Western integration. This clarification can show which development actions may or may not be worth it. In addition to maximising the social wellbeing of Bhutan, GNH will also provide a more sophisticated and effective economic development and measurement model for other regions.

To help guide development of GNH, Frank Dixon's paper analyses western economic systems. Drivers of environmental and social problems will be discussed with the goal of helping Bhutan avoid these pitfalls. The paper then suggests a strategy for developing GNH as well as the economic and social programs that would underlie it.

⁵⁸ 'Gross National Happiness: Improving Unsustainable Western Economic Systems', paper presented by Frank Dixon at the GNH Conference in Thimphu, Bhutan, February 2004. The related-images inserted are not part of the original article.

WESTERN ECONOMIC SYSTEMS

Western economic systems have produced great improvements in many areas including technology, medicine and the provision of essential and non-essential goods and services. However, as industrial economies continue to grow in a finite world, the overall impact is increasingly negative. Inefficient use of resources, high levels of pollution and numerous social disruptions resulting from industrialisation have caused human society to be grossly unsustainable. Studies conducted by the World Resources Institute, among others, show that, with some regional exceptions, every life-support system on the planet is on the decline (e.g. clean air, clean water, forests, topsoil, aquifers, fisheries, wetlands, biodiversity). Social pressure and turmoil are increasing worldwide, driven by population growth, a widening gap between the rich and the poor and other such adverse factors.



Indra's net

Indrajaal – this metaphor for Indra's net is found in *Avatamsaka Sutra*, a 3rd century Buddhist scripture.

'Far away in the heavenly abode of the great god Indra, there is a wonderful net which has been hung by some cunning artificer in such a manner that it stretches out infinitely in all directions. In accordance with the extravagant tastes of deities, the artificer has hung a single glittering jewel in each 'eye' of the net, and since the net itself is infinite in dimension, the jewels are infinite in number. There hang the jewels, glittering like stars in the first magnitude, a wonderful sight to behold. If we now arbitrarily select one of these jewels for inspection and look closely at it, we will discover that in its polished surface there are reflected *all* the other jewels in the net, infinite in number. Not only that, but each of the jewels reflected in this one jewel is also reflecting all the other jewels, so that there is an infinite reflecting process occurring.'



~ This excerpt (used with permission) is from
Hua-Yen Buddhism: The Jewel Net of Indra
authored by Francis Harold Cook and
published by Penn State Press.

Image source: http://www.geocities.com/the_wanderling/indras_net.html; accessed on June 1, 2009
(Credit and copyright: Gail Atkins)

Social distress is evident even in prosperous regions. Americans, for example, medicate themselves with food (two-third of the US population is overweight), television (six hours per day on average), and anti-depressant drugs (rapidly growing use).

Lack of Systems Perspective

Unsustainability is driven largely by the failure to adopt and act from a systems perspective. A cell cannot survive apart from the body. So the relevant perspective for human health is at the level of the total body. In the same way, a human cannot survive apart from the earth. So the relevant perspective for human survival and prosperity is global. Every person, plant, animal and thing on this planet is part of one interconnected system. This total system is too complex for any one person to understand. As a result, systems are broken into parts (reductionism) and studied in isolation rather than in relation to each other.

Modern economic and business theories were developed from this limited perspective. Firms are seen as being separate from each other and the rest of society. It is believed that they must compete with each other for scarce resources. Modern economic theory also states that profits must grow indefinitely; failure to grow would be equal to death. However, in the real world, it is the failure to restrain growth that is equivalent to death. Encouraging subcomponents of a system to compete with each other and grow indefinitely is analogous to cancer in the human body. Ultimately, cancer kills the host, then dies itself. Despite the best of intentions, this is exactly what modern economic systems are doing to the earth.

This shortsighted action on the part of humans is completely understandable. Nearly all academic knowledge has been developed from the perspective of the individual human mind (as it is the same mechanism that does the contemplating). However, as noted earlier, this perspective is not relevant for human survival and prosperity.

The wisdom of Buddhism is in seeing beyond the illusion that the individual is separate from the rest of the world (fostered by the five senses) to the reality that everything is interconnected (a reality being shown by quantum physics and other branches of science). Through the experience of millions, Buddhism and other traditional religions have shown that expanding one's perspective from being an isolated individual to being part of one interconnected system leads to a more fulfilling, sustainable and effective existence.

This wiser, larger perspective is as relevant for business and other human organisations as it is for the individual. Businesses actually are part of one interconnected system (whether they realise it or not). Raising business consciousness means helping firms understand and act upon this knowledge of interconnectedness. From this perspective, firms maximise their own wellbeing by working to maximise the wellbeing of the overall system.

Note: A new sustainability approach called 'total corporate responsibility' (TCR) helps firms improve upon financial performance through adoption of a systems perspective. TCR and related papers are available at www.globalsystemchange.com

Short-term Thinking

Time-frame is yet another key element of perspective. For instance, 70 years may seem like a long time to the individual human mind, but from the perspective of this planet (again, the relevant

perspective for human survival and prosperity), 70 years is almost instantaneous. From the human perspective, firms competing with each other and generating some negative environmental and social impacts appears rational and acceptable, though perhaps suboptimal. However, from a global perspective, this action is irrational and suicidal. As discussed earlier, when seen from a larger perspective, business (as currently operated) seems to be like cancer on this planet.

Another illusion caused by the short human time-frame is the idea of one person or business prospering, relative to another. Under the current economic system, it is thought that groups of people and firms can prosper relative to others. In the short-term, this appears to be true. But if this 'prospering' destroys the environmental and social systems that support humanity over the long-term, are these groups really prospering? That would be like dining in a luxury cabin on the Titanic... as it sinks!

It is more realistic to think of human prosperity from the perspective of the human race over the long-term, rather than from the individual perspective. The latter would be like thinking from the perspective of a cell in the body. In reality, the cell can only prosper if the body prospers. It is the same for humans with relation to the earth – humans can only prosper if the earth prospers.

Lack of Natural Wisdom

The short-term, narrow, survival-oriented perspective of the human mind is a key driver of unsustainability. From this perspective, it appears logical to maximise one's wellbeing at the expense of others. However, as noted above, this 'logic' is highly irrational when seen from a larger perspective. In one sense, the human ability to think has made humans the least intelligent creatures on the planet, as evidenced by the fact that life support systems are being destroyed while many are made unhappy.

The fact that other creatures act on intuition places them in harmony with larger systems and renders them sustainable. Humanity has become quite arrogant. It is surrounded by vastly greater intelligence, but nevertheless fails to recognise its lack of sophistication. The simplest of nature's creations is almost infinitely more complex than the greatest of human inventions. Humans have access to this level of wisdom through greater use of the intuitive function. Unfortunately, the so-called rational, scientific human mind often discounts or discredits information that it does not understand, in part because of the human ego's need to understand and control.

More traditional cultures which value contemplation – such as Bhutan – have greater access to this intuitive wisdom, the wisdom of nature. These cultures have lived sustainably for hundreds, even thousands of years, often with much higher levels of happiness (as indicated by family stability, lack of violence and other factors).

The US-led Global Economy

The global economy is led by a young nation, the US. Unlike the US, the older, more mature cultures value the elderly, wisdom that comes from a life well-lived, peaceful co-existence, and inner rather than outer prosperity.

The US was founded upon some excellent principles. For example, each person has the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Over the years, the US has brought great benefits to the world by supporting peace, democracy and human rights, as well as through US-led advances in



*Angkor Wat, a temple complex at Cambodia dedicated to Lord Vishnu and the philosophy of Theravada Buddhism*⁵⁹

technology and medicine. However, the large negative environmental and social impacts of the US are less obvious, especially to many Americans.

Clearly, the founding fathers of the US believed the primary obligation of a government was to protect and provide for future generations. They often used the word posterity. In his inaugural address, Thomas Jefferson spoke of preserving the Union for the 10,000th generation. However, economic and political systems have evolved in such a way that the US and other western governments are forced to retain a short-term focus.

SYSTEMIC FLAWS DRIVING UNSUSTAINABILITY

Perhaps the largest flaw of our economic systems is the failure to hold firms fully responsible for their negative environmental and social impacts. Failing to hold firms fully responsible in a competitive market essentially forces them to be irresponsible and unsustainable. This occurs because firms attempting to fully mitigate impacts would put themselves out of business (costs would become too high relative to firms that are not fully mitigating).

Given the immense complexity of the overall system of the earth, it is understandable why firms are not held fully responsible. It is difficult to quantify negative impacts (especially intangible ones) and include them in/as prices. Nevertheless, greater efforts must be made to hold firms fully responsible if human society ever hopes to achieve sustainability.

⁵⁹Image Source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Monks_at_Angkor_Wat.jpg; accessed on July 17, 2010

Flaws of the Economic System

Flaws in the economic system include the failure to incorporate externalities into prices, the failure to consider limits to growth, and under-valuing of future generations due to time-value-of-money concepts.

Coal-fired electricity illustrates one of the many failures to incorporate externalities into prices. It is known that burning coal brings about premature deaths, various types of illness, birth defects (from mercury), and acid rain damaged forests among other negative impacts. These are real costs paid by society that are not included in price of electricity. This creates the illusion that coal-fired electricity is cheap, when it actually may be the most expensive form of power generation. This subsidisation of coal (and other fossil fuels) causes vast over-consumption and significantly drives humanity's unsustainable state. From the society's perspective, it is inefficient to not incorporate externalities into prices since it is usually much more expensive to clean up pollution rather than to prevent it (assuming that cleaning up is even possible).

Failure to consider limits to growth illustrates the simplistic and unsophisticated nature of human economic theories and systems. Natural systems are infinitely more sophisticated than human systems. Modeling human economic systems after nature would make humanity sustainable. In nature, systems such as forests grow then level off, forming a sustainable balance with other systems. The idea that a business or national economy should grow indefinitely in a finite world is illogical and unrealistic. A more sophisticated economic system would recognise that firms also have optimal sizes. Companies should be rewarded for achieving and maintaining optimal size.

Time-value-of-money, a concept of foundational economics, is based on the idea that resources are worth more today than in the future. This is logical from the perspective of reductionism because it is better to have resources, such as food, today rather than in the future. However, this concept is illogical from a systems' perspective because it says that people and resources beyond 50 to 100 years are worthless. Therefore, protecting them would be a foolish economic decision. This concept often compels business and political leaders to act as if the people they love the most, their grandchildren, are worthless. The overall goal of an economic system should be to maximise the wellbeing of society over the long-term. Time-value-of money is one of many system flaws causing western economic systems to work in contradiction to this goal.

Flaws of the Political System

Flaws in the political system include the ability of companies to financially influence politicians (in effect, bribery). When politicians must rely on funding from corporations and their owners to get elected, the government becomes primarily focused on serving short-term corporate ends. This focus is illustrated by an 1872 mining law in the US that allows companies to buy rights to minerals on federal land for \$5 per acre. For many years, firms have lobbied and provided funding to politicians who vote to maintain this law. As a result, Chevron was able to pay \$10,000 for rights to mine platinum and palladium worth an estimated \$30 billion on 2,000 acres near Yellowstone National Park.

Natural resources belong to the current and future citizens, not to the government. The government is supposed to manage resources fairly on behalf of owners by preserving them or selling them at market prices. When it receives campaign contributions from firms, and then sells resources



Brown pelican birds affected by the 'Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill', an offshore oil spill that occurred in April 2010, in Gulf of Mexico.⁶⁰

to these firms at deep discounts, it is in effect stealing from the rightful owners of these resources and lowering revenues that could have been used to reduce income taxes. Another major flaw of the political/legal system is the limited liability corporate structure. This structure is intended to facilitate corporate investment by not holding firms and their owners fully responsible for negative impacts on society. As stated earlier, failing to hold firms fully responsible in a competitive market forces them to negatively impact society. Taxpayers often must pay to remediate environmental and social problems caused by firms. This process is grossly inefficient because remediation is virtually always far more expensive than prevention.

The limited liability structure provides unlimited upside potential to investors, but caps the downside by transferring risk mostly to low and middle-income taxpayers. This structure is a major factor driving the widening gap between rich and poor, as well as many other environmental and social declines.

The government is supposed to hold firms fully responsible when they negatively impact society, in the same way that government holds individuals responsible when they commit crimes. However, when firms are allowed to give money to politicians and when corporate structures limit liability, it becomes impossible to hold firms fully responsible. This causes many negative impacts on society, such as over-consumption of resources (from under-pricing), increased pollution and related public health impacts (from not holding firms fully responsible for the negative impacts of pollution), and corporate welfare.

⁶⁰Image source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Gulf-Oiled-Pelicans-June-3-2010.jpg>, accessed on July 2, 2010

Corporate welfare occurs when taxpayers must live with or pay to remediate the negative impacts of firms and when national resources are sold below market value. It also occurs when children are required to fund current corporate wealth transfers through increased national debt. Allowing these policies implements a reverse Robin Hood situation where wealth is taken mostly from current and future, low and middle-income taxpayers and given mostly to the wealthy.

Ending the ability of anyone to financially influence politicians and implementing complete public funding of political campaigns would enable government to hold firms fully responsible for negative impacts. This would align the wellbeing of business with that of society by making full responsibility the profit maximising path. It also would reduce taxes by far more than any other tax reduction activity. Ending the thousands of corporate welfare abuses, such as the Chevron example above, would reduce taxes probably in the range of hundreds of billions of dollars.

Flaws in the Social System

These flaws in the social area include the largely unregulated ability of organisations to influence public opinion and values through advertising and media. Focused on maximising sales and earnings, companies view citizens primarily as consumers of goods and services. Advertising is used to create a perceived need and prompt a purchase. This is frequently done by exploiting the human needs for self-esteem, love and connection to others. Advertisements often use strong emotional appeals that imply purchasing a product will meet these non-material needs.

A common and intended consequence of advertising is that consumers feel inadequate without the product. Widespread use of this type of advertising creates a pervasive sense of emptiness and low self-esteem in society. Emotionally false advertising does not tell consumers that non-material needs are met through activities such as being a good spouse, parent and neighbor, doing fulfilling work or being in nature, considering organisations would hardly make money that way. Conventional advertising is one of the most destructive influences in society; it is one of the root causes of increasing compulsive behavior and depression.

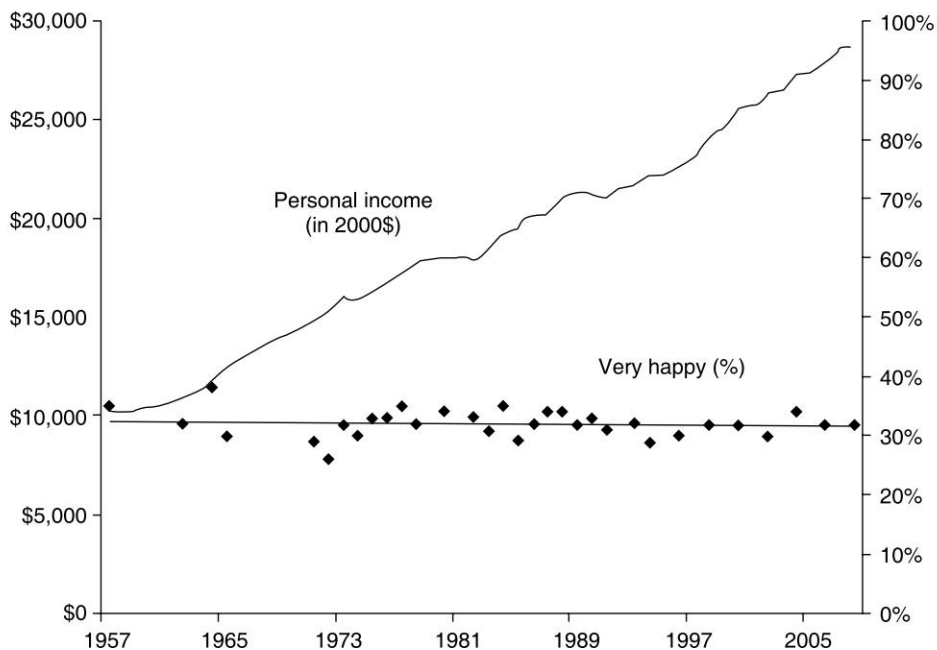
Today, organisations have the ability to unfairly influence and mislead public opinion with overwhelming financial resources, relative to other stakeholder groups, and the control of many media outlets. Founders of the US were concerned about this abuse of power; they often spoke of the evils of democracy and were concerned that the uninformed public could be whipsawed by sound bites. As a result, they structured the country to be a republic, where politicians study complex issues and make expert decisions on behalf of current and future generations, rather than a democracy, where the uninformed majority rules, often through opinion polls.

Given that politicians are often seen as serving corporate interests rather than the public good, they do not receive the public trust and support needed to make tough decisions. In this environment of distrust, public opinion is highly vulnerable to corporate misinformation campaigns. In pursuit of profit maximisation, some firms seek to confuse the public about key issues in an effort to avoid being held responsible for their negative impacts. A good example is when oil companies publish ads questioning the reality of climate change, even though nearly all scientists not receiving funding from firms agree climate change is largely induced by human activities and will have significant negative impacts on society.

Gross National Product

Another flaw of western economic systems is the method of measuring social wellbeing (GNP). In all fairness, GNP was never intended to be a measure of overall social wellbeing. Instead, it was to be a measure of economic growth. The western economic theory makes the assumption that economic growth will enhance social wellbeing; which is true in some ways. Like, for instance, when basic human needs are better met. However, GNP is an incomplete measure. It does not account for the environmental and social degradations that often accompany economic development.

Economic growth is intended to be a means to the end of social wellbeing. However, as society focuses on what is being measured, the means become the end. In other words, western nations make the mistake of equating economic growth to social wellbeing.



This image, which is not part of the article, indicates the personal income (buying power) of an American (in the X axis), and the percentage of the sample population who are 'very happy' (in the Y axis). While the buying power (adjusted for inflation) of an average American has improved almost thrice since the 1950s, the reported percentage of the sample population that is 'very happy' has remained almost unchanged, at around 30 percent. Source: www.davidmyers.org; used with permission.

Social wellbeing is a complex measure comprising many tangible and intangible factors. It cannot be reduced to one quantitative, monetised number. GNP is a misleading indicator of social wellbeing because it counts growth of many social negatives as positive, such as incarceration, medical costs, use of anti-depressant, environmental damage and related remediation. The measure also does not value many of the services which contribute most to social wellbeing, such as parenting, mentoring and volunteer work.



Students should not think that education is for a living. Education is for life and not for living. Animals, birds and beasts are also living. To which universities have they gone? Which education did they get? If it is for the sake of livelihood alone, then education is not necessary. This education must become useful for others in the society and life must become an ideal life.

~ Sri Sathya Sai Baba

GNP also fails as a measure of social wellbeing since it does not account for assets. Businesses gauge financial condition and performance by using a balance sheet and income statement. Using GNP to measure social wellbeing (or even economic performance) would be like a firm using only an income statement to measure financial condition. A more accurate indicator of social wellbeing would decline when assets, such as forests, clean air and clean water, were consumed. Finally GNP fails as an indicator of social wellbeing because it does not measure intangibles, such as inner peace and happiness (factors that many consider to be the ultimate goal of life).

It is critical that an alternative to GNP be developed in large part because society tends to manage what is measured. If humanity does not measure the state of its life support systems or the happiness of people, these issues will continue to be low priority (in relation to what is measured – GNP). Failing to measure environmental and social conditions will drive further declines and cause humanity to become even more unsustainable.

DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING GROSS NATIONAL HAPPINESS

In perhaps the most important areas, Bhutan appears to be ahead of many western nations. The nation is one of the few regions where human beings live at or near a sustainable level. In addition, the Bhutanese people seem to have higher levels of happiness as measured by family stability, lack of violence and other metrics. However, life is hard for many Bhutanese. Western technology, products and know-how could help improve living conditions and better meet basic needs in many cases. The difficult part will be gaining these benefits while avoiding the environmental and social degradations that nearly always accompany western-style development.

Development is a misleading word since it implies improvement. Countries often wind up worse off in many ways from their exposure to Western ideas, marketing, technology, and business practices. For example, western business models force companies to focus primarily on growth. To increase sales, advertising is used to get people to buy products, often by making them feel inadequate without the advertised product.

In many cases, this type of advertising causes young people in developing countries to lose interest in their values – values that have sustained these cultures for many years. As a result, young people often move from villages to cities where they often do not find work or sustenance. Through this process, advertising and western media can cause social degradation by divorcing a country from its traditional values.

Economic development is often prompted by western corporations seeking new markets and new sources of raw materials. Financial institutions, such as the World Bank, provide funding for infrastructure construction, which in turn provides revenues to Western firms. To pay off debt, de-

veloping countries are often compelled to adopt an export-oriented economy, which is usually built upon export of their natural resources.

Through corruption, weak legal systems and intense economic pressure, countries often wind up selling their resources for much less than market value. This infrastructure-debt-export cycle can cause living conditions to worsen as economies shift from meeting internal needs to generating foreign exchange through exports. In addition, this process frequently results in severe environmental degradation and disruption of indigenous cultures.

GNH can be the measurement component of an overall plan to maximise social wellbeing. The first step in developing GNH would be to identify a preferred society in the greatest detail possible. This information would be used to identify the relevant components and metrics of GNH. Finally, a practical plan to achieve GNH goals could be developed and implemented.

ESTABLISHING GOALS

With input from all stakeholder groups in Bhutan, the components and goals of a preferred society should be identified. Social goals and priorities are implicitly known and conveyed through cultural processes in Bhutan. However, it will be important to make these goals more specific as Bhutan considers western style development. Having more specific social goals and priorities will help Bhutan determine which development actions would enhance social wellbeing and which would degrade it.

Social goals should be established in great detail. The process would comprehensively look at all tangible and intangible aspects of society. Goals would be established in areas including education, health care, housing, clothing, food and nutrition, shelter, environmental and habitat protection, parents spending time with and raising children, arts, business practices, infrastructure, legal and regulatory issues, and reported levels of happiness.

This process can be achieved through various mechanisms. For example, an interdisciplinary group of experts could develop a report that addresses all these issues and makes proposals over the short, mid and long term. This would serve as a starting point for dialogue among Bhutanese stakeholder groups. Over time, a consensus document could be produced that would guide development of GNH.

Developing GNH Metrics

Using the ideal state defined above, specific metrics can be identified to measure performance on every tangible and intangible aspect of social wellbeing. For each metric, current performance would be quantified and short, mid and long-term goals would be established. This process may be highly complex as many intangible factors will be difficult to quantify. As a result, proxies will be needed to track performance for some intangible factors.

Complexity will be further increased by the likely need to develop alternative means of measuring success. Literacy and education provide good examples of this. Illiteracy is high in Bhutan. This would be seen as bad from a Western perspective. However, Bhutanese children may be far better educated on the most important aspects of life than American children. Bhutanese children spend much more time with their parents. In doing so, they learn cultural values, social skills, and the agricultural and other skills needed to sustain them over their lives.

In the US education system, children must attain the same set of knowledge (math, science, english, etc.). A competitive grading system teaches children to see peers as obstacles to their success (which weakens social skills). It also makes children feel inadequate if they are not good at a subject in which they may have no interest. This system encourages conformity, rather than encouraging children to find their own unique passions and interests, then build their lives upon them.

In addition, children are made to sit for up to seven hours per day, five days per week and listen to an adult talk to them, something few adults would want to do. Children are meant to be moving around and learning by doing.



As per the 2009 Happy Planet Index rankings, an indicator that reveals the ecological efficiency with which human wellbeing is delivered, Bhutan is ranked 17th among 143 nations, while the US is ranked 114th. India is ranked 35th.

Add to this obesity, drug use, teenage pregnancy, depression, suicide and weak academic performance relative to other nations and it appears Bhutanese children are far better educated than American children. This illustrates why it is critical to identify the preferred state of society and use this to guide selection of performance metrics. Simply accepting Western social performance standards might be a mistake.

Once metrics and performance standards have been established, they can be assembled into an overall GNH measure. Rather than attempting to render the state of society down to one number like GNP, GNH would provide a suite of performance indicators. The performance of society is highly complex and needs to be expressed on many dimensions. By following this approach, GNH would provide a far more accurate measure of social wellbeing than GNP.

Developing a Strategy to Achieve GNH Goals

The process of identifying ideal and actual social performance reveals performance gaps. Through a stakeholder dialogue process, these gaps can be prioritised. This process could be expedited if the expert report contains suggestions to prioritise areas which need improvement. Again, this report could also serve as a basis to initiate stakeholder dialogue.

A specific action plan to maximise GNH cannot be developed until social performance gaps are identified and prioritised. Once these are established, the following guidelines may be useful in developing a successful plan:

(1) Minimise the need for foreign exchange

As noted earlier, less developed countries often pay a high environmental and social price for incurring debt and developing an export-oriented economy. This is why it is important to understand the tradeoffs that would occur from importing western products and technology. Development strategies should be focused on getting the benefits of western technology and products without having to pay high social costs. For example, rather than importing products, Bhutan may be able to work with other parties to build low cost factories that produce the desired products in Bhutan. This would create jobs and minimise import costs, thus reducing the need for foreign exchange.

Considering how Bhutan would be developing a more effective and sustainable economic system that could be used as a model by other nations, it is likely that several parties would help in this process. For example, foundations, non-governmental organisations, high net worth individuals, national governments and other organisations probably would provide some funding for such projects. These organisations could also help in developing creative strategies to minimise the cost of factory construction and sourcing raw materials.

An emphasis should be placed on importing or building only products and technologies that are environmentally and socially responsible. Priority probably should also be given to essential goods and services, rather than non-essential items. Areas to consider might include renewable energy, housing, organic agriculture and foods, clothing and medical care.

(2) Develop more effective and sustainable business models

In the West, especially the US, the means have become the end. Society appears to be focused on helping business prosper (as indicated by the short-term focus of government, the corruption of social values through advertising and many other factors). However, business is meant to serve society rather than dominate it.



In 1997, in response to the question, 'Which early boyhood learning proved to be your mainstay throughout your illustrious career?', RK Talwar (former chairman, State Bank of India and IDBI) had replied:

'I began my schooling in Karachi, and shortly thereafter, we moved to Lahore in 1939. There I found my mother reading the *Gita* (in Hindi) daily. I also took to it – without her knowledge. For some time, I could understand very little of it. But gradually the *Gita* grew onto me – though I was only around 13 or 14 at that time. As I grew older, my mechanical reading habit became enriched with meaning. I later joined the Imperial Bank of India in Calcutta in 1948–49 as a Junior Officer. Ever since, I have been working on the foundation of verse II.47 of the *Gita*.'

~ An excerpt (used with permission) from '
Spirituality in Management: Means or End?',
SK Chakraborty and Debangshu Chakraborty,
Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2008.

Guiding principles, laws and regulations should be established to ensure that business always serves rather than dominates Bhutan. These principles should ensure that business is always held fully responsible for negative environmental and social impacts. If it is difficult to quantify impacts (as it might be with intangible social impacts), a panel of unbiased experts could estimate the cost and include the same in the prices. In this way, being fully responsible would be the profit-maximising path. As noted earlier, not holding organisations responsible forces them to be irresponsible.

Another key guiding principle is that there should be no pressure for businesses to grow. Instead, organisations should be offered incentives to seek optimal size and become more efficient over time. This process could be modeled after the infinitely more sophisticated natural systems of which humanity is a part. In nature, systems grow then level off, achieving an optimal balance with other systems. Of course, it is much simpler to say organisations should always grow. Yet, this simplicity

is destructive. The more difficult and sophisticated approach is to take a systems view and determine the organisations' optimal roles and sizes in the region(s) they serve.

In addition, as firms become more efficient, they should be delivering more value at a lower cost. This implies that the ideal state for a business, whose size has stabilised, would be to witness a decline in its revenues. This raises concerns about the ability to attract investment. However, such problems can be addressed if solving them becomes a priority for society. Nature is amazingly sophisticated and complex. Being part of nature, humans have the ability to replace their overly simplistic and destructive economic and business systems with ones that are more sophisticated and sustainable.

(3) Prohibit western-style advertising

The primary goal of western nations is economic growth (as indicated by the focus of government and business and by the method used to measure success – GNP). To achieve economic growth, businesses must continually sell more goods and services. Failing to do this often means organisational death in western economic systems.

To continually increase sales, businesses use advertising to compel consumption. As stated earlier, this is often done by taking advantage of human needs for love, self-esteem and acceptance by peers. Cultural messages define what it means to be successful and how one can be accepted by peers. Traditionally these messages were communicated by parents and the larger community. Traditional cultural messages taught and encouraged young people to be honest, kind and respectful to elderly people.

Advertising takes advantage of the strong influence that cultural messages have over the way people live their lives. It often seeks to redefine social standards for the purpose of selling products. Rather than encouraging young people to be fair, honest and respectful (something firms make no money on), advertising usually implies that the way to be successful and admired by peers is to buy and consume certain products. Ads often show attractive people having a good time by owning or consuming the advertised product.

In the US, children see an average of over 100,000 commercials and ads by the time they graduate from high school. Each of these is a mini sermon on the religion of materialism; it tells young people that the way to be accepted is to be attractive and to buy certain products. This drives an obsession with appearance, especially among young girls. This in turn drives depression, eating disorders, obesity, drug use and other compulsive behaviors. As noted above, advertising is one of the most destructive influences in western society.

It is highly likely that western advertising would prove to be very destructive to the Bhutanese culture. Values are not fully formed until people mature. Therefore, young people are vulnerable to commercial messages that define success by appearance and material prosperity. The capacity for discernment and wisdom generally is acquired as one matures and goes through life experiences. As a result, it is often difficult for young people to see the emptiness that lies behind a life based only on material prosperity. Owing to this, society should keep stringent control over the cultural messages communicated to young people. Bhutan should guard against having the values of their young people corrupted by commercial messages – messages designed to make them feel empty, so that they would seemingly need to buy something to fill the void.

If business has no artificially induced need to grow, then there would be no need to compel purchases through advertising. There are other ways to let people know that products and services are

available. For example, public service announcements or honest advertising could be used. Honest advertising would simply describe product characteristics (i.e. features, price, performance, etc.). There would be no implicit or explicit suggestion that purchasing the product would, for instance, enhance status in society.

Jealousy and competitiveness are characteristics of the immature, unwise, ego-based human mind. These characteristics would exist regardless of the presence of advertising. However, western-style ads vastly promote these traits in society, and thereby greatly lower social wellbeing. Not surprisingly then, such advertising should be prohibited in Bhutan.

(4) Infrastructure, jobs, barter

Other guidelines for development in Bhutan relate to infrastructure, jobs and barter. The western development model often includes infrastructure development projects such as roads and railways. While these obviously benefit society, there are costs involved. For example, industrial nations often promote transportation enhancements in developing countries to facilitate resource extraction. This frequently leads to environment degradation. In addition, building roads can increase pressure to switch to an unsustainable fossil fuel-based economy.

This is not to suggest that Bhutan should not increase the comfort and convenience of its people; only that it should carefully consider the costs and benefits of doing so. For example, it may decide that priority should be given to strong families, community-based living and inner prosperity. If this is the case, then it may be better to pursue a slower infrastructure development path, rather than the aggressive path usually sought by western nations.

To provide jobs, especially to young people, Bhutan might consider developing a conservation corps and other groups like those developed in the US during the New Deal. These would provide adventure and experience to young people. Projects might include environmental restoration and protection, some infrastructure development, sustainable agriculture and housing.

Around the world, a lot of good work also has been done towards developing sustainable business and economic models, such as those based on greater use of bartering. Bhutan could consider sustainable economic systems that have worked in other regions.

CONCLUSION

- Western economic systems are unsustainable because they were developed from the perspective of reductionism which does not take the whole system into account. From a broader perspective, one sees that the economy and business are not separate from any other part of society or the total earth system. From this perspective, it is understood that all impacts must be considered and factored into prices. The system now operating in the west is a destructive form of capitalism that sends grossly distorted price signals, makes illogical growth assumptions, under-values future generations, and compels irresponsible behavior by not holding firms fully responsible.

Bhutan could greatly benefit other nations by demonstrating that it is possible to develop an economy based on a total system perspective. Wisdom must increase if humanity is to become sustainable; this involves recognising that all things are interconnected and acting from this perspective. Bhutan can help western nations do so by showing how a more effective and sustainable economy can be developed.

- Western economies have demonstrated great creativity and progress in technology, medicine, business and other areas. In addition, Western nations have sacrificed greatly to support democracy, human rights and freedom from oppression and tyranny around the world. In the US, business and political leaders appear to be strongly committed to doing what is best for society. However, economic and political systems often force well-intentioned leaders to do the wrong thing for children, the environment and society overall.
- Western economies are so large and entrenched that it will be difficult to improve their destructive, unsustainable systems. However, these systems can only negatively impact the environmental and social realms for so long before there is a price to pay. There is no free lunch; sooner or later system change will be forced upon Western nations if they cannot develop the wisdom to act first.
- Change is difficult. People often defend a destructive system because uncertainty is frightening to the human ego. It feels safer to stick with a destructive, familiar system rather than to deal with the uncertainty involved in trying to improve it. Frequently, people will irrationally defend a destructive system by pointing out its benefits. It is as if they are saying western economic systems should be allowed to continue degrading life support systems and making people unhappy because they provide benefits.
- Given the young nature of the US, this is perhaps understandable as wisdom is acquired through age and maturity. It should be made clear however that there is great wisdom in the American people, as there was in those who founded the nation. Many Americans strongly disagree with the policies of their government. Unfortunately, at the highest levels of government and business, a simplistic corporate structure forces leaders to place short-term profits above all else and often not act on their best intentions. The US system lacks wisdom, not its people.
- Even Bhutan has problems. However, this nation appears to be more advanced in key areas than its western counterparts – it is sustainable (or nearly so) and its people appear to be happier. GNH can help Bhutan address internal issues and further enhance social wellbeing. Also, by developing GNH, Bhutan could show other nations that it is possible to organise society in a sustainable manner, which would reflect great wisdom.

SABBATH ECONOMICS

Sabbath economics has its root in the following Biblical concepts:

1. The Sabbath day, particularly during the journey through the wilderness as described in Exodus 15-17
2. The Sabbath year (*Shmita*, a Hebrew word for ‘release’), described in Exodus 23, where the land was not cultivated, and slaves were released every 7th year. ‘You may plant your land for six years and gather its crops. But during the seventh year, you must leave it alone and withdraw from it. The needy among you will then be able to eat just as you do, and whatever is left over can be eaten by wild animals. This also applies to your vineyard and your olive grove.’
3. The Year of Jubilee, every 50th year – the ‘Sabbath of Sabbaths’ – when all debts were cancelled, and all property returned to the original owners. The English term Jubilee derives from the Hebrew term *yobel* (via Latin: *Jubilaus*)

Sabbath economics looks into the application of the economic aspects of Biblical Sabbath to current economic practices. This model is popularised by Ched Myers who says, 'God's people are instructed to dismantle, on a regular basis, the fundamental patterns and structures of stratified wealth and power, so that there is "enough for everyone".' Sabbath economics focuses on voluntary redistribution of wealth; this concept is built on a foundation of abundance – as opposed to scarcity in other modern economic models.

In *The Biblical Vision of Sabbath Economics*, Ched Myers states that Sabbath observance is about gifts and limits: the grace of receiving that which the Creator gives, and the responsibility not to take too much, nor to mistake the gift for a possession. The economic implications of this tradition can be summarised in three axioms:

1. the world as created by God is abundant, with enough for everyone – provided that human communities restrain their appetites and live within limits;
2. disparities in wealth and power are not 'natural' but the result of human sin, and must be mitigated within the community of faith through the regular practice of redistribution; and
3. the prophetic message calls people to the practice of such redistribution, and is thus characterised as 'good news' to the poor.

In his article 'God Speed the Year of Jubilee! The biblical vision of Sabbath economics'⁶¹, Ched Myers writes: 'We read the gospel as if we had no money', laments Jesuit theologian John Haughey, 'and we spend our money as if we know nothing of the gospel'.

He further states: 'Moses' instructions give us the three defining characteristics of this alternative economic practice. First, every family is told to gather just enough bread for their needs (Exodus 16:16-18). In contrast to Israel's Egyptian condition of oppression and need, here everyone has enough: 'Those who gathered more had no surplus, and those who gathered less had no shortage.' In God's economy there is no such thing as 'too much' and 'too little.'.... Second, this bread should not be 'stored up' (16:19-20). Wealth and power in Egypt was defined by surplus accumulation. It is no accident that Israel's forced labor consisted of building 'store cities' (Exodus 1:11), into which the empire's plunder and the tribute of subject peoples was gathered.... The third instruction introduces Sabbath discipline (Exodus 16:22-30). 'On the sixth day, when they distribute what they bring in, it will be twice as much....Six days you shall gather; but on the seventh, which is a Sabbath, there will be none' (Exodus 16:5, 26). We Christians regard the Sabbath at best as merely one of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:8-11), at worst as a quaint Jewish custom. But here we see that it is instituted even before the covenant at Sinai. Indeed, it is reiterated in ultimate terms at the conclusion of the covenant code: If the people do not practice Sabbath, they will die (Exodus 31:12-17). Not only then is Shabat the crowning blessing of creation; it is also the "beginning and end of the law".'

'We Christians therefore trivialise (and even "profane") the Sabbath if we regard it merely as a day when Jews do as little as possible, or as a code of nit-picking prohibitions. Torah's Sabbath regulations represent God's strategy for teaching Israel about its dependence upon the land as a gift to share equitably, not as a possession to exploit (see for example the rituals enjoined in harvest festivals, Leviticus 23:9-25). The prescribed periodic rest for the land and for human labor means to disrupt human attempts to 'control' nature and 'maximise' the forces of production. Because the

⁶¹*Sojourners*, www.sojournal.net/index.cfm?action=magazine.article&issue=soj9805&article=980520; accessed on April 27, 2010

earth belongs to God and its fruits are a gift, the people should justly distribute those fruits, instead of seeking to own and hoard them.’

‘Sabbath observance requires a leap of faith, a firm confidence that the world will continue to operate benevolently for a day without human labor, that God is willing and able to provide enough for the good life’, writes Lowery. ‘Sabbath promises seven days of prosperity for six days of work. It operates on the assumption that human life and prosperity exceed human productivity’.⁶²

ISLAMIC ECONOMICS AND ISLAMIC BANKING


In the previous sections of this chapter, we discussed Buddhist economics and Sabbath economics. We have also provided an introduction to what various spiritual leaders have to say about money. Here, we introduce Islamic banking and Islamic economics.

Wikipedia states that Islamic economics ‘seeks an economic system based on uplifting the deprived masses, a major role for the state in matters such as circulation and equitable distribution of wealth and ensuring participants in the marketplace are rewarded for being exposed to risk and/or liability’. The principles of Islamic banking have been built on this tenet. Islamic banking refers to that set of banking activity that operates in consistency with the principles of Islamic law/sharia. Sharia prohibits charging interest for money that has been lent, and also forbids investment in businesses that provide goods or services considered to be *haraam* (forbidden, as per Islam). India’s first actively managed Equity Oriented Shariah compliant fund was launched by Taurus Mutual Fund in the first quarter of 2009. This fund, which sought to appreciate capital based on the Islamic Sharia principles, did not invest in businesses that involve gambling, alcohol, financial services, pornography, tobacco, certain categories of media and advertising, pork, trading of gold and silver as cash on deferred basis, etc.

Key Concepts

1. The Indian ethos of quality is based on the values of respect and care for the Divine, others and oneself, objects and time. Quality standardisation is largely related to the purity and unity of thought, word and deed.
2. The scriptures of Bharat speak about the four goals of Life: *Dharma* – living in consonance with creation and society; *Artha* – generating wealth for oneself and others (the wealth of good education, health, character and material wellbeing); *Kama* – satisfying basic desires (a life of comfort, health, enjoyment and respect for one’s family and community); and *Moksha* – attaining spiritual fulfillment or liberation.
3. The scriptures suggest that an individual’s wealth should be earned through the right means, and desires should be directed towards spiritual liberation.

⁶²© Sojourners 2008, Used with permission

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4. For distributive justice to occur, intentions and actions of individuals need to be directed towards higher good.
 5. Top quality product/service was considered primarily a function of the quality of the mind or consciousness of the doer, and only secondarily of quality circles and statistical quality control.
 6. The cow, an epitome of selfless service, is symbolic of the transformation of the *Nikrushta* aspect to the *Utkrishta* aspect of human personality. The life of a cow is an excellent example of Cradle to Cradle Design philosophy.
 7. Today's economic paradigms are degrading the environmental and societal life support systems; they run contrary to the real world. In the world of business, failure to grow equals death. However, in the real world, it is the failure to restrain growth that equals death.
 8. Buddhism suggests looking beyond the illusion that the individual is separate from the rest of the world to the reality that everything is interconnected.
 9. The western models of economic systems fail to incorporate externalities into prices.
 10. Time-value of money, a foundation concept in economics and finance, which arises from the perspective of reductionism, suggests that people and resources are worthless beyond 50 to 100 years.
 11. Mainstream economic indicators like GNP do not indicate the wellbeing of a society.
 12. Sabbath economics, which is built on a foundation of abundance as opposed to scarcity in other modern economic models, focuses on voluntary redistribution of wealth. Sabbath economics looks into the application of the economic aspects of Biblical Sabbath to current economic practices.
 13. Islamic economics seeks an economic system based on the upliftment of the deprived masses, a major role for the state in matters such as circulation and equitable distribution of wealth and ensuring participants in the marketplace are rewarded for being exposed to risk and/or liability. Islamic banking refers to that set of banking activities which operate in consistency with the principles of Islamic law/Sharia. Sharia prohibits charging interest for money that has been lent, and also forbids investment in businesses that provide goods or services considered to be forbidden.

Key Words

Sreni, Gana,	Total quality	Sustainable farming,
Vrata, Sangha,	management,	Buddhist economics,
Purushartha,	Total quality of mind,	Gross national
Shadripu,	Detached	happiness,
Dharma,	involvement,	Natural wisdom,
Artha,	Attached	Externalities,
Kama,	involvement,	Limits to Growth,
Moksha,	Cradle to Cradle	Time value of
Shubh Laabh,	design,	money,
Udyoga,	Biomimicry,	Sabbath economics,
Karma,	Biological nutrient,	Islamic banking,
	Technical nutrient,	Sharia.

Classroom Exercise

1. '...unless an organisation is already firmly rooted in its unique mission, confident in its innovative and visionary leadership and willing to grow through its own merits and performance it will not be able to create an enterprise of lasting change.' Do you think that this statement is applicable even in the life of an individual? If yes, how can you build these qualities in yourself?
2. How can you mine the rich spiritual heritage of your culture and put it into practice in your everyday leadership?

Interactive Exercise

1. Visit www.global100.org (a) Find companies which operate in your locality; (b) Procure the list of companies that lead in CSR practices; and (c) In the classroom, discuss what each one of you can do to support and promote the sustainability and social responsibility practices of these companies.
2. Visit www.global100.org: (a) Check the research reports on the connection between sustainability measures and financial performance; and (b) Give a presentation in the classroom on what these papers/ reports indicate.
3. Visit www.portfolio.com/interactive-features/2007/10/philanthropy-calculator, and understand the connection between charitable giving and the GDP growth in the US. Assume that this exercise is also applicable to India. (a) Based on what the many spiritual leaders have spoken about giving (refer related section in Chapter Two), allocate a percentage

- of your income to charitable causes; (b) For the given percentage that you have allocated, find out what will the growth in GDP be; and (c) Try different percentages.
4. Visit www.bigpicture.tv/videos/watch/1f0e3dad9, and watch the video 'The Soul of Money'. (a) Summarise the content of the video and assess the similarities of the concept presented in the video and the sayings of some of the spiritual masters that we have discussed in the text; and (b) Present your ideas to the classroom.
 5. Watch the two videos: www.bigpicture.tv/videos/watch/3c59dc048; and www.bigpicture.tv/videos/watch/98f137082. (a) Summarise the content of the videos; and (b) Present your ideas to the classroom.

Introspective Exercise

1. Visit http://www.globalsystemchange.com/GSC/Articles_files/TCR-percent2012-3.pdf. Find out how the author of the article plans to rate 'total corporate responsibility'. What are the parameters used? Can you rate two publicly listed companies based on the criteria the author has suggested in the article?
2. The following exercise may be a powerful tool in developing self-confidence and self-transformation; the effectiveness of the tool lies in its simplicity. Student needs to spend a minimum of 15 minutes everyday on introspection, asking questions (as listed in the box). Each student can make a note of what comes in his/her awareness (under each question in the box). The exercise needs to be done for a minimum period of 41 days; after which, it may be discontinued if the student does not find the exercise to be effective.

	<i>Did I see good today?</i>	<i>Did I think good today?</i>	<i>Did I do good today?</i>
Day 1			
Day 2			
Day 3			
Day 4			
Day 5			
Day 6			

Day 7			
Day 8			
Day 9			
Day 10			
Day 11			
Day 12			
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Day 29			
Day 30			

Day 31			
Day 32			
Day 33			
Day 34			
Day 35			
Day 36			
Day 37			
Day 38			
Day 39			
Day 40			
Day 41			

Review Questions

1. Explain *Purushartha*, its constituents and their interconnections.
2. What are the metaphors (imagery) used by various spiritual leaders when they speak about wealth distribution. Elaborate.
3. What do you mean by *Shubh Laabh*.
4. List the flaws in Western economic systems.
5. What is a negative externality? Choose one of the popular cars in the market. Assess how much the car would cost if negative externalities were added to the price of the car.
6. Explain Sabbatical economics.

Choose the Correct Answer

1. When did the *sreni* code disappear from practice:
 - (a) 1,000 BC
 - (b) 550 AD – 1000 AD
 - (c) 1,750 AD – 1850 AD
 - (d) 250 AD

2. 'It was not that we did not know how to invent machinery, but our forefathers knew that, if we set our hearts after such things, we would become slaves and lose our moral fibre': Who said this?
 - (a) Rajiv Gandhi
 - (b) Mahatma Gandhi
 - (c) Nandhan Nilekeni
 - (d) Hiten Bhaya
3. 'Being in the world, but not of it' is an attribute of:
 - (a) Detached involvement
 - (b) Attached involvement
 - (c) Work commitment
 - (d) Reward commitment
4. According to Sathya Sai Baba, money may be compared with:
 - (a) Manure
 - (b) Desire
 - (c) Jealousy
 - (d) A rich man's house
5. According to Frank Dixon, the short-term, narrow, survival-oriented perspective of the human mind is a key driver of _____.
 - (a) System perspective
 - (b) Unsustainability
 - (c) Green marketing
 - (d) Emotional imbalance
6. Which country is the richest for over 75 percent of the world's counted calendar of history?
 - (a) United States
 - (b) United Kingdom
 - (c) India
 - (d) China
7. Which scriptural text cautions, 'The more you get, the more you want; your desires increase with your means'?
 - (a) *The Holy Bible*
 - (b) *Qur'an*
 - (c) *Uttara-Dhyayana Sutra*
 - (d) *Adi Granth*
8. Who said, 'Take the whole responsibility on your own shoulders, and know that you are the creators of your own destiny. All the strength and succour you want is within ourselves'?
 - (a) Prophet Muhammed
 - (b) Zarathustra
 - (c) Swami Vivekananda
 - (d) Jesus Christ
9. 'Disparities in wealth and power are not "natural" but the result of human sin, and must be mitigated within the community of faith

through the regular practice of redistribution'. This concept is related to:

- (a) Islamic economics
 - (b) Buddhist economics
 - (c) Green economics
 - (d) Sabbath economics
10. Islamic banking permits investments in:
- (a) Gambling
 - (b) Alcohol
 - (c) Tobacco
 - (d) None of the above

Answers: (1) 550 AD – 1000 AD; (2) Mahatma Gandhi; (3) Detached involvement; (4) Manure; (5) Unsustainability; (6) India; (7) *Uttara-Dhyayana sutra*; (8) Swami Vivekananda; (9) Sabbath economics; (10) None of the above.

State whether True or False

1. The word *sangha* is associated with Islamic prayer practices.
2. Cradle to Cradle design model seeks to remove dangerous materials like heavy metals, harmful chemicals, etc. from the manufacturing processes.
3. According to *Yagnavalkya Smriti*, leaders should be pure in mind, and always do things that are good only to the organisation.
4. According to *Yagnavalkya Smriti*, a businessman must be a person of character and integrity with self control.
5. Islamic banking supports charging interest for money that has been lent.

Answers: (1) False (2) True (3) True (4) True (5) False

Recommended Reading

- *Foundations of Managerial Work: Contributions from Indian Thought*, SK Chakraborty, Himalaya Publishing House, 2008
- *The Biblical Vision of Sabbath Economics*, Ched Myers, Tell the Word Press, 2001

Recommended Websites

- <http://www.globalsystemchange.com/GSC/Articles.html>
- http://www.schumachersociety.org/buddhist_economics.html
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genuine_progress_indicator

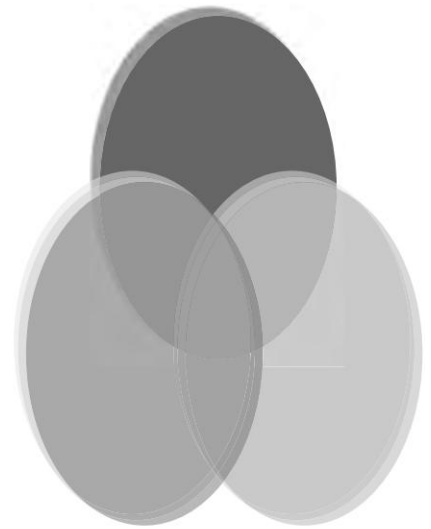
Chapter 3

Human Values

Learning Objective

Chapter 3 aims to convey and clarify the following:

- Why our lives should be driven by values
- Guidelines offered by Vedic literature towards a value-driven life
- Factors that influence the formation of values
- Emerging developments in the philosophy of science that is connected to consciousness and values



'For comforts to be enjoyed I must be there to enjoy them.

When I am split with guilt, I am rarely anywhere but with my anxieties, regrets and guilt.

When I clearly see this fact, I will see the value of applying universal ethical standards to myself.

Therefore, a value, universal or situational, is a value for me only when I see the value of the value as valuable to me.'¹

~ Swami Dayananda Saraswati

¹The Value of Values, Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Arsha Vidya Centre, 2007

THE MEANING OF VALUES

From a sociological perspective, Dictionary.com refers to values as ‘*the ideals, customs, institutions, etc. of a society toward which the people of the group have an affective regard*’. The *American Heritage Dictionary* refers to values as ‘*A principle, standard, or quality considered worthwhile or desirable*’. ‘Value’ evolved from the Latin word *valere*, which means *to be strong* or *to be of worth*. So our values are what we hold to be ‘of strong worth’ to us, what is most important to us.²

Milton Rokeach, a social psychologist, is one of the researchers often quoted in literature related to values. Rokeach spoke about terminal values and instrumental values. Terminal values refer to desirable end-states of existence; these are the goals that an individual would like to achieve in his/her lifetime. These values vary among different groups of people in different cultures. Some examples of terminal values include true friendship, mature love, self-respect, happiness, inner harmony, equality, freedom, pleasure, social recognition, wisdom, salvation, family security, national security, a sense of accomplishment, a world of beauty, a world at peace, a comfortable life and an exciting life. Instrumental values refer to preferable modes of behavior. Examples of instrumental values include being cheerful, ambitious, loving, clean, self-controlled, capable, courageous, polite, honest, imaginative, independent, intellectual, broad-minded, logical, obedient, helpful, responsible and forgiving.

Values, that people ascribe to, can be universal. Their manifestation may be in various forms and rituals. In Japan, humility is expressed by bowing to others. In India, it may be expressed by touching the feet of elders and the respected. Gratitude to a higher power is a value seen across cultures. Many people in India partake of their food as a sacred ritual, by chanting the *Brahmaarpanam* mantra and offering the food to the Divine. In western countries, the same value may be expressed in the ritual of thanking the Lord before the meal (saying ‘grace’). There can also be rituals associated with a specific locality – *desacharam lokacharam*. It is said that human values can be grouped in three aspects: pure thoughts, pure words and pure deeds – all three being in harmony with one another.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF VALUES

There can be numerous reasons why value-based life/business is necessary. Business organisations like Bajaj, Bengal Chemicals, Godrej, Shri Ram Group, Tata, and Walchand Hirachand among others, which were established during the pre-independent era, went beyond the value of profit motive and focused on values like national self-respect. Legend has it that the patriotic fervor of Jamshetji Nusserwanji Tata, on being denied entry to the Watson’s Hotel³ (Indians were not allowed in the hotel), resulted in the creation of the Taj Mahal Hotel in Mumbai in 1903. In the epic *Ramayana*, Lord Rama says, ‘*Janani janmabhoomischa swargaadapi gareeyasi*’ (Mother and Motherland are greater than heaven). Mahatma Gandhi opined that businesspeople ought to adhere to the values of honesty, frugality and perseverance. He wrote to his son, Manilal, about the necessity to incur no debts and to conduct no business on credit. Gandhi advised him not to engage in business-related to forbidden goods and not to do business with an intention to amass quick riches.⁴ If we practice

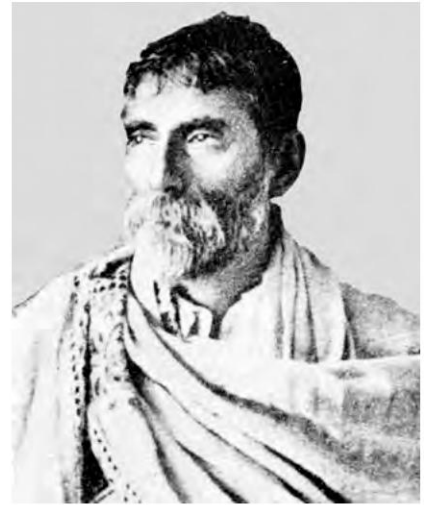
²White Paper from Global Creativity Corporation; www.globalcreativitycorp.com

³Now known as Esplanade Mansion, this structure is located in Mumbai, India.

⁴www.gandhiserve.org/cwmng/VOL069.PDF. Also quoted in *In Gandhi’s Footsteps: The Life and Times of Jannalal Bajaj*, BR Nanda, Oxford University Press, New York, 2003

values like honesty, respect for others etc. the world would certainly be a better place to live in. Vaclav Havel (Czech dramatist and essayist, president of Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic) said, '...without commonly shared and widely entrenched moral values and obligations, neither the law, nor democratic government, nor even the market economy will function properly...' ⁵

Many business leaders have displayed an ascetic bent of mind. Jamnalal Bajaj, for instance, found it repulsive to flaunt wealth; he refused to wear a pearl necklace at a relative's wedding, arguing with his grandfather that all earthly relationship was hollow and that worldly possessions could hold one in their grip. ⁶ Two other business leaders, PC Ray and Ardeshir Godrej, belonged to the same genre. The following excerpt ⁷ offers a glimpse into the values of PC Ray:



*Prafulla Chandra Ray*⁸



'Acharya Prafulla Chandra Ray was born in 1861 and died in 1944. Mahatma Gandhi had been introduced to him by Gopal Krishna Gokhale in these words:

"This is Prof. Ray who, having a monthly salary of Rs 800, just keeps Rs.40 for himself and devotes the balance to public purposes. He is not, and does not want to get married."

...It was this Dr. Ray (Knighted by the British government, 1919) who had launched the first Indian chemical and pharmaceutical factory, utilising indigenous natural materials, in 1892. It was called 'Bengal Chemical and Pharmaceutical Works'. Later, in 1901, it was converted into a public limited company. He had started the venture in 1892 with a capital of Rs.800 only, all from the savings out of his salary, the bulk of which he used to give away to the needy or to deserving social causes. Thus, PC Ray was probably unique among the industrial pioneers of India who, being an academic and a professor par excellence in the first instance, was also a daring entrepreneur.

Teaching, research, business, social service, literary activities – these five pillars constituted the solid base for the imposing edifice of his 84-year life. In the course of time, therefore, he came to be called by various affectionate names: 'the Master of Nitrites', 'Doctor of Floods' (by the Mahatma), 'a saint' (by Gokhale), 'guardian angel of the suffering humanity' (by Ashutosh Mukherjee).

PC Ray was later earning Rs.1000 by 1914 as a Professor in the Presidency College. Moreover, he was the son of a *zamindar*. Yet he had always led the life of an ascetic. Out of Rs.1000 he kept Rs.200 for himself. Thus, towards the close of his life, he had given away as much as Rs.6 lac for noble causes. He took no dividends or salaries from the companies he had floated (e.g. Bengal Potteries, Bengal Enamel besides BCPW).

This story is an eye-witness account. One morning a devoted attendant brought him a few nice, large ripe bananas. He was very happy. But moments later he asked: how much did they cost? "Three pice, sir." The Acharya exploded in anger at such over-spending, and refused to eat the fruit. The same day in the afternoon a gentleman came and explained to him about an important project to help some poor people. Convinced, PC Ray drew a cheque for Rs.3000 and gave it to the visitor. The attendant was confounded about this 3 pice versus Rs.3000 drama in the space of just a few hours!

⁵*Summer Meditations* was originally published in Czech as *Letni Premitani* (1991) and translated in English by Paul Wilson (1992).

⁶*In Gandhi's Footsteps: The Life and Times of Jamnalal Bajaj*, BR Nanda, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1990

⁷*Spirituality in Management: Means or End?*, SK Chakraborty, Debangshu Chakraborty, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2008; Used with permission.

⁸Image source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Acharya_praphullachandra.jpg, Accessed on February 10, 2010

The following is an excerpt from the same book that also speaks about Ardeshir Godrej:



Ardeshir Godrej was born in 1868 and died in 1936. He had begun his career as a lawyer, but left it soon after losing his very first case in Zanzibar. He refused to twist the truth to favour his client.

Ardeshir's first attempt in the new pasture of industry was to make surgical instruments. But the chemist's firm wanted to market them under a 'foreign' brand name which would sell better to local doctors. He would not pocket the insult. So the first foray into industry was also a failure.

He next ventured into locks in the year 1897 and gradually expanded into a whole range of world-class security equipments. Ardeshir was the first to invent and put on the market a lever lock without springs. This was the earliest of the thirty six Godrej patented inventions'. When it came to soaps, Ardeshir succeeded in producing stable toilet soaps from vegetable oils instead of animal fats....

Here are a few intimate portrayals of Ardeshir, the-man-within, from Karanjia:

- By all accounts he was a lonely man, given to plain living and high thinking ... A recluse, who inhabited a solitude and always kept his distance... He exuded the confidence of one who had the measure of his task. But he showed no pride in his achievements, and seemed not to consider himself in any way an exceptional human being. He was only doing his duty as an Indian, doing his best for India.
- Ardeshir believed in simple, unostentatious living... He would take public transport or walk to his destination, using a car only late in his life at Pirjosh's insistence. A man of considerable culture and a voracious reader, particularly of books on literature and philosophy...
- Ardeshir was religious. Every morning he spent a few moments at the Vatchagandhi Agiary on Hughes Road (in Mumbai). But he was truly religious in the sense that he lived his religion, particularly in the practice of philanthropy.

The lives of PC Ray, Jamnalal Bajaj and Ardeshir Godrej convey how business leaders assimilate values like simplicity, character, conscience, discipline, determination, higher goals, Initiative, proper use of resources, reflection, charity, compassion, sharing, and concern for the welfare of all, among others. It is certain that they were able to stand above the ever-changing aspects of the world.

Janiece Webb, former senior vice-president of Motorola Corporation in the US, makes this interesting observation, 'In my career I have been through some extremely difficult downsizing situations and personal attacks. I have been put into some impossible situations when I felt that I was under intense pressure by those in power above me to solve an unsolvable problem, or times when the organisation just wouldn't work together to get things done. Every once in a while I have lost my way and those were really dark periods. And yet I knew I would be okay. I've been demoted and I've been celebrated and through it all I have learned not to get attached because none of this is what's real.'¹⁰



Jamshetji Nusserwanji Tata⁹

India also has a strong foundation in logic and reasoning; it is this reasoning ethos of Bharat that exemplifies why an individual should lead a value driven life.

The country's history is proof that people give up all their resources in search for the ultimate knowledge. In the *Mundaka Upanishad*, Saunaka asks Angiras, 'What is that, *O Bhagavan*, by the knowledge of which everything becomes known?''¹¹

⁹Image source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:JNTata.jpg>; accessed on February 10, 2010

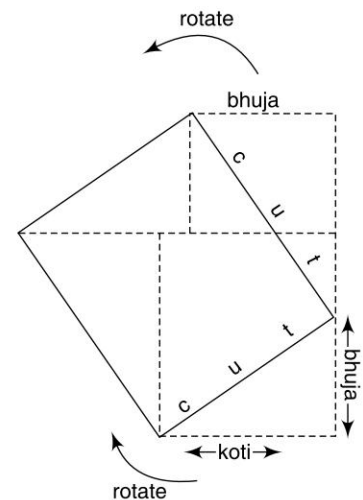
¹⁰Quotations extracted from the public knowledge base of the 'Spiritual Based Leadership Research Programme' are © 2006 by GDC. GDC retains the copyright to all excerpts from this knowledge base.

¹¹In the words of Swami Krishnananda, The Divine Life Society – Sivananda Ashram, Rishikesh, India

In one form or other, we all seek knowledge. While one person burns the midnight oil to crack a formulae, another person pursues literature that flames the senses – both trying to understand what lies behind the concept. For any kind of knowledge to occur, the presence of three aspects is essential: the knower, the object of knowledge, and the means of knowledge.

Perceiving the Knowledge of Something Seen—An Example

1. Imagine that you are attending a lecture and the professor is displaying a particular slide as part of her/ his presentation. Let us consider this slide to be the object of knowledge.
2. All your classmates saw the slide.
3. Though you were also present in the same class, you did not see it.
4. What does that indicate? Possibly, that you have some trouble with your eyesight, which is the means of knowledge in this case.
5. However, tests indicate that your vision is perfect.
6. The knower was physically present, as was the object of knowledge and there was nothing wrong with your eyesight: So what else can be responsible?
7. One of the possibilities is that your mind was elsewhere when the slide – the object of knowledge – was being shown.
8. So, the means of knowledge not only include the sense organ (in this case, the eyes), but also an attentive and capable mind.
9. Yet, can we say that knowledge occurs in the presence of an attentive and capable mind?
10. Now, let us say that you are a primary school student and the teacher is speaking about the Sine Rule in Trigonometry.
11. The teacher is competent to communicate the nuances of Sine Rule. You listen attentively to what he/she says; your sense organs are fully functional. You can perceive the lines that are drawn, along with the numbers and digits.
12. However, you still do not attain the knowledge of Sine Rule. Why?
13. The knowledge is not attained because your mind is not prepared to comprehend a level of mathematics that is beyond the primary school level. So, in order to understand the Sine Rule, it is necessary to first prepare your mind with the basic knowledge of Trigonometry.
14. This basic knowledge is cultivated through the discipline known as learning.
15. Thus, a *Samskara*, a certain discipline, is a pre-requisite to higher knowledge.



Explanation of the Sine Rule in *Yuktibhasa*¹²

¹²Image source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Yuktibhasa.gif>; accessed on February 10, 2010

Thus, anyone seeking to move towards higher levels of knowledge has to cultivate *samskara*, a certain discipline. Seers of this land say that only discovery and assimilation of values prepare the mind for the higher truths.



Gandhi went from city to city, village to village collecting funds for the Charkha Sangh. During one of his tours he addressed a meeting in Orissa.

After his speech a poor old woman got up. She was bent with age, her hair was grey and her clothes were in tatters. The volunteers tried to stop her, but she fought her way to the place where Gandhi was sitting.

'I must see him,' she insisted and going up to Gandhi touched his feet.

Then from the folds of her sari she brought out a copper coin and placed it at his feet. Gandhi picked up the copper coin and put it away carefully.

The Charkha Sangh funds were under the charge of Jamnalal Bajaj. He asked Gandhi for the coin but Gandhi refused.

'I keep cheque worth thousands of rupees for the Charkha Sangh,' Jamnalal Bajaj said laughingly 'yet you won't trust me with a copper coin.'

'This copper coin is worth much more than those thousands,' Gandhi said.

'If a man has several lakhs and he gives away a thousand or two, it doesn't mean much. But this coin was perhaps all that the poor woman possessed. She gave me all she had. That was very generous of her. What a great sacrifice she made. That is why I value this copper coin more than a crore of rupees.'

Source: www.mkgandhi.org/students/story.htm; accessed on April 28, 2010

Thus, the logic and reasoning aspects of Indian ethos substantiate why individuals need to assimilate values. Else, one cannot attain the glory of higher truth. Swami Vivekananda affirms the connection among values/ethics and higher truth. In his lecture, titled 'The Vedanta Philosophy', to the Graduate Philosophical Society of Harvard University on March 25, 1896, he was asked, 'How does the *Vedanta* explain individuality and ethics?' His response was, 'In reality there is one, but in *maya* it is appearing as many... even in this *maya* there is always the tendency to go back to the One, as expressed in all ethics and all morality of every nation, because it is the constitutional necessity of the soul. It is finding its oneness; and this struggle to find this oneness is what we call ethics and morality. Therefore we must always practice them.'¹³

What we perceive as important to us or 'what we value' need not always be in our best interest. Producing and consuming things that are expected to increase efficiency and comfort have resulted in as much harm as good. Plastic bags, mobile phones, fast food, pesticides, nuclear energy, etc. may all have their advantages, but the same things now indicate substantial disadvantages. Hence, to assess whether what we perceive important to us is in our best interest, calls for a sharp intellect and a mellow heart. Vedic literature provides guidelines on the type of values that can help an individual progress in life. Each timeless value has an intense psychological principle underlying it (SK Chakraborty, 1989).¹⁴

¹³http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Complete_Works_of_Swami_Vivekananda/Volume_5/Questions_and_Answers/I_Discussion_at_The_Graduate_Philosophical_Society_of_Harvard_University; accessed on April 27, 2010

¹⁴*Foundations of Managerial Work – Contributions from Indian Thought*, SK Chakraborty, Himalaya Publishing House, Mumbai, 1989

VEDIC LITERATURE AND VALUES

Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 13) speaks about the qualities/values of mind that are necessary to know the Truth. These qualities/values are interrelated:

*‘amanitvam adambhitvam ahimsa ksantir arjavam
acaryopasanam shaucam sthairyam atma-vinigrahaḥ’*

Meaning: Absence of conceit and pretence, refusal to hurt, glad acceptance, rectitude, service to the teacher, inner and outer purity, perseverance, mastery over mind.

*‘indriyarthesu vairagyam anahankara eva ca
janma-mrityu-jara-vyadhi-duhkha-dosanudarshanam’*



God dwells in everything,
God shines in every heart. Wherever I look,
there is God, no one else is seen.

~ Adi Granth

Meaning: Dispassionate towards sense objects, absence of self importance, knowledge of the limitations of birth, death, old age, illness and pain.

*‘ashaktir anabhisvangah putra-dara-grhadisu
nityam ca sama-cittatvam istanistopapattisu’*

Meaning: Absence of a sense of ownership, absence of obsession towards son, wife, house and the others, persistent equanimity towards all pleasant and unpleasant events.

*‘mayi cananya-yogena bhaktir avyabhicarini
vivikta-desa-sevitvam aratir jana-samsadi’*

Meaning: Constant devotion to Me, characterised by non-separation from Me; preference for a solitary place and absence of an inclination towards socialisation.

*‘adhyatma-jnana-nityatvam tattva-jnanartha-darshanam
etaḥ jnanam iti proktam ajnanam yad ato ’nyatha ’*

Meaning: Accepting the importance of Self-realisation, and the philosophical search for the absolute Truth – these are declared to be knowledge; whatever else there may be besides that is ignorance. (Here, knowledge does not stand for ‘knowledge of self’, but for those qualities/values that prepare the mind for knowing the self.)

FORMATION OF VALUES

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, *Siksastaka* (Verse 3), says:

*‘trnad api sunicena
taror api sahisnuna*

*amanina manadena
kirtaniyah sada harih'*

This invocation has been translated as:

Consider yourself lower than the grass,
be tolerant like a tree,
respect all who are not respected,
all these actions will take place when you will
always remember God.¹⁵

Some of the various factors that influence the formation of values in an individual and in a society are as follows:

1. Family

This is the foundation on which values are built. A child learns his behavior by modeling what he/she see around him/her. Family is the first social organisation that provides the immediate proximity from which the kid can learn his behavior. While a student need to be given training on various subjects related to material world, the student should also cultivate character. Some of the greatest scandals, atrocities etc. that we see in the world are committed by people of high intellectual and reasoning caliber. Thus, we can infer that superior academic qualifications and IQ, if misguided, can cause harm to others. It is a common approach to hanker after procedures, systems, controls etc. during times of trouble. While newer regulation is born, it rarely provides the necessary effect, a reason being that a procedure, system or control is sound/ unsound as the individuals who create them.

The following is a conversation between a husband and a wife:

Husband: 'Today is Sunday, I am going to enjoy!'

Wife: 'How?'

Husband: 'I've got three tickets for a film.'

Wife: 'Three? For the two of us...?'

Husband: 'One for you, and two tickets for your parents!'

This conversation may depict good humour, but it is also an indication of the state of affairs that prevail in the modern household, where there is no respect and understanding among family members. Society is made of individuals; it is the effect of individuals who operate in a particular manner. If society as a whole is failing, it also means that a collective group of individuals are failing. Any transformation in the society has to begin with the individual itself.

'If there is righteousness in the heart
There will be beauty in character;



Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in a temple at Mayapur¹⁶

¹⁵Professor VN Jha, former director, Centre for Advanced Studies in Sanskrit, University of Pune, Pune

¹⁶Image source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Mahaprabhu_103.jpg; accessed on February 10, 2010

If there is beauty in character
 There will be harmony in the home.
 When there is harmony in the home
 There will be order in the nation.
 When there is order in the nation,
 There will be peace in the world.

‘So, be righteous; avoid all prejudices against others on the basis of caste, creed, colour, mode of worship, status or degree of affluence. Do not look down on any one; look upon all as Divine as you really are.’¹⁷

Thus, Sathya Sai Baba summarises the role of a family in building a nation. More importantly, his quote also indicates the relationship between individual character and world peace.

2. Educational Institutions

Ancient Indian educational system aimed at the development of personality by eulogising the feeling of self-respect, by encouraging the sense of self-confidence, by inculcating the virtue of self-restraint and fostering the powers of discrimination and judgement.¹⁸ *Mundaka Upanishad* says, ‘*sa vidya ya vimukthaye*’ (Meaning: True education is that which liberates one from the slavery to senses and the whims and fancies of the emotions and passions). Educational institutions play an important role in the formation of values of an individual. A student spends a substantial amount of time within the precincts of the academic institution as well as in academic pursuits outside it. More than what is taught through the textbook, the student observes the words and deeds of the teacher.

The importance of the role of a teacher in influencing the life of a student is aptly described by Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, the former president of India. He said that his teacher of fifth class, Subramaniam Aiyer, is his greatest inspiration and also the person who kindled the fire in him to delve deep into the mystery of aeronautics. Similarly, the world would not have seen Jiddu Krishnamurthy had it not been for Dr Annie Besant; Ramakrishna Paramahansa recognised the fire in Swami Vivekananda; Aristotle would not be recognised but for Plato, and Plato would not be recognised but for Socrates. No wonder then, in *The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari*, Robin Sharma says, ‘If I have seen farther than others, it is simply because I have stood on the shoulders of great teachers’.

3. Role of the State

‘When the capital development of a country becomes a by-product of the activities of a casino, the job is likely to be ill-done’: Here, John Maynard Keynes highlights the role of values in economic behavior to be adopted by the state. A state which supports industries that add value to both individual and societal wellbeing reflects righteousness. In the same way, a state that remains silent when business organisations erode individual and societal wellbeing is indicative of a weak state.

¹⁷ www.saibaba.ws/quotes/humanvalues.htm; accessed on June 29, 2010

¹⁸ ‘Holistic Personality Development through Education: Ancient Indian Cultural Experiences’ by CP Bhatta, at the Conference on ‘Exploring Cultural Perspectives in Education’, 2007

4. Group Values

The social group to which an individual is associated with, influences her/his mode of behavior. This group, whether it be a not for profit organisation or a Fortune 10 company, can shape the values of an individual.

The corporate motto of Kyocera, a Japanese company, is 'Respect the divine and love people'. It extends, 'Preserve the spirit to work fairly and honourably, respecting people, our work, our company and our global community.' Furthermore, in its management rationale, Kyocera states: 'To provide opportunities for the material and intellectual growth of all our employees, and through our joint effort, contribute to the advancement of society and humankind.'



ServiceMaster, a US Fortune 500 company, summarises the foundation of its culture as 'To honor God in all we do'. The four objectives that constitute the company's philosophy are as follows:

1. Honor god in all we do

Do the right thing: Each of us knows the difference between right and wrong. Through the choices we make every day on the job, we show a heart-felt concern for the needs and expectations of others. We do an honest day's work. We tell the truth. We obey the law. We don't cut corners, even if it puts us at a competitive disadvantage.

Treat each person with dignity and respect: No one has to earn the right to be greeted warmly or to be listened to sincerely. We are each born with a basic dignity – and we affirm that fundamental goodness in ourselves by honoring it in others. We value and recognise the contribution that each person makes to the success of our team.

Respect each person's spirituality: We have a deep respect for the many different ways people experience the divine in their lives. We show our respect by demonstrating our willingness to accept others' belief systems as basically sincere, without compromising our own beliefs.

Protect and maintain our world: Our world is a marvelous creation. Through our work, we enhance that beauty, and make the world a more enjoyable place for all. We use our talents and technologies in a responsible way – so that future generations will have the opportunity to experience the world's beauty, too.

2. Excel with customers

Serve others as we would be served: We make an effort to know our customers. We greet them by name whenever we can. We show that we care about them, by doing the job right – and by trying to anticipate their needs. We listen and respond to each customer as an individual.

Make it easy for the customer: We help customers take pride, comfort and satisfaction in their homes and business properties. Thanks to the services we provide, customers know they have that much less to worry about. When they call on us, the job gets done – just the way they expect.

Stand behind our work: We are experts at what we do. We have the tools and the training to deliver on the promises we make to customers. We start each job with the desire to do it right the first time. If we fall short, we work equally hard to make it right. We always look for ways to improve our performance.

3. Help people develop

Help people to do their best every day: Because the work we do is important and valuable to our customers, we make sure that we are prepared to excel. We make safety a priority. We learn to use our tools and technologies as they were intended to be used. We listen to each other's suggestions about ways to improve.

Build proud, dynamic teams: Whether we work here for a few months, or for our entire careers, we expect to grow...to become better people by the time we leave. We love to compete. We love to win. We count on each person to contribute to the success of the team. We don't let our teammates down.

Help people reach their goals: No two people share the exact same goals. Therefore, we demonstrate our respect for each other by taking the time to learn each other's goals. We provide honest and constructive feedback on performance. We challenge and encourage each other. When we can, we take hurdles out of the way...while keeping in mind the need to treat everyone fairly and consistently.

4. To grow profitably

Act as good stewards of our investors' capital: We are in a position of trust. Thousands of good people have put their hard-earned money in our hands, to earn a return on their investment. We keep our promises to those people, by treating their money as if it was our own. We spend and invest it wisely. We follow the spirit and the letter of the law in reporting on our financial performance. We do our jobs the best way we know how – and always with the intent to make ServiceMaster a better company, one with long-term staying power.

Constantly improve and innovate: In part, excellence means never being stagnant. We are open to new ideas. We look for chances to use new technologies and processes. We recognise and respond to society's concerns. We lead, never follow.

Meet our commitments: When we make a promise, we expect to keep it – whether it's an earnings projection, a business plan, a project roll-out, or an individual job order. Our promises provide a link of trust to our owners, to our customers and to each other. We honor and respect these people by doing everything in our power to come through for them.

Source: 'Do the Right Thing: The ServiceMaster Company Code of Ethics and Business Conduct'¹⁹

5. Belief Systems

The belief system that an individual adheres to has the profoundest effect on his/her value system. Swami Vivekananda says, 'We reap what we sow. We are the makers of our own fate. None else has the blame, none has the praise.' Deepak Chopra uses the phrase 'belief horizon' in his book, *How to Know God: The Soul's Journey into the Mystery of Mysteries*. Our beliefs have profound effect on our attitudes and behaviour. If one believes that this world consists of people who are selfish, then she/he will consolidate aggressiveness and dishonesty as her/his strong value systems. If one's belief is that she/he can substantially contribute to making the world a better place, the universe will provide immense opportunities that will make those beliefs come true. Let us consider the belief system of Federico Cuneo, senior partner at Ernst & Young in Peru and Chair of Peru 2021,²⁰ and how it influences his life. He says, 'Another purpose for me is to give to others. I can remember one of my secretaries who worked with my check book asking me why I was giving so much of my money away. I told her not to worry, that it will continue to come to me, and it has always been like that. I appreciate Deepak Chopra's principle of giving in his book on the laws of prosperity. I think that when you give more, then you get more. To me this also applies to friendship, to love, to everything. Giving for me is such a pleasure; it is a concept I like very much' (refer Footnote #10).

ARISTOTLE'S VIEWS ON VALUE INCULCATION

Aristotle believed that values are best learned by studying the lives of heroic persons. To find out what courage is, one should study the lives of brave people to discover how they acted courageously.

¹⁹http://corporate.servicemaster.com/code_of_conduct.pdf; accessed on April 25, 2010

²⁰An NGO comprised of business executives working on sustainable development and corporate social responsibility



'I will give you a talisman. Whenever you are in doubt, or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test. Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man [woman] whom you may have seen, and ask yourself, if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him [her]. Will he [she] gain anything by it? Will it restore him [her] to a control over his [her] own life and destiny? In other words, will it lead to swaraj [freedom] for the hungry and spiritually starving millions? Then you will find your doubts and your self melt away.'

~ Mahatma Gandhi

Societies, where virtues like honesty and honor are the norm, looks into the life of good individuals as their role models to seek guidance from. So, if the leader of an organisation wants the organisation to be value driven, she/he should role model virtues in her/his own life so that others can learn from the same. In such scenarios, history and literature plays a major role in cultivating value systems. A society/organisation/individual draws upon cultural memory (and examples available therein) to learn lessons and emulate them. Admirable conducts are adapted and the abhorrent ones are avoided. Stories about how leaders behave, the choices they make, etc. influence and shape the cultures of organisations.



An extract from American physicist Fritjof Capra's comments about his meeting with Werner Heisenberg (known for the Uncertainty Principle, and awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1932). Fritjof Capra, interviewed by Renee Weber in *The Holographic Paradigm*:

'I had several discussions with Heisenberg. I lived in England then (circa 1972), and I visited him several times in Munich and showed him the whole manuscript chapter by chapter. He was very interested and very open, and he told me something that I think is not known publicly because he never published it. He said that he was well aware of these parallels. While he was working on the Quantum Theory he went to India to lecture and was a guest of Tagore. He talked a lot with Tagore about Indian philosophy. Heisenberg told me that these talks had helped him a lot with his work in physics, because they showed him that all these new ideas in quantum physics were in fact not all that crazy. He realised there was, in fact, a whole culture that subscribed to very similar ideas. Heisenberg said that this was a great help for him. Niels Bohr had a similar experience when he went to China.'

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Tao_of_Physics; accessed on April 28, 2010

Here is an example of how SK Welling, former executive director of HMT International (Hindustan Machine Tools) dealt with a challenging situation:

'...there was an internal advertisement put out to recruit and fill some open positions within the international division. There were several people whom the chairman wanted to have placed into these positions as a favour to him.

The day the interviews were called, the union leaders came to my office, about twenty of them, in order to put pressure on me not to hire these specific people. I called them all into my office, and

they began to shout and tell me how these two people should not be hired because of pressure from the Chairman.

I first told them: “You should leave this to me. I will not accept these two just because there is pressure from the chairman. Nor will I not take these two fellows just because you are saying that I should not take them. I will apply my own mind, my own judgment, and I will only go by the merits in each case. I will see how they fare in the interview and where they stand and I will take my decision from that. If you think that I am going to take them based on pressure from the chairman, I am the last one to do that. I would resign and go away instead. And just because you are saying that I should not take these two fellows, I will not bow to your pressure either. I will not work under pressure from either of you.” Once I said this, they all calmed down. Then I invited them to sit and have coffee, and we were able to talk harmoniously (refer Footnote #10).

SCIENCE AND HUMAN VALUES/SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALITY

‘The mind can proceed only so far upon what it knows and can prove. There comes a point where the mind takes a higher plane of knowledge, but can never prove how it got there. All great discoveries have involved such a leap,’ said Einstein.²¹

India has a tradition of science and mathematics, along with the practice of human values. In an interview given to Dr TD Singh, international director of the Bhakti Vedanta Institute, Sir Rogher Penrose, professor of mathematics, Oxford University, UK said, ‘It is to me one of the mysteries, that is to say, why do we have this extraordinary close relationship between mathematics, which is timeless notion and physics where you have things change, and so on.’²² India’s contribution to the field of mathematics includes such concepts as the zero and the decimal system. The supreme reality was related to concepts like space, nothingness, etc. which was represented as zero. It could be the ethos of India, which focused on knowing that which does not change, led to tremendous contributions from India to the area of mathematics.

Progress in research in the field of mathematics, biology and physics indicates that science and spirituality are not negating each other. The famous Double Slit Experiment demonstrated the inseparability of the wave and particle natures of light (and other quantum particles). The discipline of quantum mechanics spoke about the simultaneous wave-like and particle-like behavior of both matter and radiation. This implied that the physical reality become possibilities of probabilities rather than certainties. In an interview to *Malayala Manorama*, K Radhakrishna, chairman, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), contemplated whether there was only the universe or whether there were multiverses.^{23 24} Sigmund Freud, the Austrian neurologist who founded the psychoanalytic school of psychology, says ‘Anatomy is Destiny’ (Collected Writings, 1924). More recent researches in anatomy itself indicate that anatomy is merely a suggestion. Then, as an inference, can suggestions be destinies? Consciousness studies are other areas that affirm the proposition that science and

²¹*Einstein: The Life and Times*, Ronald W. Clark, World Pub. Co., New York, 1971

²²www.binstitute.net/media/SSS_August_2009.pdf; accessed on April 27, 2010

²³Wikipedia defines ‘multiverses’ as a hypothetical set of multiple possible universes (including our universe) that together comprise everything that physically exists: the entirety of space and time, all forms of matter, energy and momentum, and the physical laws and constants that govern them.

²⁴November 8, 2009

spirituality are not mutually exclusive. In this section, we deal with some interesting developments in the field of physics and mathematics that are connected with spirituality, Indian philosophy and human values.

CONSCIOUSNESS STUDIES

Professor Robert Jahn, known for his studies on consciousness, is the dean emeritus of the School of Engineering and Applied Science of Princeton University, Fellow of the American Physical Society and of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics. He has been a member of the NASA Space Science and Technology Advisory Committee and is vice-president of the Society for Scientific Exploration, and chairman of the Board of the International Consciousness Research Laboratories consortium. Jahn, along with Brenda Dunne, established the Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research Lab (PEAR) in 1979. PEAR program has been examining anomalies arising in human/machine interactions. Speaking about the program, the PEAR Labs Website states, 'In these studies human operators attempt to bias the output of a variety of mechanical, electronic, optical, acoustical, and fluid devices to conform to pre-stated intentions, without recourse to any known physical influences. In unattended calibrations all of these sophisticated machines produce strictly random data, yet the experimental results display increases in information content that can only be attributed to the consciousness of their human operators.' While the semantics of this statement may seem unapproachable to many, it can also be interpreted in somewhat colourful language as: 'You built a random event generator. Then you convey to your machine, through thought (Yes, through thoughts!) to stop being random – like, "Hey, machine, why don't you be non-random..."', "Hey, machine, stop being random..."', etc.'

The objective of the experiment was to assess the machine's response when people willfully try to change its behavior, exclusively through thought process.

The results were intriguing. The PEAR Website²⁶ says, 'Over the laboratory's 27-year history, thousands of such experiments, involving many millions of trials, have been performed by several hundred operators. The observed effects are usually quite small, of the order of a few parts in ten thousand on average, but they compound to highly significant statistical deviations from chance expectations.' In the paper titled 'Correlations of Random Binary Sequences with Pre-States Operator Intention: A Review of a 12-Year Program'²⁷, RG Jahn, BJ Dunne, RD Nelson, YH Dobyns, and GJ Bradish state the following: 'Strong correlations between output distribution means of a variety of random binary processes and pre-stated intentions of some 100 individual human operators have been established over a 12-year experimental program. More than 1000 experimental series, employing four different categories of random devices and several distinctive protocols, show comparable magnitudes of anomalous mean shifts from chance expectation, with similar distribution structures.



Professor Karl Werner Heisenberg²⁵

²⁵Image source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Bundesarchiv_Bild183-R57262,_Werner_Heisenberg.jpg; accessed on February 10, 2010

²⁶www.princeton.edu/~pear/human_machine.html; accessed on April 27, 2010

²⁷www.princeton.edu/~pear/pdfs/correlations.pdf accessed on April 27, 2010



An excerpt from *The Tao of Physics*

'Five years ago, I had a beautiful experience which set me on a road that has led to the writing of this book. I was sitting by the ocean one late summer afternoon, watching the waves rolling in and feeling the rhythm of my breathing, when I suddenly became aware of my whole environment as being engaged in a gigantic cosmic dance. Being a physicist, I knew that the sand, rocks, water and air around me were made of vibrating molecules and atoms, and that these consisted of particles which interacted with one another by creating and destroying other particles. I knew also that the Earth's atmosphere was continually bombarded by showers of "cosmic rays", particles of high energy undergoing multiple collisions as they penetrated the air. All this was familiar to me from my research in high-energy physics, but until that moment I had only experienced it through graphs, diagrams and mathematical theories. As I sat on that beach my former experiences came to life; I "saw" cascades of energy coming down from outer space, in which particles were created and destroyed in rhythmic pulses; I "saw" the atoms of the elements and those of my body participating in this cosmic dance of energy; I felt its rhythm and I "heard" its sound, and at that moment I knew that this was the Dance of Shiva, the Lord of Dancers worshipped by the Hindus.'

Source: *The Tao of Physics*, Fritjof Capra, Reprinted by arrangement with Shambhala Publications, Inc., Boston, 1975; www.shambhala.com

Although the absolute effect sizes are quite small, of the order of 10^{-4} bits deviation per bit processed, over the huge databases accumulated the composite effect exceeds $7s$ ($p \approx 3.5 \times 10^{-13}$). This study suggests the possibility of how a willful thought can influence an event.'

GODEL'S INCOMPLETENESS THEOREM

"This sentence is false." Is this true or false?

Kurt Gödel (1906–78), an Austrian-American mathematician and logician, is known for his incompleteness theorems, which state the inherent limitations of all but the most trivial formal systems for arithmetic of mathematical interest. *Wikipedia*, referring to Gödel's first incompleteness theorem, says, 'Any effectively generated theory capable of expressing elementary arithmetic cannot be both consistent and complete. In particular, for any consistent, effectively generated formal theory that proves certain basic arithmetic truths, there is an arithmetical statement that is true, but not provable in the theory.'

Physicists like Stanley Jaki and Stephen Hawking argue that (an analogous argument to) Gödel's theorem implies that 'even the most sophisticated formulation of physics will be incomplete, and that therefore there can never be an ultimate theory that can be formulated as a finite number of principles, known for certain as "final"'. This argument adds strength to the idea that all things are possibilities of probabilities, rather than certainties.

As Gödel's theorem states that any mathematical theory that includes certain basic facts of number theory will be either incomplete or inconsistent, a 'theory of everything' is not possible. Since any 'theory of everything' will certainly be consistent, it must be either incomplete or unable to prove basic facts about the integers. 'Some people will be very disappointed if there is no ultimate theory that can be formulated as a finite number of principles. I used to belong to that camp, but I



In a Dusserah Discourse given on October 25, 2001, Sri Sathya Sai Baba said, "Consciousness is all-pervasive. Just as current is present in each bulb, consciousness is present in each body in the form of conscience. Air is all-pervasive, but you cannot see it or catch hold of it. It has no form, but it assumes the form of a balloon when the balloon is filled with it. The all-pervasive air can be compared to consciousness, and the air inside the balloon to conscience. As you inflate the balloon more and more, at a certain point it bursts and the air inside becomes one with the air outside. Likewise, conscience merges with consciousness when one overcomes body attachment. Due to man's attachment to the body, man has limited will power. God alone has free will."

have changed my mind. I'm now glad that our search for understanding will never come to an end, and that we will always have the challenge of new discovery. Without it, we would stagnate,' says Stephen Hawking, who has authored the popular science book *A Brief History of Time*.²⁸

THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT: 'DOES THE FLAP OF A BUTTERFLY'S WINGS IN BRAZIL SET OFF A TORNADO IN TEXAS?'

Edward Norton Lorenz designed a mathematical model of the way air moves around in the atmosphere. He then realised that they did not always change as predicted. In 1961, Lorenz was using a numerical computer model to rerun a weather prediction, when, as a shortcut on a number in the sequence, he entered the decimal .506 instead of entering the full .506127 the computer would hold. The resulting prediction was a completely different weather scenario. The understanding was that minute variations in the initial values of variables in his twelve variable computer weather model would result in grossly divergent weather patterns. This sensitive dependence on initial conditions came to be known as the butterfly effect, which has since taken on a number of popular connotations. One of the oft-used ideas, which is indeed a possibility, is that the flap of a butterfly's wing in Brazil (in South America) can set off a tornado in Texas (in North America).

In the first picture (refer Exhibits 3.1 and 3.2^{29,30}), there two 3D trajectories³¹ (coloured blue and yellow each) for the same period of time in the Lorenz attractor³² starting at two initial points that differ only by 1/100000 in the x-coordinate. Initially, the two trajectories seem coincident, as indicated by the small difference between the z coordinate of the blue and yellow trajectories, but for $t > 23$ the difference is as large as the value of the trajectory. The final position of the cones indicates that the two trajectories are no longer coincident at $t=30$.

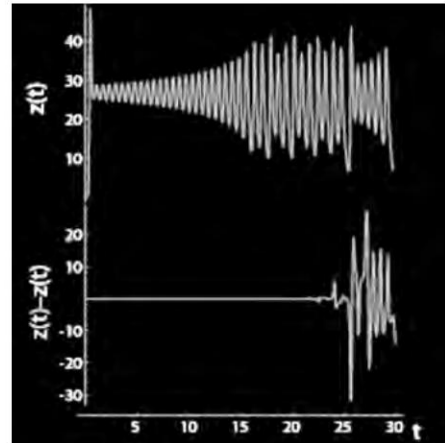
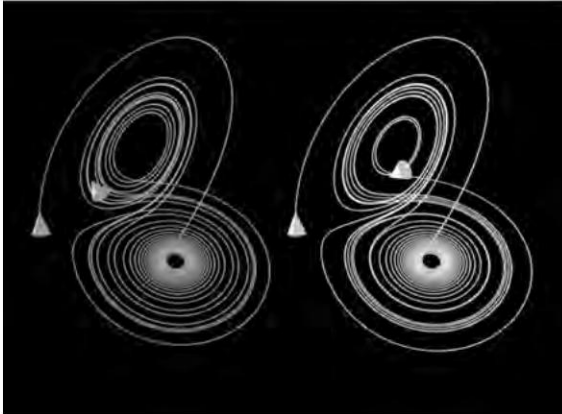
²⁸www.damtp.cam.ac.uk/strings02/dirac/hawking/; accessed on April 27, 2010

²⁹Image source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:TwoLorenzOrbits.jpg>; accessed on February 10, 2010

³⁰Image source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:LorenzCoordinatesSmall.jpg>; accessed on February 10, 2010

³¹The path taken by a moving body through space

³²The Lorenz attractor is a 3-dimensional structure corresponding to the long-term behavior of a chaotic flow. The map shows how the state of a dynamical system (the three variables of a three-dimensional system) evolves over time in a complex, non-repeating pattern.

Exhibits 3.1 and 3.2**The Butterfly Effect in the Lorenz Attractor****THE ASPECT EXPERIMENT**

An interesting aspect unfolding in our lifetime is the awareness that science and spirituality are not mutually exclusive. The butterfly effect³³ created awareness that even seemingly trivial actions have the potential to influence mighty events. The experiments conducted by Alain Aspect, a French physicist and professor at École Polytechnique, France's leading engineering school, brought in new revelations. The following is an excerpt³⁴ from an interview conducted by *What is Enlightenment*³⁵ with the physicist Amit Goswami, professor of physics at the University of Oregon and a member of Institute of Theoretical Science. He speaks about the experiments of Alain Aspect.

WIE: 'In your book you refer to this new paradigm as "monistic idealism". And you also suggest that science seems to be verifying what a lot of mystics have said throughout history – that science's current findings seem to be parallel to the essence of the perennial spiritual teaching.'

AG: 'It is the spiritual teaching. It is not just parallel. The idea that consciousness is the ground of being is the basis of all spiritual traditions, as it is for the philosophy of monistic idealism – although I have given it a somewhat new name. The reason for my choice of the name is that, in the west, there is a philosophy called "idealism" which is opposed to the philosophy of "material realism", which holds that only matter is real. Idealism says no, consciousness is the only real thing. But in the west that kind of idealism has usually meant something that is really dualism – that is, consciousness and matter are separate. So, by monistic idealism, I made it clear that, no, I don't mean that dualistic kind of western idealism, but really a monistic

³³http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Butterfly_effect; accessed on April 27, 2010

³⁴www.amitgoswami.org/scientific-proof-existence-god/; accessed on April 27, 2010

³⁵www.wie.org

idealism, which *has* existed in the west, but only in the esoteric spiritual traditions. Whereas, in the east, this is the mainstream philosophy. In Buddhism, or in Hinduism where it is called Vedanta, or in Taoism, this is the philosophy of everyone. But in the west this is a very esoteric tradition, only known and adhered to by very astute philosophers, the people who have really delved deeply into the nature of reality.

WIE: ‘What you are saying is that modern science, from a completely different angle - not assuming anything about the existence of a spiritual dimension of life - has somehow come back around, and is finding itself in agreement with that view as a result of its own discoveries.

AG: ‘That’s right. And this is not entirely unexpected. Starting from the beginning of quantum physics, which began in the year 1900 and then became full-fledged in 1925 when the equations of quantum mechanics were discovered, quantum physics has given us indications that the worldview might change. Staunch materialist physicists have loved to compare the classical worldview and the quantum worldview. Of course, they wouldn’t go so far as to abandon the idea that there is only upward causation and that matter is supreme, but the fact remains that they saw in quantum physics some great paradigm changing potential. And then what happened was that, starting in 1982, results started coming in from laboratory experiments in physics. That is the year when, in France, Alain Aspect and his collaborators performed the great experiment that conclusively established the veracity of the spiritual notions, and particularly the notion of transcendence. Should I go into a little bit of detail about Aspect’s experiment?’

WIE: ‘Yes, please do.’

AG: ‘To give a little background, what had been happening was that for many years quantum physics had been giving indications that there are levels of reality other than the material level. How it started happening first was that quantum objects - objects in quantum physics – began to be looked upon as waves of possibility. Now, initially people thought, “Oh, they are just like regular waves.” But very soon it was found out that, no, they are not waves in space and time. They cannot be called waves in space and time at all - they have properties which do not jibe with those of ordinary waves. So they began to be recognised as *waves in potential*, waves of possibility, and the potential was recognised as *transcendent*, beyond matter somehow.’

But the fact that there is transcendent potential was not very clear for a long time. Then Aspect’s experiment verified that this is not just theory, there really *is* transcendent potential, objects really *do* have connections outside of space and time – outside of space and time! What happens in this experiment is that an atom emits two quanta of light, called photons, going opposite ways, and somehow these photons affect one another’s behavior at a distance, without exchanging any signals through space. Notice that: without exchanging any signals through space but instantly affecting each other. Instantaneously.

Now Einstein showed long ago that two objects can never affect each other instantly in space and time because everything must travel with a maximum speed limit, and that speed limit is the speed of light. So any influence must travel, if it travels through space, taking a finite time. This is called the idea of ‘locality’. Every signal is supposed to be local in the sense that it must take a finite time to travel through space. And yet, Aspect’s photons – the photons emitted by the atom in Aspect’s experiment – influence one another, at a distance, without

exchanging signals because they are doing it instantaneously – they are doing it faster than the speed of light. And therefore it follows that the influence could not have traveled through space. Instead the influence must belong to a domain of reality that we must recognise as the transcendent domain of reality.

THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS AMONG ENTITIES

Developments in the field of science like Aspect Experiment have been creating tremendous influence in all sphere of life and business leaders have been no exception either. Deependra Moitra, Formerly the youngest General Manager within Lucent Technologies, who at the time had 70,000 employees worldwide, and Associate Vice President with Infosys Technologies, Ltd. is one of those leaders and he speaks on how Science, Nature and Organisations is all about interconnection.

‘I want to do things that are governed by nature’s law. I do not believe that something will work if it is against the laws of nature. So what are the laws of nature? Nature is nothing but science. There is a principle in physics and electrical engineering called ‘impedance matching.’ What it means is that there are two devices, A and B. If these have to be connected and if the power transfer between these two has to be maximum, then their “impedance” or “resistances” should match.

I believe in this same principle as far as human relationships are concerned. My approach is to really understand an individual, individually. I want to understand their impedance and then I will position myself so that I can match my impedance with their impedance. That way our relationship can be the most productive, most powerful. See, this is actually science, and science in my opinion is nature.

I do not believe in force because I think it is against the law of nature. I have never attempted to force any of my associates in the last five years on even a single issue. I believe in dialogue. If there is a lack of alignment between what I think and how others think, I would rather focus on coaching them instead of using my position to tell them what they have to do.

The other principle I use that is related to this law of nature is that very often we do not recognise that every individual is unique. In the workplace I have seen a lot of conflicts, a lot of issues, because we tend to forget the uniqueness that each individual has. That, in my opinion, is against the law of nature. If you look at it, God has designed each of us to be unique; that is the reason we all have unique DNA’s. If our DNA is unique, and that is God’s way of telling you that every individual is unique, then we must understand how each person is unique and how we tap into that uniqueness to do something productive’ (refer Footnote #10).

While Deependra Moitra used the example of DNA to appreciate the uniqueness of every individual, the DNA also communicates the inter-relationship among various entities. Every cell in a kidney contains certain identical DNA information, which is different from the DNA information that is available in the cells in the heart. It is this differentiation that contributes to the uniqueness of each organ. While such differentiation exists, there is also existence of awareness among all the cells, be it kidney cell or a heart cell, that it should contribute to the health of the larger organ – the human body. Thus, the cells consider not just the immediate context in which they exist, but the larger context too. When this awareness of being connected to the larger context is lost, the cells

may start existing for themselves and may start charting an accelerated growth in their numbers through rapid cell divisions, a situation that threatens the existence of the larger organ/the human body. Such undifferentiated blind divisions of cell are referred to as cancer. Every cell, in a healthy state, considers itself to be a part of the whole.

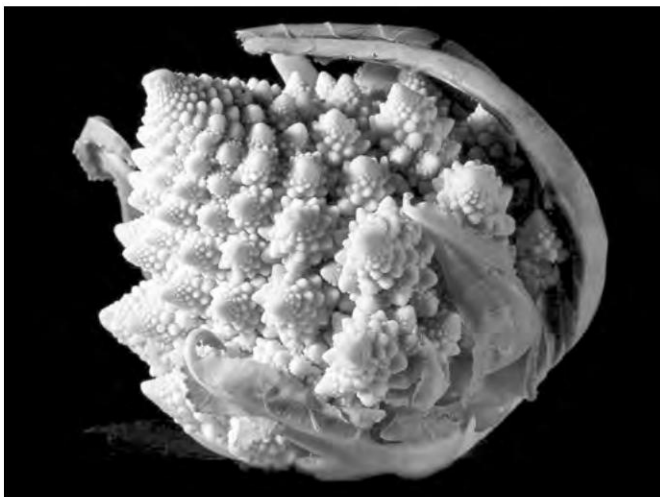
The relationship between parts and whole in a system is interesting. A dewdrop reflects the whole world on it. All the light of the world is reflected in that small dew drop. Visualise that you are enjoying the spectacular vision of a star-lit night sky. The whole sky is being reflected in your eyes; regardless of how big or how small the eye. The eye just reflects. A child's eyes reflect the sky and an adult's eyes reflect the sky. Light from the entire sky is present in every minute region of the eye. Even if the size of your pupil is reduced by half, every region in the pupil will still reflect the entire sky. Another example indicating a relationship between the part and the whole can be that of a hologram. Even if the hologram is cut into infinite number of pieces, each piece, however small it may be, will still contain the entire image. As if, everything is in everything. A pervading belief in India has been:

As is the human body, so is the cosmic body.

As is the human mind, so is the cosmic mind.

As is the microcosm, so is the macrocosm.

As is the atom, so is the universe.



'We are all in Him enclosed, and He is enclosed in us', said the Christian mystic, Julian of Norwich (1342– 1416).³⁶

SCIENCE, IN THE CONTEXT OF VALUES

In *Seven Nobel Laureates on Science and Spirituality*³⁷, The Dalai Lama states, 'In recent centuries science and technology have very much developed. Of course, this has been important and useful to us, but at the same time, due to this advancement, humanity is facing new terror and new anxiety. This, I believe, is not merely due to science and technology, for ultimately it is the disposition of our minds and our motivation that determine the direction in which science and technology are used. In other words, whether science and technology are used constructively or destructively ultimately depends on the human mind. So from this point of view also, it is very important to ensure that inner spiritual development goes together with external or scientific development.'

³⁶Image source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Fractal_Broccoli.jpg; accessed on July 17, 2010

³⁷*Seven Nobel Laureates on Science and Spirituality*, Dr. TD Singh (Ed.), Bhaktivedanta Institute, 2004

Mahabharata provides a stellar example of applying science in the context of values. Dronacharya was the teacher to both Pandavas and Kauravas. Arjuna, a Pandava, soon became Drona's favorite student due to the skills, respect and eagerness that he exhibited towards learning. Drona rewarded Arjuna the divine weapon of Brahma, called *Brahmastra*. *Brahmastra* is considered to be the deadliest weapon, and is believed to never miss a mark, causing severe damage to the being/environment of the one attacked. There is no weapon that could counter or neutralise *Brahmastra*. However, Drona clearly instructed Arjuna not to use this weapon against an ordinary warrior. Ashwatthama, Drona's son, desired a similar weapon and demanded the same from his father. Though Drona resisted this demand from Ashwatthama for quite a long time, he finally relented, although he was aware that his son was not as values-driven as Arjuna. According to *Mahabharata*, Drona's relenting resulted in Ashwatthama causing serious trouble when he used the weapon driven by his baser instincts. He directed the *Brahmastra* to attack Arjuna's unborn grandson Parikshit. The situation would have become disastrous but for the intervention of Lord Krishna. Clearly, this incident from an Indian scripture indicates the necessity of character and values in the life of a person who wields power.



Parables of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa

Once several men were crossing the Ganges in a boat. One of them, a pandit, was making a great display of his erudition, saying that he has studied various books—the Vedas, the Vedanta, the six systems of philosophy. He asked a fellow passenger, 'Do you know the Vedanta?' 'No, revered sir.' 'The Samkhya and the Patanjala?' 'No, revered sir.' 'Have you read no philosophy whatsoever?' 'No, revered sir.' The pandit was talking in this vain way and the passenger sitting in silence, when a great storm arose and the boat was about to sink. The passenger said to the pandit, 'Sir, can you swim?' 'No', replied the pundit. The passenger said, 'I don't know the Samkhya or the Patanjala, but I can swim.'

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teachings_of_Ramakrishna, Accessed on June 25, 2010

Most of the seemingly progressive technologies man has created have also brought along with them damages and sufferings to human life and planet. In their research paper titled, 'Bringing Human Values to the Forefront of Corporate Innovation', William Miller and Debra Miller³⁸ indicate the resulting dichotomy when innovations are not popularised and built on the foundation of values.

'On the one hand, we have an electronic global network. On the other hand, we have the accelerating effects of global warming.

On the one hand we can generate nuclear power. On the other hand we have nuclear weapons and hard-to store nuclear by-products.

On the one hand, we have innovated with job design and job enrichment, in white collar jobs as well as manufacturing, to empower people with more complex and self-affirming jobs. On the other hand, with the allure, power, and demands of these jobs, we have fostered a new breed of workaholics who choose to work rather than spend time with their families, leading to an epidemic of work-life imbalance.

On the one hand we are increasing crop yields through pesticides, fertilizers, and genetic engineering to feed a growing planetary population. On the other hand, the chemicals are causing toxicity

³⁸www.GlobalCreativityCorp.com

to our groundwater and food chain, while biotechnologies are quite controversial regarding their impact on health.

On the one hand, we innovate new financial products and services to help people invest in their own future, perhaps buying their own home for the first time. On the other hand, we gamble with these investment products by betting on an ever-upward market, which has culminated in the ‘economic tsunami’ now impacting the globe.

On the one hand, the US and Europe have provided the consumer engine for world economic growth, as developed and developing countries around the globe all strive for a major presence for their innovative products and services in the American and Euro marketplaces. On the other hand, rampant consumerism, fuelled by seemingly unlimited desires, continues to deplete the Earth’s natural resources in an unsustainable manner. A report in *Harvard Business Review* stated that if the global economy was successful in bringing the material standard of living of China and India up to Euro-American standards, it would take the natural resources of four planet earths to support the system.

And on the one hand, we have rid the world of smallpox and are on the brink of eliminating polio. On the other hand, the majority of deaths in developed countries today are from lifestyle related conditions. For example, according to the US Center for Disease Control (CDC), the leading causes of deaths in America are heart disease, cancer and stroke – three conditions related to our lifestyle values. CDC also describes what they call ‘the actual causes of death’ behind the three major killers, as: ‘The combination of diet, physical inactivity and tobacco are all leading causes of death.’

In another paper titled ‘The Ethical Responsibilities of Scientists’,³⁹ Howard Gardner, professor of cognition and education, Harvard Graduate School of Education, writes, ‘There is no guarantee that science will naturally contribute to the good of the public or that it will be a benevolent force in the future.’ Science itself cannot decide which course to pursue, as these decisions are made by human beings. Gardner uses the example of Einstein (who became a leader in the movement towards peace and eventual disarmament, following the detonation of nuclear devices in Japan) to speak about scientists who wielded a moral responsibility. In the concluding paragraph, Gardner states, ‘Personal responsibility cannot be delegated to someone else.’ Charles Townes, a Nobel Laureate and a professor of physics at University of California, Berkeley, brings about a connection among human values and science. He says, ‘One may argue that science does not take a strong moral position, but it certainly takes a strong position as to the importance of truth. I think this has great moral overtones regarding the importance of truth as well as the surmounting of one’s own personal predilections.’⁴⁰

UNIVERSAL VALUES AND VALUES IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

Values like truth, righteousness, peace, love and non-violence are present across cultures, and can be considered as universal values. These human values are hidden in every human being. One cannot acquire them from the outside; they have to be elicited from within. The expressions of five universal values from the sacred texts of six religions, are as follows:

³⁹www.howardgardner.com/Papers/documents/Eth%20Resp%20of%20Sci_Feb-02_HG%20pdf.pdf; accessed on April 27, 2010

⁴⁰www.bbinstitute.org/media/SSS_Dec_2006.pdf; accessed on April 27, 2010



Truth

- Buddhism – 'Him I call a Brahmin who has truth and love for all life'
- Christianity – 'The truth shall make you free'
- Hinduism – 'Be sincere and truthful'
- Islam – 'Speak the truth'
- Judaism – 'They love him who speaks what is right'
- Taoism/Confucianism – 'He who knows the truth is not equal to him who loves it'.

Righteousness

- Buddhism – 'Him I call a Brahmin who never asks what life can give, but only what he can give to life'
- Christianity – 'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness'
- Hinduism – 'Give freely and control the senses'
- Islam – 'Perform what you promise'
- Judaism – 'The righteous man walks in his integrity'
- Taoism/Confucianism – 'The man of honour thinks of his character; the inferior man thinks of his position'

Peace

- Buddhism – 'Him I call a Brahmin who is never angry... and is free from the chain of fear'
- Christianity – 'Peace be with you'
- Hinduism – 'Be fearless and euonymus'
- Islam – 'Keep your heart free from malice towards anyone'
- Judaism – 'A man of understanding is of a calm spirit'
- Taoism/Confucianism – 'To a mind that is "still", the whole universe surrenders.'

Love

- Buddhism – 'Him I call a Brahmin who has the power of love no army can defeat'
- Christianity – 'Love one another'
- Hinduism – 'Be loving, and show goodwill to all'
- Islam – 'Do you love your Creator? Love your fellow-beings first'
- Judaism – 'What is desired in a man is kindness'
- Taoism/Confucianism – 'Love the world as your self; then you can care for all things'

Non-violence

- Buddhism – 'Him I call a Brahmin who has renounced violence towards all creatures'
- Christianity – 'Love your enemies'
- Hinduism – 'Don't harm any living creature and don't slander'
- Islam – 'Withhold your hand from striking'
- Judaism – 'If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat'
- Taoism/Confucianism – 'All men have a mind which cannot bear to see the suffering of others'

Source: www.globaldharma.org/hvw-home.htm⁴¹

Here is how Janiece Webb, former senior vice-president, Motorola Corporation, USA, speaks about leading her professional life, rooted in integrity and trust, an expression of the universal values of truth and righteousness:

'I have stood firm many times to not paying bribes and as a result people realise that they can trust me. A wealthy man in an Asian country once attempted to get me to hire a person so that he could buy some property for his personal use through Motorola. I stood firm that I would not do that. He reminded me that he was one of our largest customers in that country and I told him I didn't care. To this day my contacts in that country tell me that they want to deal with me because they know they can trust me.

⁴¹Used with permission

In another Asian country we had worked very hard to put together a huge partnership and contract. At the very end of the deal, the partner told us we would have to make a payoff in order for them to sign the contract. They thought they had our soul and that we wouldn't back out. My higher-ups had told me earlier not to go and do this deal, but I believed in my heart and soul that I could pull it off without a compromise. I refused to make the payoff, so I came back with my hat in my hand and admitted that I had made a mistake. Yes, it was very embarrassing and I admit that those above me were very right in many ways. There were also ways in which they were not right and we all learned a lot together from this experience' (refer Footnote #10).

Thus, the value of trust was in effect only when Janiece Webb put into practice the value of trust and integrity. An organisation – be it a company or a nation – is only effective to the extent its individual members are effective.

Key Concepts

1. The word 'values' is derived from the Latin word *valere*, which means to be strong or to be of worth. Our values are what we hold to be 'of strong worth' to us, or which is most important to us. Expression of universal values manifest in various rituals.
2. The values we perceive as important to us need not always be in our best interest. For instance, the value that 'greed is good' has brought about enough problems. It requires clarity and intellect to assess whether what we perceive important to us is in our best interest. It is only through assimilation of life affirming values that we move towards higher truths.
3. Family is the first social organisation that provides the immediate proximity from which a child can learn her/his behavior.
4. Students look upon their teachers as role models. The value systems and behavior of an academician is as important as or more important than what is taught in the class.
5. Society is made up of individuals. The responsibility of a malfunctioning society rests with the individuals. Any transformation in the society has to begin with the individual itself.
6. Our belief systems have the profoundest impact on our values. If we believe that we are the creators of our own destiny, then we will not blame anyone else for mishaps in our life.
7. Developments in physics indicate that spirituality and science are not mutually exclusive.
8. Science and innovation have to be approached in the context of values and humanity. Else, as the prevailing situation in the world indicates, their influence would create suffering for the humanity.

9. Values like Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Love and Non-violence are prevalent across cultures, and can be considered as universal values. Such values find expression in the sacred texts of all religions. These universal human values are hidden in every human being. One cannot acquire them from the outside; they have to be elicited from within.

Key Words

Values,	ServiceMaster,	Stephen Hawking,
<i>valere</i> ,	Belief systems,	Butterfly effect,
<i>desacharam</i> ,	Value inculcation,	Lorenz Attractor,
<i>lokacharam</i> ,	Aristotle,	Aspect experiment,
Ardeshir Godrej,	Quantum	Quantum physics,
Jamnalal Bajaj,	mechanics,	<i>brahmastra</i> ,
Mahatma Gandhi,	Consciousness	Universal values,
PC Ray,	studies,	Truth,
Vaclav Havel,	Double slit	Righteousness,
SK Chakraborty,	experiment,	Peace,
<i>samskara</i> ,	PEAR Labs,	Love,
<i>Mundaka</i>	Kurt Godel,	Non-violence
<i>Upanishad</i> ,	Incompleteness	
Kyocera,	Theorem,	

Classroom Exercise

1. Refer Exhibits 3.1 and 3.2. A small difference – that may differ only by as little as $1/100000$ th – can bring about major changes in a given trajectory. You also find from the pictures that there was no perceptual change till it was 23. Many a time, we feel that our associations with human values, be it in the form of thought, word or deed, are not yielding any immediate result. Now, if you bring in the learning that you have seen in the trajectory change in the Lorenz Attractor, (how) would you refine/relook your earlier perspective?
2. What could have been the reason for the anomaly witnessed in the experiments conducted by Professor Robert Jahn?

Introspective Exercise


1. What experiences have I gone through in my life that can be called spiritual?
2. Why do I call these experiences spiritual?
3. For me, how is spirituality related to and/or distinct from religion?

Review Questions

1. 'And thus an individual need to assimilate values': Why do Indian scriptures suggest that one should lead a life built upon the foundation of wholesome values?
2. Which qualities of the mind, according to *Vedanta*, are necessary for the truth to be known?
3. What do major religions of the world have to say about the value of truth, righteousness, peace, love and non-violence?

Choose the Correct Answer

1. Who said: '...without commonly shared and widely entrenched moral values and obligations, neither the law, nor democratic government, nor even the market economy will function properly...'?
 - (a) Jamnalal Bajaj
 - (b) Ardeshir Godrej
 - (c) Vaclav Havel
 - (d) Dalai Lama
2. Who founded the first Indian chemical and pharmaceutical factory, utilising indigenous natural materials, in 1892?
 - (a) Deependra Moitra
 - (b) Amit Goswami
 - (c) Dr. P C Ray
 - (d) Dr Reddy
3. Under whose leadership did the Godrej companies launch the first lever lock without springs and produce stable toilet soaps from vegetable oils instead of animal fats?
 - (a) Ardeshir Godrej
 - (b) Pirojsha Godrej
 - (c) Adi Godrej
 - (d) Burjor Godrej
4. Who verified the concept that 'objects really do have connection outside of space and time'?
 - (a) Aspect experiment

- 
- (b) Butterfly effect
 - (c) Godel's Incompleteness Theorem
 - (d) Experiments at PEAR Lab
5. What is the foundation that one should strive for, if one is aiming for peace in the world?
- (a) Righteousness in the Heart
 - (b) Beauty in Character
 - (c) Harmony in the Home
 - (d) Order in the Nation
6. *Mundaka Upanishad* says, 'Sa Vidya Ya Vimukthaye'. What does it mean?
- (a) True education is that which liberates one from the slavery to senses and the whims and fancies of the emotions and passions
 - (b) True education is that which helps one to get a job with a fat salary
 - (c) True education is that which liberates one from writing exams
 - (d) True education is that which helps an individual to do whatever he/she wants to do
7. Which company considers the foundation of its culture as 'To honour God in all we do'?
- (a) ServiceMaster
 - (b) Toms of Maine
 - (c) Ben and Jerry
 - (d) Sounds True
8. Who believed that values are best learned by studying the lives of heroic persons?
- (a) Aristotle
 - (b) Alexander
 - (c) Socrates
 - (d) Plato
9. Which study suggested the possibility of a willful thought influencing an event?
- (a) Aspect experiment
 - (b) Uncertainty Principle
 - (c) Godel's Incompleteness Theorem
 - (d) Experiments at PEAR Lab
10. *Janani janmabhoomischa swargaadapi gareeyasi* means:
- (a) Mother and Father are greater than heaven
 - (b) Fatherland and father are greater than heaven
 - (c) Mother and Motherland are greater than heaven
 - (d) Mother and Motherland are equal to heaven

Answers: (1) Vaclav Havel; (2) PC Ray; (3) Ardeshir Godrej; (4) Aspect experiment; (5) Righteousness in the heart; (6) True education is that which liberates one from the slavery to senses and the whims and fancies of the emotions and passions; (7) ServiceMaster; (8) Aristotle; (9) Experiments at PEAR Lab; and (10) Mother and Motherland are greater than heaven

State whether True or False

1. Instrumental values refer to the desirable and end state of existence.
2. Pure deed is an aspect of human value.
3. Prafulla Chandra Ray was referred to as the 'Master of Nitries' by Mahatma Gandhi.
4. The Butterfly Effect conveys that 'seemingly trivial actions have the potential to influence mighty events'.
5. *Samskara* is a pre-requisite to gain higher knowledge.
6. Generally, humility in Japan is expressed by bowing, while in India it is expressed by saluting.
7. Values are what we hold to be 'of strong worth' to us, or what is most important to us.

Answers: (1) False; (2) True; (3) True; (4) True; (5) True; (6) True; (7) False; and (8) True

Recommended Reading

- *Human Values at Work: Making Spirituality the Inner Context of Your Work*, Debra and William Miller, Global Dharma Center, 2005 (Download this workbook free of cost at www.globaldharma.org/hvw-home.htm)
- *Principle Centered Leadership*, Stephen Covey, Free Press, 1989

Recommended Websites

- <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-4237751840526284618#>
(A video on Double Slit Experiment)
- www.binstitute.org/index.php?pr=Downloads

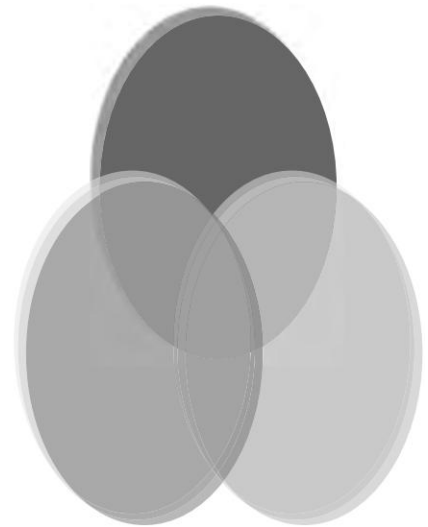
Chapter 4

The Application of Values

Learning Objective

This chapter aims to convey and clarify the following:

- How values influence and impact stakeholders of an organisation
 - The connection between personal values and organisational commitment
 - Values that are transcultural in nature
 - The connection between values and communication
 - Equanimity and decision-making
-
-



‘What is missing is a paradigm of leadership that looks upon social responsibility, ethical behaviour, and concern for the environment not simply as instruments, but as fundamental principles and values in their own right. In the moral language of the mind, what is missing is responsibility. In the emotional language of the heart, what is missing is love. In the spiritual language of the soul, what is missing is compassion and unity.’¹

~ Peter Pruzan and Kirsten Pruzan Mikkelsen²

¹Life Positive, www.lifepositive.com/Mind/Corporate_Management/The_Spirituality_of_Business62007.asp; accessed on April 27, 2010

²Dr Peter Pruzan is professor emeritus at the Copenhagen Business School and is known for his work on value-based leadership and corporate responsibility. He was the president of a successful, international business, has authored 10 books and more than 100 articles in international scientific journals. Kirsten Pruzan Mikkelsen is a journalist and former editor. She worked for almost 30 years at Det Berlingske Hus, a publishing house in Denmark, and was the editor of the Danish daily, *Berlingske Tidende*.

RELEVANCE OF VALUES IN MANAGEMENT

In *Mahabharatha*, Veda Vyasa depicts the qualities of an individual who leads others as well as the kingdom. Vyasa uses the word *Sarvabhutasaman* when referring to such a leader; suggesting that a leader should consider all as one, have equal respect for all, and show no preferences amongst people. Such a leader appreciates and acknowledges the state of unity in diversity; wherein a leader has no selfish biases. The institutionalisation of such leadership gives rise to a society where common citizens are able to express their opinion without fear and prejudice. For example, in *Mahabharatha*, when Paanchali (the wife of the Pandavas) was being disrobed, most of the learned scholars present in the court remained silent. Yet, it was the common people in towns and villages who shouted out in protest, that such an incident was wrong and that the king had been unrighteous.



NR Narayanamurthy, founder and chief mentor, Infosys Technologies on the secret of Infosys' success

'...let me say this, right from day one, when we founded the company, when we sat for four hours to discuss what we should seek in this journey, we were all unanimous that we would seek respect. We would seek respect from customers, from our employees, from our investors, from our lender departments, from the government and from the society. And we said, if we seek respect from each of these stakeholders, we will do the right thing for them. And if we do the right thing for them, then everything will fall into place. So I'm happy that the company has not swerved from that part of taking respect right from day one to now. And that is perhaps the reason we have had what little success we have had so far.'

Source: Interview with Nayan Chanda of YaleGlobal Online; <http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/transcript-%25E2%2580%259C-interview-nr-narayanamurthy%25E2%2580%259D>; accessed on April 28, 2010

Modern society is losing its faith in the so-called 'educated' people, who make, bend and apply rules based on personal preferences. People are realising that it is the intellectually brilliant who have contributed the most to the global financial meltdown witnessed in 2008-09. In USA, trust in corporate companies touched its nadir in the 2000s. Enron filed for bankruptcy in 2001. 2002 could be regarded as the year of accounting scandals in USA. The accounting behemoth Arthur Anderson almost self-destructed after being found guilty of criminal charges relating to the way it handled Enron, and other companies like Waste Management, Sunbeam and WorldCom. The year 2008 saw another set of companies going bankrupt or filing for bankruptcy, following the sub-prime crisis. The financial meltdown severely affected those who did not have much financial security.

In times of economic exuberance, people's behaviour is also focused on substantial amount of wastage which, in turn, hurts the planet. The Living Planet Report 2008, released by World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Zoological Society of London and Global Footprint Network stated that human beings, on an annual basis, were consuming more than 30 percent of the annual bio-capacity of the planet. It also said that if we continue our lifestyle business as usual, we would need another planet to live, by mid 2030s. Obsession with the credo 'greed is good' has brought suffering at all levels. Increased consumption and production have not resulted in an economic paradigm where poor people can afford the basic living needs. The Food and Agricultural Organisation of United Nations

(FAO) states that 25,000 people die every day from hunger or hunger-related causes. As per FAO, every sixth second, a child dies because of hunger and related causes.³ The trickle-down concept has not shown any effectiveness. In fact, it is such situations that call for the necessity to think about the relevance of values in management. Speaking about the role of principle-centric living, Shaunaka Rishi Dass, director, Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies, Oxford University states, 'Without self-regulation, without respect and trust, no system we introduce will be efficient or effective in the long-term. And the *Rig Veda* puts the responsibility for this on the basic building block of the universe, the individual.'⁴

HOW VALUES HELP STAKEHOLDERS

One could have a more harmonious and productive work environment by adopting a spiritual credo.⁵ However, an organisation's behaviour is a manifestation of its real values, and not its espoused values. Many organisations declare their vision and mission statements; however, it is only in those companies where missions are aligned with what the company values that these statements have any influence among its people. Nilofer Merchant, founder and president of Rubicon Consultants, a US marketing consulting firm, speaks about the importance of nourishing the roots (values) so that what appears outside (behaviour) is also nourished: '...Also, I am looking outside at that beautiful tree and thinking about how spirituality helps me to draw strength from the roots of life. The tree doesn't get nourishment from the leaves. And yet what do we see when we look at the tree? We see the branches and leaves and not the root system. So I think spirituality is about defining where our true strength comes from as the root system. We have a chance to consciously change the wellspring from which we draw our nourishment....'⁶ Thus, a company driven by values benefits its internal customers (management, employees, shareholders) along with its external customers (customers, government, society).

Shareholders

A company driven by life affirming values will focus on sustainability, because not being sustainable is not included in its work ethics. In an interview⁷, Arie de Geus, former head, Strategic Planning Group, Shell Oil Company, was asked how they could move into a world consisting of companies that behave as living organisations rather than as money machines. In response, he spoke about an awareness where, '...people see profit not as the purpose or goal of institutional life, but as the result of a successful institutional life. That is an enormous difference.' More recent researches indicate that companies which practice the highest standards in their institutional life are indeed generating rewards. Earlier, it has been difficult for researchers to prove a connection between corporate responsibility and investor returns. There was also a belief that 'doing good' results in lesser market competitiveness. Studies are now suggesting that being a sustainable company results

³www.wfp.org/hunger/stats; accessed on April 27, 2010

⁴'The Rig Veda and Credit Crunch', by Shaunaka Rishi Das, *Business India*, November 15, 2009

⁵'Healing the Rift: Bridging the Gap Between Science and Spirituality', Leo Kim, *The Journal for Quality and Participation*, October 2009

⁶Quotations extracted from the public knowledge base of the 'Spiritual Based Leadership Research Programme' are © 2006 by the GDC. GDC retains the copyright to all excerpts from this knowledge base.

⁷www.dialogonleadership.org/docs/deGeus-1999.pdf; accessed on April 26, 2010

in improved stock market performance and participating in socially responsible investing (SRI) is not only good for the society but may even improve the company's financial returns. SRI is an investment strategy that seeks to maximise not only financial returns, but also social and environmental good. SRI favours corporate best practices that promote environmental stewardship, respect for customers, human rights and diversity. Moreover, SRI funds tend to avoid businesses involved in alcohol, tobacco, gambling and weapons.

A study by Dr Marc Orlitzky, professor Frank Schmidt and professor Sara Rynes suggested that 'corporate virtue in the form of social responsibility and, to a lesser extent, environmental responsibility is likely to pay off...'.⁸ While assessing whether environmental factors can improve stock selection, Kimberly Gluck and Dr Ying Becker supported 'the assertion that sensitivity to environmental issues, particularly for the extreme performers, may enhance returns of an active strategy over time'.⁹ A study conducted by Nadja Guenster, Jeroen Derwall, Rob Bauer and Kees Koedijk, about the economic value of eco-efficiency, suggested that company managers do not face a tradeoff between eco-efficiency and financial performance, and that investors can use environmental information for investment decisions.¹⁰ Another study titled, 'Does the stock market fully value intangibles? Employee satisfaction and equity prices' conducted by Alex Edmans, assistant professor, The Wharton School at University of Pennsylvania, concluded that 'certain SRI screens may actually improve investment performance, contrary to some views that SRI sacrifices returns or that it has no effect on financial performance'.¹¹

A study conducted by Global 100 through Innovest Venture Partners, one of the world's leading sustainability research firm, shows that the financial returns generated by stocks of those companies that occupy top slots in sustainability ranking 2006 (Global 100) outperformed other stocks (indicated through MSCI World Index). On back-testing, it was found (refer Exhibit 4.1) that the stocks of Global 100 sustainable companies outperformed MSCI world index by 13.46 percent, 5.47 percent and 7.11 percent during one year, three year and five year period respectively.

Investors prefer to invest in credible organisations, and they would like to work with people who are trustworthy. Some investors would not like to be in the realm of uncertainty. An organisation that provides regular operational feedback and honest reporting of its financials is more appreciated by investors than an organisation that does not follow such practices.

The example of Parantha Narendran, former strategy director for Eurotel (Czech Republic), private equity consultant and investor, and his colleague sheds light on the connection between value-driven behaviour and exposing fraudulent behaviour:

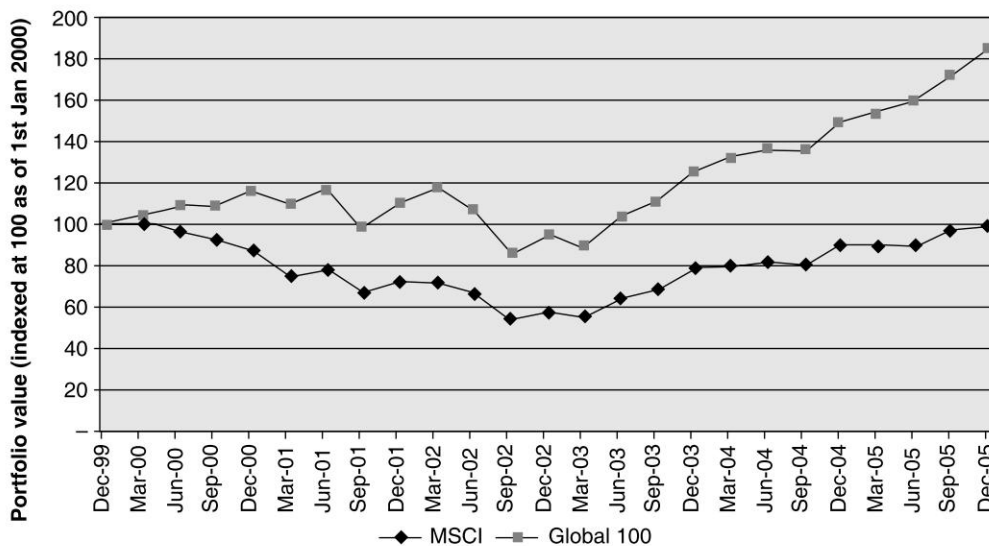
'When I was 26 years old I went to India and visited a spiritual teacher there. I sensed a very strong message to stop my doctorate work and get a job. I was studying at that time, but I wasn't using my knowledge in any way; and I already had some reservations about it. As a result of my insights from this trip, I began to look for jobs. I was offered a number of jobs and ended up taking one as a telecom consultant in a company that was quite dynamic and with a good group of people.'

⁸www.global100.org/Corporate%20Social%20&%20Environmental%20Performance.pdf; accessed on December 10, 2009

⁹www.global100.org/Can%20Environmental%20Factors%20Improve%20Stock%20Selection.pdf; accessed on December 10, 2009

¹⁰www.global100.org/The%20Corporate%20Value%20of%20Eco-Efficiency.pdf; accessed on December 10, 2009

¹¹www.socialinvest.org/resources/research/documents/Moskowitz2007Paper.pdf; accessed on April 27, 2010

Exhibit 4.1¹²

This allowed me to do quite a bit of high profile work in different markets. While it still seemed theoretical, I did feel that I was using my knowledge in some way in order to have an impact on the ways markets were regulated. This was satisfying, but after a while I wanted to get more involved in companies. So then I took a position working for a more operational consultancy for about a year. At the end of that year, I became involved with a colleague of mine, an accountant, who was trying to expose some fraudulent behaviour in the company being perpetrated by the CEO.

None of our colleagues wanted to support the accountant, nor did they really understand the issues at the time. I got involved in supporting him – advising him on what he should do. He knew he would likely get fired, and he did get fired. Once he was fired, I felt strong enough to resign from the company – about two weeks later – based on principles’ (refer Footnote #6).

Enron is an example where fraudulent behaviour was exposed due to the courage shown by Sherron Watkins, vice president of corporate development, who sent a letter to the senior management at Enron, speaking about the unethical practices in the company. In a study¹³ conducted by professor Majorie Cooper, it was found that internal frauds had cost companies between the annual GDP of Bulgaria (\$50 billion) and the GDP of Taiwan (\$400 billion). If there are more people like Sherron Watkins, the corporate world will have lesser accounting frauds and management irresponsibilities, which have till now taken millions of shareholders/investors for a ride.

¹²Image source: www.global100.org/2006/study.asp; accessed on December 10, 2009

¹³‘The Economic Costs of Sin’, Jennifer Roback Morse, *The American Enterprise*, October 2003

Partners

A substantial amount of time is spent on alleviating conflicts among the managing partners of an organisation, be it *Fortune* listed companies or SMEs (small and medium enterprises). Some of the leading business houses in India have also been affected by family feuds. These incidents are not only a drag on the morale of the organisation, they also provide opportunities for petty politics. How do partners benefit from a business process built on the foundation of values? James Sinclair, chairman and CEO of Tan Range Exploration (USA and Tanzania), says:

‘I will be the first to admit, I never wanted to go back to Africa to do business after the horrendous experience I had in the mid-90s. But my spiritual teacher told me to go back to Africa. I told him I didn’t want to go back. I travelled to see him numerous times to ask him to reconsider and let me out of it. He finally had enough of it, and so I went back even though my previous experience was a disaster. Right now it’s taking all of the money I have and the strangest things in the world are happening. I am the first guy in this type of business (gold mining) to do this without any investors. But even then I am standing strong to only do what works.’

For example, an African local lost his concession (piece of land) because he didn’t pay the money required and so the license went back to the state. Here is this very desirable piece of land with a mine already on it. I wanted that piece of land and the government was ready to give it to me. But I said, “No, give it back to the man who owned it. I’m going to make a deal with him because he wasn’t sophisticated enough to keep it.” I got him back into the loop and now he owns 30 percent of the option and we’re paying him \$50,000 for the privilege and we’ll buy the rest of it as his participation in the joint venture.

I did this because it seemed like the right thing to do. As a result, the word has gotten around that I’m a straight-shooter who is going to treat these African locals like human beings with respect. I paid them the same amount of money that I would pay someone in the USA. As a result, my company ended up with 52 pieces of land for mining, about half the size of the state of Connecticut. These are all some of the finest pieces of land in the world. We gave all of the landowners the respect of being real partners; we paid them and didn’t even take the land out of their name. I was only willing to treat these people with the same respect that I would treat someone in the USA.

The word got around and now I can’t keep people out of our offices who want to do business with us. I have made a lot of Tanzanians wealthy. Am I helping them or hurting them? I don’t know. But I do know that to hurt someone requires an intention. If I set up a business with the intent to hurt another person or business, then this is hurting and you know you are doing it. There is something in the environment that will control the stability of the world and eventually those businesses that do intentionally hurt others cannot survive. If your intention as a human is to hurt, you are looking for disaster. I don’t care if you’ve got the oracle of Delphi giving you insight.’ (refer Footnote #6).

This incident indicates the surpluses that were created due to the respect given to people by the gold miner. Respect among partners could create the following surpluses:

- Trust among partners leading to quick business decisions and easier implementation of those decisions;

- Governmental assistance;
- Increase in the employee morale;
- Consumer support; and
- Media goodwill.

Employees

During college days, the author came across the caption, 'Powered by intellect, Driven by values'. This was the tagline for Infosys Technologies. Quite impressed, the author had even jotted the line in his notebook. It was 'driven by values' that took Infosys to greater heights to become one of the most admired companies across the world, winning awards like 'India's Most Respected Company' award for 2002 instituted by *Businessworld*, the Global MAKE (Most Admired Knowledge Enterprises) award for the years 2003, 2004 and 2005, etc. A survey conducted in 2009 by *Business Today* revealed that Infosys was the most sought-after company to work for, in India. It has also been observed that people want to work with a company that engages in business practices that are socially responsible, a manifestation of the embedded values in the organisation. Furthermore, it also appears that workers desire workplaces perceived as exuding spiritual values, even if the workers themselves are not personally spiritual.¹⁴ Empirical findings suggest that when employees experience workplace spirituality, they feel attached to their organisations, and have a sense of loyalty towards the organisations.¹⁵

With increasing career opportunities, more and more employees are changing their jobs frequently. While organisations complain that employees do not exhibit much loyalty to the organisation, the latter point to the 'pink slip' culture adopted by organisations during times of downturn. What can a business leader, who is guided by his conscience, do in a situation of painful restructuring? Lars Kolind, former CEO of Oticon (Denmark), one of the world's premier suppliers of products for the hearing impaired, and chairman of Grundfos, sets an inspiring example:

'If you look back at the Oticon story, there were two phases. One was the downsizing and the other was the building of the new company. In the downsizing phase we were under extreme pressure because the whole company was falling apart. And the pressures were coming from everywhere. I met with the management of our bank once a month and they were looking critically at everything we were doing. We were pressed to an extent that most people simply cannot imagine.

We were forced to reduce staff very dramatically. On one occasion we cut away 10% of the staff overnight. I was really under pressure to determine which principles we should use to make the decisions as to who to lay off. I took the decision, which no one understood, that we would not fire anyone over 50. Neither would we fire people who were so essential that we didn't think we could survive without them. But other than that, we would let those people go who we thought would have the best chance of getting another job quickly – even though these were obviously the ones I would have preferred retaining. I just couldn't look into the

14 'Workplace Values and Outcomes: Exploring Personal, Organisational, and Interactive Workplace Spirituality', by Robert Kolodinsky, Robert Giacalone, Carole Jurkiewicz, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 2008

15 'Workplace Spirituality and Organisational Commitment: An Empirical Study', by Arme'nio Rego, Miguel Pina e Cunha, *Journal of Organisational Change Management*, 2008

eyes of all of the people that we would kick into prolonged unemployment in order for the rest of us to make money and prosper. I just couldn't do that.

I must admit that I simply made these decisions and I didn't really think about where they came from, which was from my conscience. Normally someone in my position would let the department heads talk to the people. But I didn't do it that way. I talked to every single person that was to be laid off and told each of them that they were going to be fired and that we would work with them to get a new job the best we could. I was experiencing all their bad feelings as I was confronting myself with the doubts and fears of all of these people. To me it would have been an act of cowardice to let others do this for me. I made the decision. Then I explained it to my managers - and I explained to those being fired why I had chosen to do what we were doing.

The interesting point was that we got through this amazingly well. There was total acceptance, even though no one really understood it. But once it was done, people said "wow" and really respected my decision. I maintained a number of the people who were fired as very good friends because they respected that it was necessary. It turned out that we managed to work with almost all of them to get new jobs. Obviously this had a price for me and for the company as well, and the price was that there were lots of people that I would have rather laid off that we retained.

Later I realised that this was really an expression of my spiritual principles. But I must admit that while doing it I didn't think much about it. Yes, I did follow my conscience and that is certainly the voice of spirituality.' (Refer Footnote #6)

Employees would prefer to work with chief executives like Lars Kolind. When they witness such commitment from senior management, they will tend to reciprocate such feelings and behaviour. Research studies support such ideas. In the 'Best Employers in Canada' study conducted by Hewitt Associates, it was found that values like integrity and ethical conduct was a parameter that clearly distinguished the leading employers from others. The press release stated, '88 percent of employees at the top ten Best Employers agreed or strongly agreed that co-workers displayed integrity and ethical conduct at all times, while only 60 percent felt that way at the bottom ten organisations. With respect to managers, the numbers were 90 percent at the top ten and 63 percent at the bottom ten. There was a bigger difference with respect to leaders: 89 percent of employees at the top ten Best Employers agreed or strongly agreed that senior leadership displayed integrity and ethical conduct at all times, while less than half – 48 percent – felt that way at the bottom ten employers.'¹⁶ It has also been found that stock market returns of those firms on *Fortune* magazine's '100 Best Companies to Work For' list outperformed market averages, even after accounting for market risk, size, momentum, and style effects.¹⁷

Studies on organisation behaviour speak about three types of trust – deterrence based, knowledge based and identification based. Here, identification based trust is considered to be the highest level of trust; an organisation like Oticon, with a leader like Lars Kolind, is likely to exhibit this type of trust.

¹⁶www.berlineaton.com/whatsnew/50best.htm; accessed on April 27, 2010

¹⁷'Does the Stock Market Fully Value Intangibles? Employee Satisfaction and Equity Prices', Alex Edmans, MIT Working Paper, 2007

Customers

Jan Carlzon, former CEO of Scandinavian Airlines System (SAS) took over this financially ailing company, which was also known for irregular work-hours. He focused on “moments of truth”, the points at which SAS customers came into contact with anything related to the airline. In his book *Moments of Truth* published in 1987, Carlzon said, ‘Last year, each of our 10 million customers came in contact with approximately five SAS employees, and this contact lasted an average of 15 seconds each time. Thus, SAS is “created” in the minds of our customers 50 million times a year, 15 seconds at a time. These 50 million “moments of truth” are the moments that ultimately determine whether SAS will succeed or fail as a company.’ Carlzon focused on converting each of these “moments of truth” into “moments of magic” – a situation where the interaction between the airline and the customer exceeds the customer’s expectation and generates delight. Led by the value of serving the customer, SAS soon became a profitable company. There have been empirical substantiations that facilitating employees to find meaning and purpose in their job can positively impact their service performance.¹⁸

Amber Chand, founder of the Amber Chand Collection: Global Gifts for Peace and Understanding, an internet-based company in the USA that markets the products of artisans from around the world, speaks about another example where a value-driven company creates customer delight:

‘The second initiative I started early on was to speak to the customers who were unhappy with us. I remembered my childhood where my mother and father taught me to treat a guest who came to our house as God. You do everything you can to make their time with you happy and satisfying and comfortable. So during our first customer training, I told them this story. I told them that at Eziba, I like to feel that the customer is God. So when the customer calls, we drop everything and we listen. People actually listened to what I said and thought it was nice.

We have a fabulous customer service group and yet I still want to speak with all of the unhappy customers. It is actually helpful for our employees to see that the co-founder is working alongside them, supporting the larger work, which is to satisfy all our customers. I always pick up the phone and call the unhappy customers. I begin by apologising to them, “I am so sorry that we have dissatisfied you in some way.” I must tell you that customers are amazed; they cannot believe that one of the founders is taking the time to call them. From this call, I always end up with a happy customer; we usually end up feeling a lot of joy and laugh together. I tell them to call me again if they ever have any problems and I give them my direct line. So it is another way of being thoughtful and it works.’ (refer Footnote #6)

The following is another incident where a business leader engages an internal customer. Let us consider the experience of Anand Pillai, head of the learning and development department for HCL Technologies in India:

‘There was a time when I had just moved into a new assignment and a vendor had not been paid because he had not supplied what he was suppose to have supplied. This vendor was upset because he had not received his money. This conflict had been going on for quite some time when I took this position.’

¹⁸‘Spiritual Climate of Business Organisations and Its Impact on Customers’ Experience’, by A Pandey, RK Gupta and AP Arora, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 2009

‘My secretary received a call from this vendor, and she came to ask me if she should tell him that I was not there. While she had the receiver covered she told me what a nasty fellow he was, and how he was going to shout at me. While she kept the receiver down for a minute, I told her that I did not want to hurt her, but I wanted to take the call. I took the call and asked the man what I could do for him. He said that his payment had not come. I told him the truth, I said, “Sir, I have just moved into this position one week ago. Give me your details, phone number and invoice. I cannot promise you a payment; however, I can promise you that within the next half of hour I will tell you why your payment has not been made. Then we can see what we need to do so you can receive your payment.”

He shouted that everyone promised to call back, but no one ever called back. I said with a calm voice, “Sir, you have spoken to me for the first time; please give me that respect. If I don’t call you back then you can yell at me also.” In that half hour, I talked with my secretary, first about how she was avoiding rather than solving the problem. I told her that we must solve the cause of the problem and not just the symptoms. I said, “By your saying that I am not here, you are only solving the symptoms. We don’t want him to give up as a dissatisfied vendor. We want him to be a satisfied vendor.”

I then went to the accounts department and found out that he had short supplied an item. In less than fifteen minutes, I called him back and told him exactly what the facts were. I told him that if he supplied the item that was not supplied, then we would pay him. He said, “Sir, I don’t even want the payment now that I am talking to you. I want to thank you for giving me the full details. Yes, there was initially a short supply, but the reason I did not supply the full amount was because I talked with a person in your company and he told me I would not be paid even if I supplied the rest of the order.” He supplied the item and got his payment; and my secretary increased her faith and ability to handle problems.’ (Refer Footnote #6)

Thus, Anand Pillai’s experience indicates how a business leader engaged in a business situation – centered on the values of integrity, self-confidence, patience and respect – was able to provide customer delight. Not only did he win the appreciation of the vendor during the transaction, he was also able to mentor his secretary.

As customers increasingly link their values to their buying decisions, they prefer products and services that are made in a responsible manner. They support companies that are socially responsible, by voting with their wallet. Increasing connectivity has enabled people to make a conscious buying decision, thereby promoting ethical consumerism. The Greenpeace Guide to Greener Electronics¹⁹ National Geographic Green Guide²⁰, Karmayog.com ratings on socially responsible companies in India²¹, etc. help customers in making informed purchase decisions. In a study by the market research group GfK NOP, about one-third of the 5000 respondents from the UK, US, France, Germany and Spain, suggested their willingness to pay a premium of 5–10 percent on ethical products. As customers actively engage in co-creating with the companies, the world is witnessing an increasing in ethical spending. The Ethical Consumerism Report 2009²² indicated that ethical spend in UK

¹⁹www.greenpeace.org/international/campaigns/toxics/electronics/how-the-companies-line-up

²⁰www.thegreenguide.com/

²¹www.karmayog.org/int-csr/

²²The *Guardian*, www.guardian.co.uk/business/2009/dec/30/co-operative-bank-ethical-sales-triple-report; accessed on April 27, 2010

increased £13.5 billion in 1999 to £36 billion in 2008. Sales of Fairtrade goods in UK went up to £635 million in 2008 from £22 million in 1999. Fairtrade certification is a product certification system designed to allow people to identify products that meet agreed environmental, labour and developmental standards. This approach helps producers and farmers in developing countries obtain better trading conditions and promote sustainability. In 2008, Fairtrade certified sales amounted to approximately €2.9 billion (\$4.08 billion) worldwide, a 22 percent year-to-year increase.²³ Organisations have also found that associating with noble causes is beneficial to them. ITC has been donating a percentage of its revenue from its 'Classmates' brand of notebooks to support school education. It was significantly noted that ITC Classmates had the highest brand recall among students because of the product's association with an education related philanthropic cause.

Government

During the license quota raj, some of the industrial houses in India sought favours from the governmental machinery through corrupt practices. Since then, this malaise has only spread. A Planning Commission report released in 2005²⁴ indicates that only 27 paise out of every rupee spent by the government on the Targeted Public Distribution System reach the poor. Brijmohal Lall Munjal, the founder of The Hero Group, which owns Hero Honda Motors, says, 'In 1954–55, when there was a severe shortage of cycles in the country, the government started issuing small-scale licences to manufacture cycles. Lot of people misused these licences to make quick money. At the time we could also have gone for the small-scale licence, but we decided against it. 'We always wanted to take the right path, which is more difficult, and never get into making quick and easy money.'²⁵ One of the richest people in India today, Munjal has shown that it is not necessary to follow corrupt and unethical practices to become rich.

Most of the major political parties have been affected by corruption scandals and senior leaders from the political parties are trying to bring about a change in the scenario. The government also prefers to work with organisations, driven by values. The following incident that happened at Infosys is an example of how the government and the society benefitted due to the integrity upheld by NS Raghavan, co-founder of Infosys:

'We used to have perpetual complaints from our employees about the salary structure and how much they had to pay in taxes. They would compare with their friends in other companies and tell me that other companies were giving their employees a lot of cash payments, which allowed them to avoid paying taxes. However I knew that this was not legal and told them that they must pay the taxes that they are supposed to pay.

To make the employees appreciate our stand, I requested a senior income tax official to come and give a presentation to our people. One of the employees told the official that he knew of a company that was giving cash payments so that the employees could pay less tax. The IT official was quick to say that if he could get the details, he will check it out and if necessary take immediate action on the company. He assured us that we at Infosys were doing the right thing. He also told them that they were earning top wages, and therefore they should rightfully pay their taxes as their duty.

²³www.fairtrade.net/facts_and_figures.html; accessed on April 28, 2010

²⁴http://planningcommission.nic.in/reports/peoreport/peo/peo_tpbs.pdf; accessed on April 27, 2010

²⁵'We Never Get Into Making Easy Money', Sanjeev Sharma, *The Economic Times*, March 22, 2005

The employees continued to come to me and complain that if they paid so much in taxes it was just going to support a corrupt government. I continued to tell them that they must pay their proper taxes and if they had complaints about the governance issues or how the taxpayers' money is being used, they must go to those forums and see if they can help to correct that situation. I told them that they must not shy away from upholding their responsibility to pay their taxes. I told them not to mix up the two. I believe in integrity and openness, and this is how I handled this situation.' (Refer Footnote #6)



'If we look at the word competition, am sure most of you would have used it, you know, most people do not realise it comes from Latin *com-petare* which means strive together...'

Competitors

A competitor is after all a competitor. Ruthless behaviour meted out to competitors can be justified saying, 'If we don't kill them, they will kill us'. Similar metaphors of big fish eating small fish are oft heard in many business conferences. However, we are in for a surprise when we look at the root of the word competition. 'If we look at the word competition, am sure most of you would have used it, you know, most people do not realise it comes from Latin *com-petare* which means strive together',²⁶ comments William McDonough, known for his C2C approach to design (refer Ch.2, pg. 31). In the same context, Federico Cuneo, senior partner with Ernst & Young (Peru), Chair of Peru 2021 (an NGO working on sustainable development and corporate social responsibility), says:

'I think the world needs the business segment to be concerned about the good of the whole. I know this may be difficult, but it must start from within. We must all start to look within at our spiritual nature and change from the inside. I cannot imagine all of the good things that business could do for the world if this were to happen. If the people who run the highly successful companies would look inside, I know that they could do a lot more for the world. To me this is an ethical way to do business and there is a responsibility to look into the unethical practices that are being done today and stop them.

I also think that large multinational corporations need to be much more aware of how they are killing the small producers in the countries they are going into. These small producers are actually the ones who created the market in the first place and they need to be respected. I think that a spiritual approach will help these leaders find a way to resolve these inequities somehow.' (refer Footnote #6)

Goes to say, business leaders seldom raise the issue of big businesses eating up small businesses, while also respecting small producers who, in the first place, created those markets that are now attracting big business houses.

²⁶www.ted.com/index.php/talks/william_mcdonough_on_cradle_to_cradle_design.html; accessed on April 27, 2010

Society

Will society benefit by value-driven actions? Hélène Ploix, chairman and managing director of Pechel Industries (Paris)²⁷ puts things in perspective:

‘In 1992 when I was at Caisse des Dépôts, one of the people working with me had the good idea to start research on ethics and finance. Although I was very, very, very busy, I wanted to keep some time for that programme. I started thinking more about ethics and finance; what did ethics mean? What did finance mean? Was ‘ethics and finance’ an oxymoron or was it possible to meaningfully speak of ethics and finance? I started thinking that ethics was balance, not going beyond limits. There were many reasons why finance could go out of balance – just think of what computers allow people to do; in some cases they don’t think any more, computers tell them what to do and they don’t always realise what they are doing. That became clearer and clearer to me, and I started discussing it with research people in order to clarify my thoughts. We had no code of conduct at Caisse des Dépôts, so I created one. This was at the very beginning when different markets were trying to organise themselves in that respect and it was very difficult to have people share it. It was difficult to convince them that they had to think about these issues, but we had some seminars to help.

At a certain point in 1995, someone in my team organised a seminar with, among the speakers, two famous economists. One of them was Merton Miller, who had received the Nobel Prize in Economics in 1990. The other was Myron Scholes, who two years later, in 1997, received the Nobel Prize in Economics and who at the time of the conference was working on the Board of the firm LTC Management that specialised in hedge funds. Both of them together with Robert C. Merton, and Fischer Black had contributed to the development of options, derivative products, structured products and consequently hedged funds.

I made what I considered at that time to be my “usual speech” about ethics and finance, balance, about stepping back and thinking about what the financiers were doing, about the risks and what ethics was all about. In that speech I spoke about systemic risks, because in economics you can really create big problems, big disruptions, because the money is all over the world and one country’s actions can have big repercussions on other countries, hence the necessity for financiers to behave ethically. Then one of these Nobel Laureates (now I do not remember which one) stood up after my little speech and said, “You don’t understand anything – the capital markets always correct imbalances!” The speeches were put together in a book titled *Risques et Enjeux des Marchés Dérivés* which, in a footnote, states the debate which followed my speech: “Diverging viewpoints were expressed on the role of regulation and on protection of the collectivity, and on the proportion of risk that it would bear in the last resort.”

Some years later LTC Management became unable to cover all the risks they had taken (The hedge fund Long Term Capital Management, formed in 1994 and staffed with some of the greatest financial and mathematical minds in the world (including two Nobel Prize winners in economics), helped write one of the most unique chapters in Wall Street history. After huge initial successes, only four years after its start, it brought the world’s financial markets to

²⁷Designation during the time the thought was shared

the brink of chaos when it ‘collapsed’ and couldn’t cover its huge, leveraged positions; LTC had to be bailed out by major financial institutions to avoid the catastrophic effects of its failure on the international financial systems. The culture of this company was known for the arrogance of its leaders, as well as for its almost complete lack of transparency). They had to be rescued; otherwise there would have been a systemic crisis that would have threatened the whole world’s financial systems. At the same time several investment banks made big losses.’ (refer Footnote #6)

Mahatma Gandhi once mentioned that knowledge without character is a social sin. The previous example indicates how people who ‘understand everything’ can contribute to financial crisis. It was a similar crisis that brought about the financial meltdown of 2008. In contrast to such misbehaviour, a person of character will bring surplus to the society, as we have seen in the case of PC Ray, Ardeshir Godrej, etc.

Narayan Murthy, mentor, Infosys, says, ‘...it’s society that contributes customers, employees, vendor-partners and investors. Society provides bureaucrats and politicians who frame policies for our industry. Hence, it is important that we create goodwill in society. I do not know of any corporation that has demonstrated longevity without sustained goodwill from society. Goodwill is created only if we do not make exaggerated attempts to distinguish ourselves from the common man, if we are seen to be moderate in our desire, if we eschew greed and vulgarity, and if we create rules that enhance the confidence, enthusiasm and commitment of our employees.’²⁸

In January 2010, Exide India launched an initiative wherein every time a used battery was returned to Exide, the company would contribute to the UNICEF Child Environment Programme, that focused on sanitation, hygiene, nutrition, etc. among children. The lead used in batteries was harmful to human beings and other life forms, if not treated/disposed properly after use. Through this initiative, Exide India not only expressed its value of non-violence towards the environment, but also of love towards children in the society. In 2010, Van Heusen launched the eco-line range of organic shirts. Being organic, it was ensured that no chemical substances were used during cotton cultivation. The company also gave 1 percent of the sales revenue from these shirts to ‘Trees for Free’,²⁹ a ‘not for profit’ organisation that planted and nurtured approximately 17,500 tree saplings in Bangalore, mostly in public spaces.

In addition to bringing benefit to shareholders, partners, employees, customers, governments, competitors and society, value-driven behaviour can also benefit the organisation in myriad other ways. Companies find that, for example, when a new recruit who joins the organisation primarily driven by monetary benefits, leaves it for higher monetary benefits offered by the organisation’s competitors. Organisations that practice values will attract people who are driven by values; such employees would switch jobs relatively less frequently. Ashoke Maitra, Former Director of Human Resources for the *Times of India*, founder of the Centre for Human Resource Development and the Sri Ramakrishna International Institute of Management in India narrates an incident that reflects how employees responded when the employer extended a hand of commitment:

²⁸ ‘Experiments in Compensation’, Narayana Murthy, Business India, November 29, 2009

²⁹ www.treesforfree.org

‘I ask a lot of questions to myself when situations which require me to make a response or give a decision arise. I normally introspect and try to see the different dimensions of the situation or the problem. I think of the consequences of the actions I take and whether there are alternative actions too.

Suppose the director of a company tells me that an employee needs to be sacked as he is not performing. I think of the consequences to the employee: what will happen to his family, to his children; how will he reform? I also know that the director is known to act out of anger and repent later. I give it a little space and then examine the issues with the employee to find the obstacles he may be facing. If there is something wrong with his work, I ask for some alternative ways he could improve – without termination.

My philosophy is that, this person was once fit to be employed, why else would he be recruited in the first place? So, if he needs to be terminated now, then surely the organisation has to take some responsibility? Otherwise, why did they recruit him/her? They should also take some responsibility for contributing to his lack of development, and not absolve their responsibility so fast.

We entered the Internet business in a big way and then there was the whole dotcom crash. However, we did not sack a single person whom we selected. We put them into other ventures. When the government shut down our radio channel, we sacked no one. We put them into our retail shops where they made announcements, talked to customers, performed all kinds of hand-holding exercises. We knew that we would start a radio station again in the future and that these employees would be useful then.

Now we have some of the best radio jockeys from the old team and, when competition is offering them three times their respective salaries, those very employees are refusing the offers. Why? Because we stood by them when they needed us most’. (refer Footnote #6)

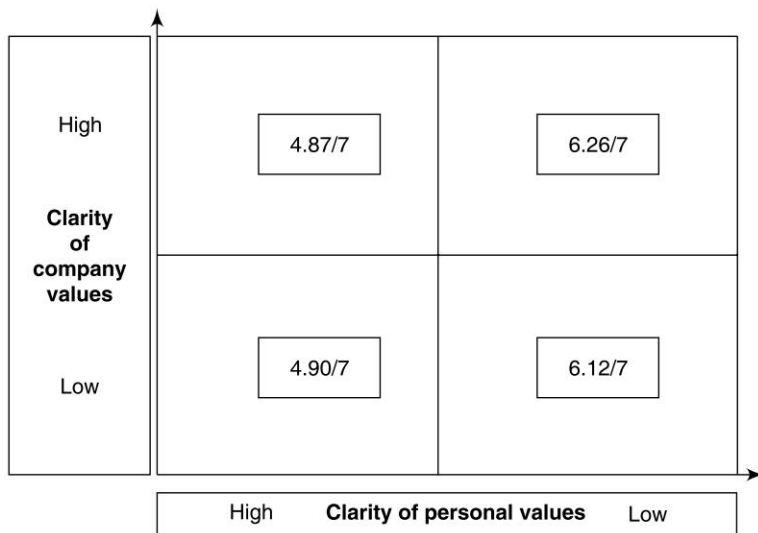
PERSONAL VALUES AND ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

In 1992, Barry Posner and WH Schmidt studied people’s commitment to organisations. The researchers probed the respondents on three areas – clarity about the values of the company; clarity about their own personal values; and their commitment to work.³⁰ The highest score that indicated an individual’s organisational commitment was seven.

The results (refer Exhibit 4.2) were as follows:

1. Low clarity on personal values + Low clarity on organisational values = An organisational commitment score of 4.90
2. Low clarity on personal values + High clarity on organisational values = An organisational commitment score of 4.87
3. High clarity on personal values + Low clarity on organisational values = An organisational commitment score of 6.12
4. High clarity on personal values + High clarity on organisational values = An organisational commitment score of 6.26

³⁰‘Values Congruence and Differences between the Interplay of Personal and Organisational Value Systems’, by Barry Posner, WH Schmidt, *Journal of Business Ethics*, December 1993

Exhibit 4.2

The results suggested that increased organisational commitment came from those people who were aware of their personal values. The ideal situation is when individuals have high clarity about both personal and organisational values. What is surprising is the emergence of 'clarity on personal values' as a strong component in deciding organisational commitment. Even if an individual scores low on clarity on organisational values and yet has high scores on clarity on personal values, this individual has higher organisational commitment as compared to the one who has high clarity on organisational values yet low clarity on personal values. An individual may have high clarity about organisational values, but may still not be committed to the organisation.

In another study,³¹ it was found that greater the experience of personal purpose and meaning in one's work,

- the greater the organisation commitment of the individual
- the lesser the intention of the individual to quit the organisation
- the greater the intrinsic work satisfaction of the individual
- the greater the job involvement of the individual
- the greater the organisation-based self-esteem of the individual

As Dr APJ Abdul Kalam has said in his autobiography, *Wings of Fire*, 'We are all born with a divine fire in us. Our efforts should be to give wings to this fire and fill the world with the glow of its goodness.' If we are aware that there is a divine fire within us, then we will be aware of our personal values. If we are aware of our personal values, then we will be committed to our work.

³¹'An Exploratory Empirical Assessment of the Relationship Between Spirituality and Employee Work Attitudes', by John Milliman, Andrew Czaplewski, Jeffery Ferguson, Academy of Management Proceedings, 2001

NEED FOR VALUES IN GLOBAL CHANGE – INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

‘Change is the only constant’ goes the popular quote at business presentations, class lectures, etc. Every creation undergoes change at some time or another. Seasons change, the physical body changes, the mental makeup of a person changes, the personality changes, the economic situation of the world changes, and the political stability of the world changes... Thus change is an encompassing factor; we have to accept the inevitability of changes in us and the environment. How do Indians relate to change? ‘Indians consider the material world to be a constant flux and change and full of contradictions and paradoxes. Hence they welcome and appreciate change as a fundamental reality,’ says Swami Bodhananda, chairman, Sambodh Foundation.³²

Observe closely, and it will be clear that changes in the environment are all in synchrony. Trees shed leaves when the summer is approaching so that it can conserve water. Later, these leaves decompose and turn into manure from which new leaves and other living beings take nutrition grow. Some animals go into hibernation during harsh winters, and emerge only in summers. A sunflower changes its direction vis-à-vis the sun. Temperature changes during night and day; earth (land) gets warmer and colder faster than the sea. In the day, when land is relatively hotter than sea, soothing sea breeze comes in towards the land. This cycle reverses at night, when the land cools faster as compared to water. Thus, there is always some interconnection in all the changes occurring in nature. There is a holistic and organic approach to change when it comes to nature. Here is what RK Pachauri, chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) said as part of the acceptance speech (December 10, 2007) for the Nobel Peace Prize awarded to IPCC: ‘Coming as I do from India, a land which gave birth to civilisation in ancient times and where much of the earlier tradition and wisdom guides actions even in modern times, the philosophy of ‘*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*’, which means the whole universe is one family, must dominate global efforts to protect the global commons.’³³

In contrast to this interconnected change are the types of changes that we see across the globe. While plastic has made it convenient for many to lead a pleasant life, it has vastly damaged the environment. It may take thousands of years for plastic waste to be degraded. It is estimated that almost one billion ton of plastic has been discarded since 1950.

Remarkably, we are quick to adopt changes that are not ideal, while motives and practices related to righteousness are slow to inspire. From this perspective, a ‘conservative’ society/culture is an advantage because it offers a period of



Waste on the Hawaain coastline³⁴

³²As quoted in the conference material given to participants of the International Conference on ‘Indian Management for Global Effectiveness: Insights from the Mahabharata’ held at Indian Business Academy, Bangalore on February 19 and 20, 2010

³³http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/2007/ipcc-lecture_en.html; accessed on June 29, 2010

³⁴Image source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Marine_debris_on_Hawaiian_coast.jpg; accessed on February 10, 2010



Remnants of a Laysan Albatross (found in the North Pacific) chick which accidentally fed on plastic and died.³⁵

contemplation before accepting any fads. There is a tendency to force ‘change as the only constant’ as a fundamental truth. While this statement may be true at a sensory level, it is suspect whether this notion is true beyond time and geography. The surface of a sea is always changing with waves lashing across. The surface of the sea is transient, ever changing.

The following is an excerpt from *Man Management: The Gita of Management*³⁶:

‘Truth along with character should be a part of your life. King Harishchandra lost everything, yet he stuck to truth. To uphold truth, he even parted with his wife and son. Even after this, he was not able to pay even the interest on the amount he had promised. He had nothing to eat or drink. His wife also followed him. She helped her husband in every work that he did in order to pay the amount he had promised to pay. One day, his wife told Harishchandra, ‘Oh Lord! We lost every thing and we have nothing with us to pay the amount. Only you and I are remaining ultimately. So, sell me to someone and pay the amount.’ Today, will any wife speak so? When the husband gets into trouble, she leaves him and goes back to her parents’

³⁵Image source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Albatross_chick_plastic.jpg; accessed on February 10, 2010

³⁶*Man Management: The Gita of Management*, Sri Satya Sai Students and Staff Welfare Society, 2005. Excerpts used with permission.

house. So, everyone has to follow the path of Harishchandra. Every husband and wife has to understand each other, support each other in troubled times and follow the path of truth and sacrifice.'

It can be inferred that King Harishchandra's life has been influenced by his value of following the path of truth and sacrifice. He was not one to tell the truth only as and when it was beneficial to him. King Harishchandra's story is embedded in the psyche of most Indians; even people who do not adhere to the values of honesty and truthfulness, often chide others by saying, 'You fool, why try to be Harishchandra?!' The story of Harishchandra has had a profound impact upon the lives of many, including Mahatma Gandhi.

Let us assume that our life is like a pie. For some people, this pie is the sum total of a number of smaller slices like family, professional life, religion/spirituality, social relationships, and so on. Sincere practitioners of all faiths consider the whole pie to be spiritual, rather than being one slice of the pie. Professional life, family, leisure, social relationships and health are all slices of spirituality. Steven Covey, author of the best-selling *The 7 habits of highly effective people*, says, 'Spirituality cannot be something a person toys with, a little compartment of their lives. It has to be at the core in a way that affects every other part of their lives.'³⁸ André Delbecq, former dean, and professor and director of the Institute for Spirituality and Organisational Leadership at the Santa Clara University School of Business in the USA, says 'So for me, the spiritual journey includes the choices you make in the unfolding inner journey. True spirituality seeks to avoid any dualism between the inner self and outer action. Our actions dealing with the secular and mundane are part of the spiritual journey' (refer Footnote #6). Similarly, in *Bharata*, the whole life is considered spiritual. King Harishchandra considered truth and sacrifice to be spiritual values and was following these values in all spheres of his life, as did King Janaka who ruled the kingdom of Mithila.

India has a rich management ethos, and has said to the world for thousands of years that spiritual character is an essential part of leadership. Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, a text on management written in 300 BC, speaks about the qualities necessary for leadership. Kautilya states that leaders must have character based on piety, reliability, truthfulness, gratefulness, liberality, promptness, avoidance of harming others and freedom from vices.



Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi³⁷

³⁷Image source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tagore_Gandhi.jpg; accessed on February 10, 2010

³⁸*The Corporate Mystic: A Guidebook for Visionaries with Their Feet on the Ground*, Gay Hendricks, Kate Ludeman, Bantam Books, 1997

For a business organisation to be effective in a country rooted in such an ethos, business practices undertaken should be based on the values that Kautilya has spoken about. However, the situation is not so ideal in the current scenario. Society is giving in to increasing permissiveness to advertise intoxicants, and its consumption is increasing too. We the people need to assess whether business organisations are manufacturing such products because people demand them or whether business organisations are luring people into using these products.

Another perspective that we need to consider is the conventional way of looking at leadership characteristics. India is a country where both masculine and feminine values are embedded in its cultural mesh. This synthesis of masculine and feminine energies is represented in *Ardhanarishwara*.

Amber Chand, founder of the Amber Chand Collection: Global Gifts for Peace and Understanding, an Internet-based company in the USA, rooted herself in spiritual values, and used that strength to move through an arduous change process within her organisation. She epitomises the feminine qualities that an individual can bring forth to be a noble leader. Says she:

‘One of the most painful periods for me as a leader in this company was the time just after the tragedy that happened in New York on September 11th through Christmas, 2001. We were restructuring the company and looking seriously at our goal of being a profitable organisation.

As a result we had to look closely at areas of the company that were not cost-effective, which then required us to let some people go. This happened very quickly and it was very painful for me. Here was a company that had promoted itself to be a kind, thoughtful, compassionate company and people came to work here because they had a sense of alignment with our mission of doing good for the planet.

And yet, I had to be realistic about the early, start-up phase that we were in. There were no guarantees, we were not a solidly profitable company yet, we were still young and our roots were still not embedded. Once we had communicated to everyone about who would be laid off, we had an open forum meeting with everyone in the company. We clearly expected people to express their distress, unhappiness, frustration and anger. I stood there in front of everyone along with the other members of our senior team.



*Ardhanarishwara, the synthesis of masculine and feminine energies.*³⁹

³⁹Though this image is available on the Internet, the authors were unable to find its original source. The author/publisher does not hold the copyright to this image, and it is therefore being used here for educational purposes.

Even though some people did become quite angry, I could feel my heart accepting all of this. I genuinely felt that there was a reason for all this anger and frustration and that there was no harm in it. I knew that the last thing we needed to be was defensive. There was a moment when one of our senior members became defensive and it sparked a battle between two wills; it was awful. Everyone looked so sad and devastated. At the end of it, there was just this silence.

I then very quietly went and stood in the centre of the room, looked around the room at everyone and said, "I am so sorry. I apologise for the way this has turned out." At that moment the faces of the people began to soften and a spaciousness was created that let them know that this was not about us versus them. It was simply all part of the journey of this company. The apology felt like a quiet, but powerful flame within me.

It was a moment when I stretched inside. I was accepting the responsibility for what had happened in the company and was also acknowledging that there was no right or wrong. It simply was what we needed to go through. I stepped into the circle, stood in my own space, and felt all of it. To me it made a great difference.

Humility would be the word I would use to describe that moment. It was in this humility that I found my greatest courage. Courage to me is not when I raise my voice and act aggressively and defensively against others; it is when I feel responsible and responsive to their needs. In that moment I literally re-defined what a leader was meant to be. We have become so consumed by the idea that leaders are strong and in charge, and that they are the captains of the ship. I am most interested in incorporating the great feminine principles into leadership: bringing in the art of grace and humility, dialogue, soft speech and deep listening, and eyes that may water, and allowing all of that to be there.

This is what it means to me to be a servant leader. This is very much how I see my leadership role in this company; I am founder-servant. I have always known that I was here to serve and anytime I forget this, I lose my way. Without this faith, this spiritual source, I do not feel it would be possible to be an exemplary leader.' (refer Footnote #6)

VALUES FOR MANAGERS

There is a story about a king who once had a hurried breakfast and, in the hurry, forgot to clean his face properly. Due to his haste, the king's cheek carried a lump of jam-spread. Unaware, the king rushed to the court and carried on with his daily routine. While the ministers and others present in the court observe this, none brought the jam spread to the king's notice. The chief minister was afraid that the king would get angry; the court jester thought that the king had applied it intentionally in order to lighten the atmosphere; the army general perceived the king was trying out some new sign codes. After the day's work, the king returned home to find the jam spread on his cheek and felt ashamed of his carelessness.

Next day, the king was careful. He made time for a good breakfast and ensured that his face was cleaned properly. He reached the court only to find that all the members, including the chief minister, court jester and army general, had jam spread on their cheeks!

Similarly, in organisations, whatever a manager or a member of the senior management does, others try to imitate the same. This being the case, it is necessary for the senior management to ensure that their thoughts, words and deeds are worthy of emulation. *Bhagavad Gita* (3,21) says:

*yad-yad acharati sreshthas
tad-tad eve 'taro janah
sa yat pramanam kurute
lokas tad anuvartate*



When he (JRD Tata) was awarded the Bharat Ratna in 1992, Tata employees arranged a function where a gentle breeze was blowing inland from the Arabian Sea. When JRD rose to speak he made the point: 'An American economist has predicted that in the next century India will be an economic superpower. I don't want India to be an economic superpower. I want India to be a happy country.'

Source: *The Hindu*, www.hindu.com/2005/07/29/stories/2005072905991100.htm; accessed on April 28, 2010

Meaning: Whatever is practised by noble personalities, those very practices are followed by other people too. Whatever is the guiding principle of the noble personalities, the world too adopts the same.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba echoes the same idea:



'Leadership is idealism in action. A leader is one who gives up all ideas of possessiveness, strives only for the wellbeing of society and holds himself forth as an ideal human being.'⁴⁰

Research studies have often linked corporate performance to strong ethical leadership.^{41 42 43 44} However, in many organisations, a gap exists between the espoused values (values that are professed, but not necessarily put into practice) and the integrated values (values that are demonstrated and expressed in daily routine). It is up to the manager/leader to ensure unity between espoused values and integrated values. *Mahabharata* espouses the role of a leader and manager in good governance. To create a kingdom where citizens are free from fear and violence is considered to be the reason for the existence of a state. Section 91 of 'Shanti Parva' in *Mahabharata* extols the virtues that a king should possess. Section 91.12 states, 'The class that requires greatest protection of all is composed of those who are weak, are poor, are exploited, are helpless, and are trampled upon. It is to protect them from the strong that the king was created' (Mathur, 2010).⁴⁵ The values of *Mahabharata* also advocate impartiality and justice as values that a leader-manager (king) should show in governance. The scriptures say that neither mother, nor father, nor brother, nor wife, nor the son, nor the priest is above the law, and if any of them transgress *dharma*, the king has to hold her/

⁴⁰ Saibaba's Mahavakya on Leadership, Lt. General Dr ML Chibber, Leela Press, 1996

⁴¹ 'Corporate Ethical Identity as a Determinant of Firm Performance: A Test of the Mediating Role of Stakeholder Satisfaction', by P Berrone, J Surroca, JA Tribo, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 2007

⁴² Good to Great, J Collins, Harper Business, New York, 2001

⁴³ 'Spiritual Leadership and Organisational Performance', by LW Fry, LL Matherly, Paper Presented at the Academy of Management, Atlanta, Georgia, 2006

⁴⁴ 'Spiritual Leadership as an Integrating Paradigm for Positive Leadership Development', by LW Fry, LL Matherly, Paper Presented at the International Gallup Leadership Summit, Washington DC, 2006

⁴⁵ 'Mahabharata – Philosophy of Good Governance', by BP Mathur, Paper presented at the International Conference on 'Indian Management for Global Effectiveness: Insights from the Mahabharata' at Indian Business Academy, Bangalore on February 19-20, 2010

him responsible. Similarly, the king is also not considered above the law ('Shanti Parva', 121.60 and 91.32). *Mahabharata* also states that a leader-manager (king) who governs with equality and impartiality is applauded and praised (Section 69.30). It has now been found that spiritual leadership is a significant and important key to increased organisational commitment and productivity, as well as sales (refer Footnote #43).

Human beings have been endowed with the power to choose. We can choose whether to behave like a human being or like the devil. We can choose responsible or irresponsible behaviour. We can choose public or private transport. We can choose to hold a cloth bag or a plastic bag. We can choose to make a measured remark or to use abusive language. We can choose to make a socially responsible investment or we can invest in sectors and industries that work against the wellbeing of the society. SK Chakraborty stresses on the need to work *with* the mind and *on* the mind for its refinement, elevation, and coherence before one starts paying attention to the acquisition of skills and information. Only a refined and pure mind is capable of taking decisions that benefits all. 'Shanti Parva' 69.4 states, 'When the king has conquered his own self, he has conquered his enemies too. The king who remains defeated by his own self, how can he be victorious against enemies?' (refer Footnote #45)

Jack Hawley, author of *Reawakening the Spirit in Work: The Power of Dharmic Management*,⁴⁶ speaks about nine qualities that a modern leader should have – being a sense-maker, being a moral architect, being a steward of organisation's values, being a leadership yogi, being a servant, being a spiritual guide, being a whole-maker, being an optimist, and being a spiritual warrior. Hawley elaborates:

1. Be mostly concerned with your vision of the organisation's reality, rather than just its goals and objectives. Know that you are the **sense-maker**, the one who understands and conveys the overall concept of the organisation – its purpose and meaning, and why it's in business.
2. Be mostly concerned with integrity and dharma (living one's truth), rather than being merely honest. Know that you are the **moral architect**, the leader of character, the one who creates an environment saturated with integrity, who makes living by one's inner truth workable.
3. Be mostly concerned with establishing human values and basic virtue, rather than just setting priorities. Know that you are the **steward** of the organisation's values, the one who creates the conditions for integrity to come forward, and keeps watch over it.
4. Be mostly concerned with your own peace of mind and depth of composure, rather than just plans and strategies. Know that you are the **leadership yogi**, the one of calm, determined action who generates the organisation's state of mind.
5. Be mostly focused on the principle of giving, rather than merely getting your own share. Know that you are the **servant**, the one who grasps the universal law behind giving – that you always get what you give – the one who creates an overall aura of helpfulness.
6. Be mostly concerned with the organisation's energy, heart and spirit, instead of only its performance. Know that you are the **spiritual guide**, the one who builds an organisation that liberates the very best in people.
7. Be mostly concerned with the organisation's culture, its basic 'personality' – rather than just its structure and manner of operating. Know that you are the **whole-maker**, the one who at some

⁴⁶The first book to be published by an American publisher that overtly dealt with the theme of spirituality, leadership and management.

high level of consciousness knows the basic oneness of all beings and creates an overall sense of unity.

8. Be mostly concerned with showing gratitude and acknowledging successes, instead of only correcting errors. Know that you are the **optimist**, the one who incessantly recognises the contributions of people and brings an overall mood of cheerful optimism to the organisation.
9. Be mostly concerned with establishing an overall air of conviction and assurance, instead of being merely a problem solver and decision maker. Know that you are the **spiritual warrior**, the one of courage who lives in constant, awareness of inner truth, the one who fosters self-confidence and individuality.

Thus, it is possible to infer⁴⁷ that the leadership qualities are aligned to human values. The qualities that Hawley speaks about have universal application. Any individual can aspire to be a 'leadership yogi'. Nationality, religion, gender, caste, and race do not hinder one from being an 'optimist'.

TRANS-CULTURAL HUMAN VALUES IN MANAGEMENT AND MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

The universal values (refer Chapter 3, pg. 93) are applicable in the field of business management and related areas. Viktor Frankl, a psychiatrist, the founder of Logotherapy (considered as the Third Viennese School of Psychotherapy) and a survivor of the Nazi concentration camps, is known for his book, *Man's Search for Meaning*. In his book, Frankl makes a point: 'We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They may have been few in number, but they offer sufficient proof that everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms - to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way.' He says that between a stimulus and a response, there is a space. Our ability to choose the response lies in that space. Frankl states that it is in our response that our growth and freedom lies. He also believed that liberty and responsibility move and work together.

His book suggests having a Statue of Responsibility in the west coast of USA to complement the Statue of Liberty that is located on the east coast (New York). The Statue of Responsibility Foundation is now engaged in that process.



Statue of Liberty⁴⁸

⁴⁷These excerpts from an interview given by Dr Jack Hawley to *Quantum 21* can be downloaded at www.gitawalkthrough.com

⁴⁸Image source: <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Liberty-statue-from-below.jpg>; accessed on February 10, 2010

The idea for a Statue of Responsibility brings forth the connection between duties and rights. While there are long discussions about human 'rights', there is less talk about human 'responsibilities'. Seers of various wisdom traditions focused on duties as the primary aspect of life and rights as something that result as a natural byproduct of a sincere engagement in those duties. Only when a teacher considers each student as her/his child and acts upon that responsibility, will we not have a scenario where a student speaks about student rights. On the contrary, if a teacher does not do her/his duty properly, then the rights of the student to learn are being negated. A government servant who is punctual and dedicated to his duty, is indirectly ensuring that the rights of the citizens are taken care of. The sincere service of a minister automatically ensures that the rights of the citizen are being taken care of.

Debra and William Miller from Global Dharma Center state that since the human values of Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Love and Non-violence come from a common spiritual foundation – Divinity resides in all of creation, the human values are an indivisible whole; one human value cannot exist apart from the others. This integrated wholeness of the human values gives us tremendous strength as we seek to bring them forth in our work.

Here are some of the ways through which we can practice the universal values at work:

1. **Truthfulness** – speak honestly with co-workers and customers.
2. **Righteousness** – keep your agreements with your manager and co-workers, as well as customers.
3. **Inner peace** – practice equanimity, even in crises, in times of profit or loss, and in times of praise or blame.
4. **Love** – listen generously and compassionately to others rather than being judgmental.
5. **Non-violence** – find win-win solutions to problems, rather than winning at another's expense.

And, here are some examples indicating the practice of trans-cultural human values in the world of business:

Websites such as www.GoodSearch.com, www.SearchKindly.com, www.EveryClick.com, www.Ecocho.in and www.Forestle.org donate a significant amount of their revenue to social projects. GoodSearch donates 50 percent of its revenues, SearchKindly donates all of its revenues, Ecocho plants five tree saplings for every 1000 searches made through the website and Forestle contributes 90 percent of its income to protect rainforests. As can be inferred, social responsibility is not a peripheral endeavor for these organisations, but a value that is at the core of the organisation's business strategy.

World Community Grid (WCG) is a social responsibility initiative of IBM aimed at creating the world's largest public computing grid engaging in scientific research projects that benefit humanity. Using the idle time of computers around the world, WCG has been engaged in research projects related to human genome, HIV, dengue, muscular dystrophy, cancer, influenza, rice crop yields and clean energy. Though started by IBM, this initiative is an example of organisations and individuals coming together towards a common good, as indicated by the statistics that WCG has received the support of more than 400 companies and organisations to assist in the work, and has over 500,000 registered user accounts⁴⁹ from across the world.

⁴⁹As on February 28, 2010

The stakeholders of these organisations are located at different corners of the world. An individual from India surfing the internet may avail the services of the US-based site GoodSearch, whose donations may benefit a community located in the African continent. It is such transcultural human values that make these organisations stand tall. The universal human values of truth, righteousness, peace, love and non-violence are also the fundamental roots of a healthy organisation – and of healthy individuals.

- Truth fosters trust and honest communications. For example, a professional would tell the truth about errors or delays, even if it called for a temporary reprimand.
- Righteousness fosters high quality work. For example, a clerical person would do her/his best quality work, even if no one were watching.
- Peace fosters creative and wise decisions. For example, an executive would continually strive to find creative/new ways to deliver goods effectively and efficiently, without adding undue costs to her/his customers.
- Love fosters selfless service based on caring for others' wellbeing. For example, a sales person would actively seek to serve people rather than seek some bureaucratic rules to hide behind.
- Non-violence fosters a win-win collaboration. For example, a manager would strive to keep the environment clean and unpolluted by the waste generated from the business processes.

What is required is education about these human values. Ashoke Maitra, former director of human resources for the *Times of India*, founder of the Centre for Human Resource Development and the Sri Ramakrishna International Institute of Management once said, 'Our regular worldly education process does not allow you to see your Divinity. Its goal is to cram lots of knowledge into you...' (refer Footnote #6). It is education in human values that can lead one to seeing the Divinity in all. As Swami Vivekananda put it, 'What the world wants is character. The world is in need of those whose life is one burning love, selfless. That love will make every word tell like a thunderbolt.' Trans-cultural values and ancient Indian educational systems was focused on building character in a student. In India, people usually refer to the four ages (*yugas*): *Sathya yuga* or *Kritha yuga*, *Thretha yuga*, *Dwapara yuga* and *Kali yuga*. The modern times that we live in are often referred to as *Kali yuga*.



Before you can become a spiritual man or woman, you must become a gentleman or a gentlewoman, in the real sense of the term.

Sri Satya Sai Baba further classifies *yugas* according to a person's character. He says (*Dharma Vahini*, Chapter 9), "The ages (*yugas*) are classified on the basis of the dominant mental role. In the age of truth (*Kritha-yuga*), it is said that dharma walked about on four legs, happy and safe. In the second age (*Thretha-yuga*), dharma had only three legs, while in the third age (*Dwapara-yuga*), it had to totter about on just two! In the present *Kali-yuga*, dharma has only one leg, according to this tradition. A person with all four can be said to be in the Golden Age (*Kritha-yuga*), whatever the age in the calendar. If truth is not steady but one has the other three qualities, one is in the *Thretha-yuga*. If truth and compassion are absent but austerity and giving persist, one is in the *Dwapara-yuga*. If only giving remains out of the four, it is as if dharma is standing on one leg, and the person sticking

to giving, in spite of everything else having disappeared, is in the Iron Age (*Kali-yuga*) - even if it is chronologically the Golden Age. The ages (*yugas*) change only with the change in dharma, not with the mere passage of time. The wicked Hiranyakasipu and the pure-hearted Prahlada lived in the selfsame chronological *yuga*; the same *yuga* saw Dharmaja, the personification of righteousness and peace (*santhi*), as well as the arch cheat Duryodhana. So, *dharm*a is what makes the *yuga* for each; one can always be in the Golden Age (*Kritha-yuga*), if only one has all four qualities of dharma. The conduct of man makes and mars history and changes the Golden Age to the Iron Age."

SECULAR VERSUS SPIRITUAL VALUES IN MANAGEMENT

*prajna vivekam labhate
bhinnair agamadarsanaih
kiyad va sakyam unnetum
svatarkam anudhavata*

~ *Vakyapadiya*, Bhartrhari, 2.492

Meaning: Intelligence acquires the faculty of distinguishing and classifying things according to their real properties through the study of different systems of thought transmitted by tradition. How can a man, limiting himself to his own reasoning, make progress?

Secular, a Manifestation of Divine

The economics professor of one of the authors used to say that whenever he needs clarification on a word related to economics, his primary source of reference is a general dictionary. One of the authors had this urge to check the dictionary for the meaning of 'secularism'. The dictionary stated it to be: 'not concerned with religion; not sacred; worldly'⁵⁰. If secular means 'not concerned with religion', then 'am I truly secular?', the professor asked himself, 'Haven't I been influenced by the philosophies of various religions?' His questions attain acute significance especially in a country like India, the birthplace of some of the major religions of the world and a warm host to other religions even before they spread in other regions of the world. In our lives, there are instances when we experience moments of love. Did we not experience some kind of sacredness in those moments? If secular means 'not sacred', then would we like a 'secular' relationship with those who are close to our heart? Would we like a sacred relationship or a non-sacred relationship among family members – the basic unit/the foundation upon which a nation is build?

For a moment, ponder over the following: Why is there so much disturbance, so much strife and quarrelling in the name of God? Swami Vivekananda⁵¹ says: '...There has been more bloodshed in the name of God than for any other cause, because people never went to the fountainhead; they were content to give only a mental assent to the customs of their forefathers, and wanted others to do the same.'

Swami Yatiswarananda⁵² says: 'Before you can become a spiritual man or woman, you must become a gentleman or a gentlewoman, in the real sense of the term.'

⁵⁰The Oxford English Dictionary

⁵¹http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Complete_Works_of_Swami_Vivekananda/Volume_1/Raja-Yoga/Introductory; accessed on April 27, 2010

⁵²*Meditation and Spiritual Life*, Swami Yatiswarananda, Ramakrishna Math, Bangalore, 1979 (first edition)

There are times when we may feel that we are all born sinners. We have committed mistakes in our past causing harm to ourselves and to others. There have been instances when we've been abused, physically and emotionally. Fine, let it be so. The past is past. The future is uncertain. However, we have a choice. A choice that we can make for the present, a choice that we can make for now; the choice to move ourselves from a state of fear to a state of love. And we can do that, right here, right now. There may be times when we feel that we can do no good. In such situations, we can at least desist from doing evil. The three areas of focus in the tradition of Indian wisdom that bridges the religious and the secular are: *shaurya* (valour) emphasising courage, *neeti* (ethics) and *dharma* (duty). Enterprise, ethics and energy are therefore considered the foundation of any human endeavour.⁵³

The following narrative by Ananth Raman, chairman of Graphex Inc (USA), is about his senior who 'was not a religious person or anything like that' yet was 'a gentleman with a deep sense of values' engaged in a business transaction taking into consideration the value of responsibility and honor, in letter and spirit. Ananth Raman goes on to mention how that incident made him to have a re-look on his perspectives about business transactions.

'There was an instance where I was not the decision maker; my boss was the one who had to make a very important decision. However, I was able to see the basis of this decision from a spiritual perspective only after it had happened. We had borrowed a large sum of money from a banker who wanted to pull out of their operations in the US, and we had a large multi-million dollar loan due to them.

I went to the lender and told them that since they were the ones who were leaving, we would like to pay them less than the total amount. I proposed a certain reduction in what we owed them, and we had an extensive discussion about this. With hesitation, they agreed to a reduction, but it was a smaller reduction than what I had proposed. Since we couldn't finalise the actual amount of the reduction, they had the head person from their London organisation come to the US to meet with our principle shareholder from Switzerland; and we decided to let those two people work it out.

I had briefed our principle shareholder, who was actually my immediate boss, on what had taken place up to that point. I suggested that he offer an amount for the reduction that was a little more than they had agreed to. I went into the discussions feeling very proud that I had negotiated this loan reduction, and had gained this extra income for the company.

As we moved toward this critical point during the talks, my boss suddenly said, 'I have not come here to ask for this reduction, I will not do it.' We had negotiated so hard for this reduction, and now this man was saying that he would not ask for this! He told them that we would in due time pay back the entire amount of the loan.

I was totally shocked. Here we had a huge gift of money available, and my boss was giving it away. Afterwards I asked him why he had done this, and he said, "As a businessman we have a responsibility. We are responsible not only to our shareholders, but also to our bankers. We have borrowed this money from them; we must repay it to them. This company is not

⁵³'Managerial Ethos of the Indian Tradition: Relevance of a Wisdom Model', by SR Chatterjee, *Journal of Indian Business Research*, 2009

bankrupt - we are able to pay this money to them. So there is absolutely no reason why we should take advantage of this situation just because they want to pull their operations out of the US. This is no way to do business.”

I was really struck by all of this. He was not a religious person or anything like that. He was just a gentleman with a deep sense of values. He considered this loan not as something that we simply wrote down and now we can debate about whether to pay or not pay. Rather, he took it as an obligation to society.

I felt this was a deep spiritual lesson for me. The lesson was that all obligations must be honoured. They must be paid back in the right way, not by arguing like this. I saw that all obligations, whether they are in cash, such as this, or in some other form, must be repaid in some way or another. This is my duty and I must honour that duty. I saw that this was the only way to do business in this world.

If I had not looked at this from a spiritual perspective, I would have thought, “I did all of this hard work for this man, and he is not even appreciating it.” My financial controller was with me, and he is still not convinced today that what my boss did was right. He still calls it a stupid decision and I continue to tell him why it was not a stupid decision.’ (refer Footnote #6)

Stephen Covey, author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, shares an incident related to the secular issue of Reward Management, and how to make it effective based on the ‘value of abundance’:

‘One time in the USA I was working with a man whose insurance company was suffering under internal competition. I had attended their annual celebration where about 20 to 30 people received big awards. I asked, “Did you hire the other people as losers?” He said, “Oh, no, they will have their chance next year.” I said, “Nevertheless you have got about 800 losers out there and only 30 winners. Everyone can be a winner; you have just got to change your mind-set from scarcity to abundance.” He had a fine character and said, “I would like that, but how do we do it?” He didn’t know how, it was not a character issue, it was a competence issue.

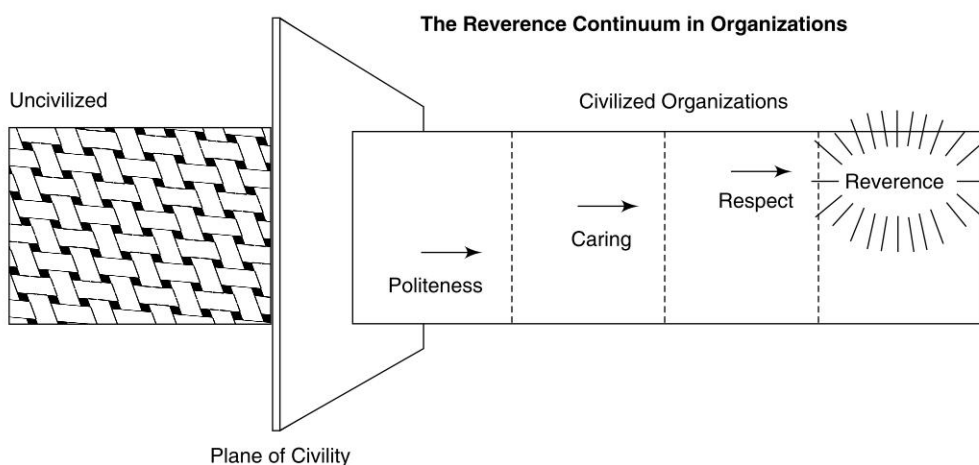
I said, “Turfism in your company is a result of the way you have designed your reward system; it nurtures cutthroat internal competition.” He asked, “What can one do?” I said, “Set up win-win agreements. These are agreements where those you want to inspire participate in designing the agreement – the reward system where if some achieve their goals, all the rest benefit, this is a win-win system where everyone can win. Get off this internal competition.” He had an abundance mentality and immediately responded to the need. Now that he was aware of the challenge, he had to develop the competence for designing and institutionalising participative win-win agreements. He became so inspired that he and his employees designed the new system – and within one year 80 percent of his organisation was producing per person what 3 percent, 30 people, had produced the year before. The pie got so large. Unfortunately, a lot of people operate from the paradigm of scarcity, where the pie is only so large. (refer Footnote #6)

⁵⁴Excerpt from *Reawakening The Spirit in Work: The Power of Dharmic Management*, Jack Hawley, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, San Francisco, 1993; Used with permission

Thus, the accounts of Ananth Raman and Stephen Covey indicate how seemingly secular actions can become highly effective, when built on the foundation of human/spiritual values. It can also be self-discovered that seemingly secular values, when deepened and nurtured, reach a state of existence where they are considered spiritual. Jack Hawley explains this continuum:⁵⁴

‘...I proceed with my talk, explaining that an organisation’s basic personality can be plotted somewhere along this line, this continuum, depending on the general pattern of human relationships within it.

Then I draw two short vertical strokes about a third of the way along the line. “Call this the dividing plane between basically uncivilised and basically civilised organisations,” I say. “To the left are those without real human relationships. They’re generally mean-spirited, indifferent, and apathetic. Unfortunately, there are many of them, but disregard them for now and consider only organisations that are basically civilised.”



I then divide the line to the right of this plane into four segments. “Let’s look at some gradations of civility. I point to the first segment.” The most elementary civilised organisational personality is the ‘polite organisation’, wherein people are at least minimally considerate and attentive to one another. “I label this segment **P**.” These are organisations with manners; there’s a whiff of common courtesy in the air there.

I think, and reach for an example: “The English as a nation are generally good at this. Even if they don’t like you, they’ll at least act politely toward you most of the time. It may be forced and thinly veiled, but they seldom let themselves dip below a minimum level of civility.”

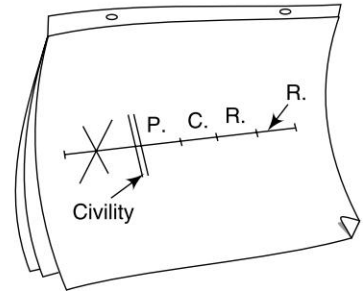
“But polite organisations better be careful,” I caution. “If they persist in acting that way and thus become compulsively polite, they will become distanced, separated from real feelings of any sort, and this will deaden them to improvement.”

“On the other hand, if polite organisations really want to improve, again they had better be careful,” I say half jokingly, “because if they persist in their politeness, it will grow and will slip over the line into real caring. The ‘caring organisation’ is the ‘polite organisation’ that’s even more so.” I scratch a **C** in the next segment.

In the Caring Organisation members are more concerned with and more attentive. They’re generally more interested in people and their work, and are more thoughtful. In this organisation

you see them watching out for one another, for the organisation – and for customers. There's a heightened consciousness in this type of company that's really noticeable. People care more; that's good for them and their clients, and everybody likes it.'

'I give as an example a particular high-production pharmacy unit in a huge medical center. The unit operates as a human prescription-filling machine. You walk in and all heads are down, paying attention to business, churning out thousands upon thousands of medications each day. There's a whole squad of pharmacists behind a glass partition busily filling prescriptions, and there's a score of clerks working the front end of the human "machine", pecking at computer terminals and handling the throngs of patients coming to the long counter. One day, a while back, an elderly man shuffled slowly up to the counter and asked in a weak, shaky voice for diabetes medicine. Every head in the unit looked up to make sure the patient wasn't "in trouble".



With this example the wrinkled brows of the management group have smoothed out some; their faces aren't quizzical; it's beginning to make sense. I continue, a bit higher, 'But caring organisations better watch out because those behaviours, too, become a habit. If they're not careful, care grows into respect.' I label the third segment **R**.

"Respect. Imagine an organisation climate soaked in respect. Respect is one of those qualities you all know when you feel it, and especially when you don't; yet it's not something that's thought about or talked about much," I continue.

"What are the important human interactions and feelings that make up a respectful environment?" I then ask. The group helps build the list: Consideration toward one another. Holding others in esteem. Admiration. Genuine politeness. Kindness. Valuing others. People "liking" each other. It's a good list. "That's the kind of organisation I hear people all over calling for," I say.

Now they know where I'm heading, they shift a little in their seats. I go ahead anyway. "Respect can become a habit, too; if and when it eventually deepens, it becomes reverence." An **R** goes in the last segment. Here's how the completed chart looked.

The wrinkles and quizzical looks have returned, furrows etched deeper. I might have backed off here and tried to smooth things, but something prompts me to persevere. "I know reverence sounds far out" – I pause for a moment – "but think back to the best boss you've ever worked for or the best team you've ever worked on or the best subordinates you've ever worked with." I encourage them to pause, turn inward, and take a full minute to do their recollecting.

I time it – sixty quiet, precious seconds – then continue, "Tell me, was there reverence in that situation? Certainly! Every forehead in the room immediately nods agreement. It's a revelation to themselves (and even to me); reverence **is** more common in the workplace than we think."

SUBLIME COMMUNICATION

In 2003, Deloitte Consulting launched a software program called Bullfighter that helped people spot and avoid incomprehensible business jargon. While testing the program, Deloitte found that the communication from the now-bankrupt energy company Enron became 'progressively more obscure

as they got deeper and deeper into trouble'. Deloitte also found a connection between the clarity of communication among the America's 30 largest companies and their financial performance – the growth, during a three year period, was better for those companies which had clarity of communication as compared to those who were using incomprehensible jargons.⁵⁵ In the world of business, we not only find many people using incomprehensible jargons, but also find the usage of words related to war, gory images and demeaning terms – 'marketing blitzkrieg', 'guerilla marketing', 'ambush marketing', 'cut-throat competition', 'industrial espionage', 'market bloodbath', 'talent poaching', 'selling yourself', 'union busting', 'bleeding edge', 'making a killing', 'bullet points', 'command and control', 'deployment', 'ensnaring customers', 'market capture' and more. These words, which indicate a scarcity mindset/ battle mentality, are so prevalent in the business language that we rarely notice their impact on our thinking. Such a language creates a world of winners and losers, and divides and rules. 'Today we realise that when we "beat" our so called enemies it can very often have a negative impact on the whole system of which we are a part. Thereby doing more harm than good in the long run. We cannot build the future we all want with a warfare mindset,' say John Sutherland and Jacqueline Stavros in the article 'The Heart of Appreciative Strategy'.⁵⁶

This context of language reflecting a deficit mindset is miles away from the Biblical statement, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God' (John 1:1). A number of spiritual traditions across the world consider sound to be the beginning of the cosmic creation. The Vedic view considers 'Aum' to be the primordial sound, the source from which creation is made through the sound's vibratory powers. It is believed that Aum, Amen, Amin and Alm are all connected; sound and words were thus considered to be sacred, and meant to be used with care and compassion. The practitioners of this philosophy assessed sounds and words to the subtlest levels, in their journey to understand the language of nature and the word of god. In *Rig Veda* 1:164:39, Rishi Dirghatamas⁵⁷ suggests the presence of an essence that lies hidden behind the word. Association of the sacred with the word ensured that Indian civilisation was able to largely preserve its ancient scriptures and literature despite a number of onslaughts and attacks. Vedic literature from ancient India is considered to be the largest source that has survived from anywhere in the ancient world.⁵⁸



'The Tower of Babel', a painting by Pieter Bruegel the Elder. According to the Book of Genesis, the tower of Babel is a structure that remained unfinished as people started using languages that disconnected them from others.⁵⁹

⁵⁵The Telegraph, www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/3309893/Empty-jargon-is-put-to-the-sword-by-new-program.html; accessed on April 27, 2010

⁵⁶AI Practitioner, November 2003

⁵⁷Dirghatamas is a Vedic sage.

⁵⁸*Hidden Horizons: Unearthing 10,000 years of Indian Culture*, David Frawley, Navaratna Rajaram, Swaminarayan Aksharpathi, 2006

⁵⁹Image source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Brueghel-tower-of-babel.jpg>; accessed on February 10, 2010

In *Management by Values*⁶⁰, SK Chakraborty speaks about the key aspects related to communication that he has derived from the works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. These guidelines can be helpful in making communication process genuine and respectful. They are:

1. Never utter a word when you are angry.
2. Don't allow the impulse of speech to assert itself too much or say anything without reflection – speak always with conscious control.
3. If there is gossip about others and harsh criticism, don't join in - they only lower the consciousness from the higher level.
4. Cultivate the habit not to throw yourself out constantly into spoken words.
5. The less one speaks of others – even in praise – the better it is. Already it is difficult to know exactly what happens in oneself, how to know when with certainty what is happening in others.
6. You must criticise nothing unless you have at the same time a conscious power and an active will in you to dissolve or transform the movements you criticise.
7. To discourage is wrong. But false or wrong encouragement is not right... Very often if an inner communication has been established, a silent pressure is more effective than anything else.
8. What is needed for success in the outward field... is the power to transmit calmly a force that can change men's attitude and the circumstances, and make any outward action at once the right thing to do and effective.
9. Outburst of anger or temper means the tongue is projecting bad vibrations into the atmosphere... nothing is more contagious than the vibration of sound.
10. One must state only what one wishes to see realised.

One of the mantras from the *Upanishad* goes '*Vang me manasi pratishtitaha mano me vachi pratishtitam*'. Meaning, 'may my speech be established in my mind and my mind be established in my speech.' Here too, Amber Chand speaks about how she has been looking forward to the creation of a language that connects with the heart:

'When we take two seemingly paradoxical worlds such as business and spirituality and try to marry them together, we must find language that people can feel safe with. So to me language is very important. For example, we have a cost-cutting committee at Eziba and I have been thinking about what this is really saying, it is actually quite negative. What if we were to call it the committee of abundance and part of its strategy in creating abundance is to cut cost. So to me language allows us to have a very different relationship with reality and we must be careful in how we use it. We must find the words that allow us to create the kind of reality that we really want. If the basis of all of this is love, which is the antidote to fear, then we must find the language that will literally reflect love in the most pragmatic ways. I also feel that we must not feel afraid to use this kind of language either.'

I believe that businesses can play a role in finding the new vocabulary for this spiritual dimension and can incorporate it into the very foundations of their organisations. I think it is time to embrace our shadows and to face the dichotomies of "them versus us". I think that this notion that we are competing against each other has to be profoundly shifted. I do not

⁶⁰*Management by Values*, SK Chakraborty, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2004

know how this will happen, but just the fact that we are speaking and opening ourselves up to this possibility is huge at this point. I am just open-eyed and open-hearted at this time (refer Footnote #6).

Secular is the manifestation of the spiritual level. Sri Satya Sai Baba says the following about how we should engage in our daily lives: “Your nature is revealed by your acts, gestures, looks, speech, feeding habits, dress, gait, etc. Therefore, pay attention to ensure that your speech, movements, thoughts, and behaviour are right and full of love, devoid of wildness and waywardness. You have to develop the humility to believe that you have much good to learn from others. Your enthusiasm, strong ambition, resolution, capacity to work, store of knowledge, wisdom – all these have to be related to all others and not utilised for you alone. Your heart should take all others in. Your thoughts too should be patterned on those broad lines.”⁶¹

In view of all the real-life incidents and examples discussed thus far, we can understand that it is the innate values and beliefs of an individual that are manifested in/as words and actions. Amber Chand looking for a humane language, the gentlemanly behaviour displayed by the senior of Ananth Raman, and the communication guidelines provided by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother – are all a reflection of inner values and how to nourish those values. The ‘watch’ (refer Exhibit 4.3) can be one of the tools that may be used to nourish these values.

Exhibit 4.3

W	Watch your Words
A	Watch your Actions
T	Watch your Thoughts
C	Watch your Character
H	Watch your Heart

HOLISTIC APPROACH FOR MANAGERS IN DECISION-MAKING

According to scriptures there are no desires that drive a man of achievement to pursue an action. The man is in a state of fulfillment and, hence, nothing/no one can bring him further satisfaction. Such a man operates without any attachment to the results of his actions. He is always in a state of equanimity. One such example is Jesus Christ, during the period of crucifixion. At an event that reflects the peak of injustice, before the physical death on the holy cross, Jesus Christ was a being with an all-encompassing love.

‘And Jesus prayed, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.’ (*Amplified Bible*, Luke 23:34)

⁶¹ www.srisathyasai.org.in/Pdf/Vidya_Vahini.pdf; accessed on April 27, 2010

An action performed without egocentric desire or anxiety for the employment of its fruit is the noblest of all. Such deeds do not depend on ‘what one does’ but on ‘how one does’ her/his work. Here, the value of work is measured by the ideal which inspires one to do it. The quality of action improves by adopting better ideals which guide and inspire it. The nobler the ideal, the greater will be the beauty and efficiency of action dedicated to achieve it. Fatigue at work results from mental dissipation; a person in an air-conditioned office feels tired even before completing a few hours of work. In sharp contrast, old farmers, who labour physically in the open fields all day long, feel fresh and spirited enough in the evening to enjoy some recreation like folk dance and music. The reason behind this contrast lies in the different states of mind. While the farmer has a relatively clean and pure mind uncontaminated by selfish motives and his work is designed for the general welfare of all, the former maybe self-centered and ever burdened with egocentric desires and anxiety towards the enjoyment of the fruits of his actions. These are two negative forces that sap the vitals of an individual. Sri Sri Ravishankar says, ‘...a whole lifetime is not sufficient to digest this knowledge: desire kills joy and all desires aim for joy.’⁶² He goes on to add that a person who conquers his desires is known as *mahavira*.

The secret of success lies in overcoming one’s negative outlook, thereby conserving the mental energy to apply it to action. This can be achieved by choosing an ideal or goal in life that is so high that one has to go beyond one’s own selfish interests and work with consistent dedication to attain it. Hence it is desirable to affix one’s ideal or vision above one’s egocentric view of life and work for this chosen ideal. This is also how one gains inspiration to work for a noble cause which provides relative peace or tranquility. The result of such inspired and dedicated work is more efficient than any desire-ridden activity. Thus, by gradually elevating the ideal and broadening one’s vision of life, one can enjoy greater peace and life becomes more efficient and progressive as well. The Vedantic way of life gives one the capacity to be dynamic in one’s activities, while simultaneously drawing peace from the same.

James Sinclair, chairman and CEO of Tan Range Exploration, (USA and Tanzania) says:

‘The first level of discernment is to see if the answer is without intellectual argumentation. Secondly, to see if it comes to you out of nowhere. Thirdly, to see if it tends to come to you when your emotions or environmental emotions are not running high. If you’re sitting in a large trading room with a thousand traders, the environment is extremely emotional. So, you don’t make the jump because you have to have discipline. But what you do is take the “possibility” that your intuition has given you as the one you’ll now most put your attention on to determine what you should do.

To have the glimpse of insight is preparation. And preparation means a willingness to remain outside of the fervour of what’s taking place. This is where your “extra sensory” intuitional input is, which is the difference between success and failure. But don’t act on that alone; be scientific, be disciplined, but be in the direction of your intuition.

⁶² *Intimate Note to the Sincere Seeker* (Vol. 5), Sri Sri Ravishankar, Vyakti Vikas Kendra, 2005

My decision to liquidate our gold market – when it was at a high of US\$887.50 per ounce – was made in a huge room of traders running some of the largest positions in the history of the marketplace. They were enjoying, in the egotistical sense, the adulation of all of the people who were making money and they were getting more public relations than the Secretary of the US Treasury. They were on the front page of the *New York Times*' business section and had their pictures in the *Wall Street Journal* and were on talk shows like Ted Koppel, Nightline, and Wall Street Week.

In the midst of all this, I heard, "it's over; this market is over". I sat in shock. Then I went to all of our technical expertise and saw that everything was yelling and screaming that the market was over. "How could I have not seen this?" is what came to me. Then I said, "We have to get out, this is over." In one night, we kept every trader busy, and spent the whole night selling all of our positions all over the world. We sold a huge amount, 900,000 ounces at over US\$800 per ounce, close to US\$1 billion. When the market opened the next morning in the USA, the price of gold had dropped US\$150 an ounce and never stopped falling until it hit a low of US\$400.

Even in doing what we did, we faced the possibility that the market might have continued to rise to US\$2,000 per ounce as it was predicted to do. But my intuition perceived that the rise was not substantiated by underlying demand and could not continue.' (refer Footnote #6)

While Sinclair's story speaks about intuition, Rajan Govindan, former senior managing director with Bankers Trust and chief operating officer of Bear Stearns Asset Management (USA), suggests operating from the heart rather than from the mind level.

'Decision-making that can be made using black and white analytical facts, mostly having to do with economic impact, is what our minds do best. But the best visionary leaders have been those who can integrate their analytical mind with their heart where the spirit resides – the spirit that always seeks the greater good for society and not personal gain; the spirit that is our moral compass and never lets us stray too far. It is the spiritual heart that enables us to make decisions that we will never be sorry about; it is the compassion heart that makes our priorities right.

In the hard impersonal business world, it is very easy to become hardened by our analytical mind – the challenge is to remain softened by our heart so that we can lead our lives as God would want us too....

...I would remind them (aspiring spiritual based leaders) that we've all become experts in rationalisation and we have become so good at suppressing our inner world. To become a better person, the first thing one has to do is start listening to the inner voice inside and to stop rationalising. When you stop rationalising, slowly but surely the inner voice starts to speak up. We've all squashed this inner voice.

Every time you do something ask yourself, 'Is this right? Is it the correct behaviour?' You don't have to tell everyone what you are doing; just keep your own diary. In doing this you will start to see many things. When you stop rationalising, your inner voice will tell you right away when you have done something that was not correct. Instantly you will feel it.' (refer Footnote #6)

Key Concepts

1. Despite increased production and consumption, which has taken the planet to the brink of ecological catastrophe, access to basic amenities continues to be grim for a substantial segment of world population.
2. There is a necessity to nourish life affirming values in organisation ('roots') so that it get manifested in the behaviour of the organisation ('branches and leaves').
3. Recent studies indicate that investing in a sustainable company results in improved stock market performance.
4. Values-driven behaviour brings benefit to shareholders, partners, employees, customers, governments, competitors and the society, as well as to the organisation, in a myriad ways.
5. Increased organisational commitment comes from people who are aware of their personal values and not from those who know their organisational values.
6. Changes that happen in nature are interconnected and gradual. It has rhythm. In contrast, changes induced by mankind cause harm to the society.
7. A 'conservative' society/culture that does not rapidly adapt to changes is at an advantage because it offers a period of contemplation before it accepts any fads.
8. India has a rich management ethos that speaks about the necessity of spiritual character being the foundation of leadership. Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, a text on management written in 300 BC, elaborates on the qualities necessary for leadership; a leader's character should be based on piety, reliability, truthfulness, gratefulness, liberality, promptness, avoidance of harming others and freedom from vices.
9. There is a need to align business practices in India with the ethos of the land.
10. Leadership characteristics need to embody both masculine and feminine traits.
11. Viktor Frankl, a psychiatrist, survivor of Nazi concentration camps, and author of *Man's Search for Meaning*, states that every human being has the freedom to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances. There is a space between a stimulus and a response. Our ability to choose the response lies in that space. It is in our response that our growth and freedom lies.
12. Liberty and responsibility go hand in hand. Indian ethos focuses on duties as the primary aspect of life and rights as something that result as a natural byproduct of a sincere engagement in the same duties.


13. The universal human values of truth, righteousness, peace, love and non-violence are also the fundamental roots of a healthy, vibrant, viable organisation – and of healthy, vibrant, viable individuals.
14. Human values come from a common spiritual foundation – divinity resides in all of creation, the human values are an indivisible whole; one human value cannot exist apart from the others.
15. We can make a choice to move ourselves from a state of fear to a state of love.
16. Actions that appear secular can become more effective, when built on the foundation of human/spiritual values.
17. Substantial number of words in the world of business is related to war, gory images and demeaning terms. We need to adopt a new language while engaging in business.
18. Work channeled towards the welfare of all will reduce stress, whereas self-centered and egocentric desires will add on to the anxiety. A man, at the zenith of perfection, operates without any attachment to the results of his actions. He/she is always in a state of equanimity.

Key Words

<i>Sarvabhutasaman,</i>	ethical	statue of responsi-
socially responsible	consumerism,	bility,
investing,	moments of truth,	responsibilities and
corporate virtue,	moments of magic,	rights,
identification based	<i>com-petare,</i>	<i>Satya yuga or Krita</i>
trust,	personal values,	<i>yuga,</i>
Greenpeace	organisational	<i>Thretha yuga,</i>
Guide to Greener	values,	<i>Dwapara yuga,</i>
Electronics,	organisational	<i>Kali yuga,</i>
National	commitment,	golden age,
Geographic Green	<i>Vasudhaiva kutum-</i>	reverence
Guide,	<i>bakam,</i>	continuum
karmayog.com,	<i>ardhanarishwara,</i>	

Introspective Exercise

1. What person or situation have I experienced at work that had the quality of articulating the truth about work conditions?
2. What person or situation have I experienced at work that had the quality of being willing to take a stand regardless of the consequences?
3. What person or situation have I experienced at work that had the quality of having confidence in the relationship between the human and the Divine?

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4. What person or situation have I experienced at work that had the quality of compassion and caring for people?
 5. What person or situation have I experienced at work that had the quality of persistent devotion to respecting people and their rights?
 6. What person or situation have I experienced at work that had the quality of a self awareness about his or her talents and how to use them well?
 7. What would it be like to have a leader with one or more of these qualities as head of my organisation? You may mention it below or in the margins of this textbook or use additional pages.
 8. Based on what you read in the section, what are the various ways for you to improve your communication?
 9. Recollect a recent situation that created an impression on your mind due to respectful communication or disrespectful communication. Based on the principles mentioned in the above section, what new perspective would you develop about the situation?
 10. Select two principles suggested by Professor SK Chakraborty. By practicing these two principles, how differently would you have behaved in order to elevate and improve the dignity of that situation?

Interactive Exercise

The following is a link featuring an interview with Julia Butterfly Hill. In 1997, she climbed up an ancient Redwood to save it from being felled. She stayed in the tree for over two years before the timber company agreed not to cut it down nor any of the trees immediately surrounding it. Visit www.bigpicture.tv/?id=3222; find out those vital points of her discussion that you think should be included as part of the MBA curriculum.


Review Questions

1. State the relationship between personal values and organisational commitment.
2. Give examples of how assimilating universal values like truth, righteousness, peace, love and non-violence will help shareholders, customers, society, governments, colleagues, superiors, organisation and competitors.
3. Human values are present in all religions. Elucidate.

4. As per Jack Hawley, which are the nine qualities that a modern leader should possess?
5. Explain the 'reverence continuum'.

Choose the Correct Answer

1. Jack Hawley speaks about nine qualities that a modern leader should have. Which one from the following is not among them?
 - (a) Being a moral architect
 - (b) Being an optimist
 - (c) Being a spiritual warrior
 - (d) Being a tough taskmaster
2. Who is the author of the book '*Man's Search for Meaning*'?
 - (a) Jawaharlal Nehru
 - (b) Viktor Frankl
 - (c) Albert Einstein
 - (d) George Bernard Shaw
3. Which of the following search sites contributes 50% of their advertisement revenue to social projects?
 - (a) www.GoodSearch.com
 - (b) www.Ask.com
 - (c) www.Google.com
 - (d) www.Rediff.com
4. 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God'. From which sacred book has this statement been extracted?
 - (a) *The Bible*
 - (b) *Bhagavad Gita*
 - (c) *Bodhicaryavatāra*
 - (d) *Tao Te Ching*
5. What are the four qualities that one should be in to live in the Golden Age (*Kritha Yuga*):
 - (a) Truth, compassion, austerity, giving
 - (b) Anger, desire, assertiveness, determination
 - (c) Compassion, sympathy, self-torture, aversion to food
 - (d) Ambition, aspiration, assertiveness, austerity
6. Who said 'An American economist has predicted that in the next century India will be an economic superpower. I don't want India to be an economic superpower. I want India to be a happy country.'?
 - (a) Jamshetji Tata
 - (b) JRD Tata
 - (c) Ratan Tata
 - (d) Dorabji Tata

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7. What does 'Vasudhaiva kutumbakam' means?
 - (a) The whole universe is one family
 - (b) Lord Vasudeva is part of my family
 - (c) God's name is Vasu and he is part of my family
 - (d) The family is from Vasudeva
 8. The word competition is derived from the Latin 'com-petare'. What does it mean?
 - (a) To strive together
 - (b) To fight against each other
 - (c) To create fear in others
 - (d) To love all
 9. Which company follows the tagline 'Powered by intellect, Driven by values'?
 - (a) Infosys Technologies
 - (b) Wipro Technologies
 - (c) IBM
 - (d) Boston Consulting Group
 10. Which of the following are not informative resources that a customer can use to make socially responsible purchase decisions?
 - (a) Greenpeace Guide to Greener Electronics
 - (b) National Geographic Green Guide
 - (c) Karmayog.com ratings on socially responsible companies in India
 - (d) Fortune 500

Answers: (1) Being a tough taskmaster; (2) Viktor Frankl; (3) www.GoodSearch.com; (4) *The Bible*; (5) Truth, compassion, austerity, giving; (6) JRD Tata; (7) The whole universe is one family; (8) To strive together; (9) Infosys Technologies; and (10) Fortune 500

State whether True or False

1. Increase in organisational commitment comes from people who are aware of their personal values and not from people who are aware of the organisational values.
2. Research studies have proved that being a sustainable company results in improved stock market performance.
3. The three areas of focus in the Indian wisdom tradition establishing the bridge between religious and secular are Shaurya (valour), Neeti (ethical principles) and Dharma (Duty orientation).
4. Moments of Magic' is a metaphor used by Air India to suggest a situation where the interaction between the airline and

the customer exceeds the customer's expectation and creates a delight.

5. 'Leadership is Idealism in Action' is a quote attributed to Che Guevara.

Answers: (1) True; (2) True; (3) True; (4) False; and (5) False

Recommended Reading

1. *Leading with Wisdom: Spiritual-Based Leadership in Business*, Peter Pruzan, Kirsten Pruzan Mikkelsen, Response Books, New Delhi, 2007
2. *Reawakening the Spirit in Work: The Power of Dharmic Management*, Jack Hawley, Berrett Koehler Publishers, San Francisco, 1993

Recommended Websites

1. www.values.com
2. www.infed.org/archives/e-texts/bohm_dialogue.htm
3. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spirituality_at_Work

Recommended Film

- *Life is Beautiful*, Roberto Benigni (director), 1997

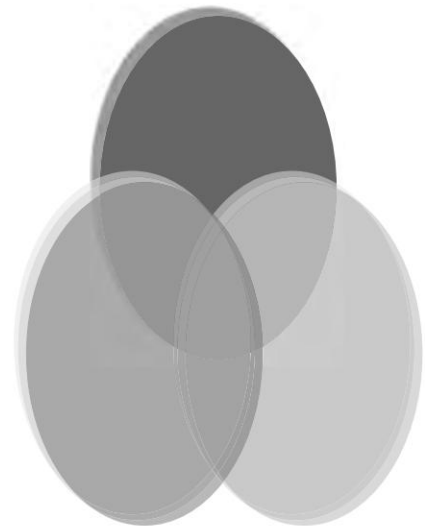
Chapter 5

Ethics in India

Learning Objective

Chapter 5 intends to convey and clarify the following:

- The meaning and root of the word 'ethics'
 - The contribution of Greek philosophers towards ethical studies
 - The constituents of spiritual character
 - Business ethics and views on ethics available in scriptures of various religions
 - Areas concerned with business ethics and ethics policy
 - Spirituality as the emerging context for business leadership
 - How visual media is influencing the emotions and behaviors of an individual
 - Role of parents in 'teaching ethics'
 - The dilemma in choosing a course of action
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'In the path of morality there is no such thing as reward for moral behaviour.

If a man does some good deed, he does not do it to win applause, he does it because he must. For him doing good is but a higher kind of food, if one may compare food and goodness.

And if someone should give him an opportunity to do a good deed, he would feel grateful just as a starving man would be grateful to the giver of food and bless him.¹

~ Mahatma Gandhi

Ethical dilemmas do not occur in the animal community; they are a part of human life, since human beings are endowed with the discriminating capability. *Wikipedia* refers to ethics as ‘a major branch of philosophy, encompassing right conduct and good life. It is significantly broader than the common perception of analysing right and wrong.’ ‘Ethics’ is derived from the Greek word ‘*ethos*’, which has its roots in the word ‘*ithihaas*’. Applied ethics is an attempt to apply ethical theory to real-life situations. Business ethics is a specialised field in applied ethics. While there are experts who vouch for such segregations, these definitions and classifications are not supported by all. Balakrishnan Muniapan, faculty – HRM, School of Business and Enterprise, Swinburne University of Technology in Kuching (Malaysia) says, ‘On ethics, some may be of the opinion that there is only ethics, not separate ethics for business, medicine, politics, etc.’² This chapter introduces students to the contribution of Greek philosophers like Socrates, Aristotle, Epicurus and Epictetus to the study of ethics, and understand that these philosophers tried to guide individuals to attain the state of divinity.

AN INTRODUCTION TO SOME OF THE GREEK PHILOSOPHERS

Socrates

Steve Jobs, co-founder, Apple Inc. and former CEO of Pixar Animation Studios, once said, ‘I would trade all of my technology for an afternoon with Socrates’³. This reflects the reverence people have for the Greek philosopher (469 BC – 399 BC). For Socrates, knowledge that had an influence on the human life was to be considered prominent knowledge. He prodded people to turn their attention to the condition of man. His opinion was that if an individual is aware of the consequences of his action, he would make the right choice. A person who knows what is right will naturally do what is good. It is an ignorant person who commits wrongdoings. A criminal will not engage in crime if the perpetrator was aware of the consequences of his actions. Thus, Socrates gave prominence to self awareness and self knowledge – an essential good and a necessity for success. In *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*, authored by Diogenes Laërtius, Socrates has been quoted as saying ‘There is only one good, knowledge, and one evil, ignorance’. A person who is aware of himself will excel in their competencies, while an ignorant person may face difficulties. To attain self knowledge, one should be aware of every fact relevant to an individual’s existence. It is interesting to note that the fundamental construct in the emotional intelligence model introduced by Daniel Goleman is about self-awareness. The construct of self-awareness contributes to success in the other three constructs of self-management, social awareness and relationship management.

¹‘Ethical religion’, Mahatma Gandhi, http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Ethical_Religion/Beginning; accessed on April 28, 2010

²In an e-mail communication to the co-author of this textbook

³‘The Classroom of the Future’, *Newsweek*, October 29, 2001



A story illustrating how an individual should interpret a message or teaching according to her/his level of maturity.

The descendants of Prajapati (a creator deity) – Devas (Gods), Manushas (Men) and Asuras (Demons) – lived with him as students for some time.

Devas, endowed with character and God-like intentions, went to Prajapati and asked him how they should live. Prajapati looked at them and uttered 'Da'. When Prajapati understood that Devas has pondered over what they heard, he asked them, "Do you understand the meaning of what I said?" They answered, 'Yes, we have understood. You said to us Damyata – Be Self controlled.' "Yes," agreed Prajapati, 'You have understood.'

Manushas, endowed with passion but were weak in body and petty in their dealings with others, went to Prajapati and asked him how they should live. Prajapati looked at them and uttered "Da". When Prajapati understood that Manushas has pondered over what they just heard, he asked them, 'Do you understand the meaning of what I said?' They answered, 'Yes, we have understood. You said to us Datta – Be charitable' 'Yes,' agreed Prajapati, "You have understood."

Asuras, strong in body and in their determination, went to Prajapati and asked him how they should live. Prajapati looked at them and uttered 'Da'. When Prajapati understood that Asuras has pondered over what they just heard, he asked them, 'Do you understand the meaning of what I said?' They answered, 'Yes, we have understood. You said to us Dayadhvam – Be compassionate.' "Yes," agreed Prajapati, 'You have understood.'

It is said that Prajapati rose up and vanished in the midst of clouds in the sky that were thundering 'Da', 'Da', 'Da'. The Devas, Manushas and Asuras then repeated 'Damyata', "Datta," 'Dayadhvam'. This message is even now conveyed to all beings by thunderstorms – Da, Da, Da – be self-controlled, be generous, be compassionate.

Here, one may even put forth an idea that, because self-awareness is consciously cultivated, the other three are cultivated on their own.

Socrates' opinion was that virtue was the most valuable possession and the ideal life was spent in search of Good. Plato, while giving an account of the trial and death of Socrates, attributes this comment to him, 'I do nothing but go about persuading you all, old and young alike, not to take thought for your persons or your properties, but and chiefly to care about the greatest improvement of the soul. I tell you that virtue is not given by money, but that from virtue comes money and every other good of man, public as well as private. This is my teaching, and if this is the doctrine which corrupts the youth, I am a mischievous person.' This is an echo of what Veda Vyasa says in *Mahabharata*, 'With uplifted arms I am crying out aloud but nobody hears me. It is from *dharma*, that wealth and pleasure arise. Why should *dharma*, therefore, not be courted?' Another quote which suggests Socrates' vision of divinity is revealed in *Memorabilia* (I. 4.18), by Xenophon. Here, Socrates says, 'You will know that the divine is so great and of such a nature that it sees and hears everything at once, is present everywhere, and is concerned with everything.'

Aristotle

Aristotle (384 BC – 322 BC) was of the view that to become virtuous, one should engage in virtuous activities, and not just study what virtue is. For him, ethics was not about functional knowledge

like mathematics but more of a practical discipline. In his work *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle says, 'We are not studying in order to know what virtue is, but to become good, for otherwise there would be no profit in it.' He held the view that awareness of one's nature and developing the talent would lead to happiness, the ultimate goal. Based on how well a person fulfills his purpose, Aristotle categorised humans as the virtuous, the content, the incontent and the vicious. *Nicomachean Ethics* deals with his views on justice, which consisted of general justice and particular justice. General justice was universal justice that can exist in a perfect situation. Particular justice is where justice is meted out based on the context – weighing all evidences and looking into each situation as a unique situation.



As per Zeno, the process leading to true knowledge consisted of four stages. He illustrated this through the following:

Zeno stretched out his fingers, and showed the palm of his hand, – 'Perception,' – he said, – 'is a thing like this.' Then, when he had closed his fingers a little, – 'Assent is like this.' – Afterwards, when he had completely closed his hand, and showed his fist, that, he said, was Comprehension. From which simile he also gave that state a name which it had not before, and called it *katalepsis*. But when he brought his left hand against his right, and with it took a firm and tight hold of his fist: – 'Knowledge' – he said, 'was of that character; and that was what none but a wise person possessed.'

Source: Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Academica*, ii. 4.

'Good' is considered to be the goal of every endeavor. 'Every skill and every inquiry, and similarly, every action and choice of action, is thought to have some good as its object. This is why the good has rightly been defined as the object of all endeavour', says *Nicomachean Ethics* (1.1). The highest good is said to have three characteristics – desirable for its own sake, not desirable for the sake of some other good, all other 'goods' desirable for its sake. This highest good was associated with *eudaimonia*,⁴ which means happiness, wellbeing, or flourishing. It was also associated with godlike consciousness.

Aristotle kept the view of an intermediate condition between two extremes – excess and deficiency. He considered moral virtues as a means between two corresponding vices. For example, courage is the intermediate condition between fear (which results in cowardice) and confidence (which results in foolish choices). This intermediate condition or middle ground was necessary to attain *eudaimonia*.

According to Aristotle, virtues were categorised as moral and intellectual. Moral virtues include prudence, justice, fortitude, courage, liberality, magnificence, magnanimity, and temperance; while intellectual virtues include wisdom – *sophia* (theoretical wisdom) and *phronesis* (practical wisdom).

⁴Eudaimonia' is a central concept in ancient Greek ethics, often translated into English as 'happiness'. In *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle says that eudaemonia means 'doing and living well'. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eudaimonia>; accessed August 10, 2010

Epicurus

Though he affirmed religious activities, Epicurus (341 BC – 270 BC) was one of the earliest known Greek philosophers who believed that gods do not reward/punish human beings. An atomist, he believed that everything that occurred in the world is the result of atoms colliding, rebounding and entangling with one another. In *Sovereign Maxims*,⁶ Epicurus suggests, 'It is impossible for someone to dispel his fears about the most important matters if he doesn't know the nature of the universe but still gives some credence to myths. So without the study of nature there is no enjoyment of pure pleasure'. He insisted that one should believe only that which can be tested through direct observation and logical deduction.

According to Epicurus, what is good is what is pleasurable, and what is bad is what is painful. He spoke about *Ataraxia*, a state of freedom, where there is no worry. This state suggested a detached and balanced state of mind, which transcends the material world. In *Sovereign Maxims*, Epicurus states, 'Of our desires some are natural and necessary, others are natural but not necessary; and others are neither natural nor necessary, but are due to groundless opinion'. He warned against overindulgence, as it may lead to pain.

Epicureanism opined that a society should protect an individual from harm so that one can pursue happiness. For Epicurus, justice was neither to harm nor be harmed.



Plato and Aristotle, from the fresco 'The School of Athens', Apostolic Palace, Vatican⁵

Zeno and Epictetus

These two Greek philosophers (Zeno: 334BC - 262BC; Epictetus: 55AD - 135AD estimated) were practitioners of the Stoic school of thought. Stoics held the view that emotions like fear and envy were false judgments or arose from false judgments. They opined that a person who had attained moral and intellectual perfection would be immune to misfortunes. Stoics commented that only the sage is free while all others are slaves. We can infer that, for Stoics, allowing one's mental equilibrium to be disturbed by another is enslaving oneself to another. For example, if the other person is able to make you angry, you have no control over your internal world and – as inference – no freedom.

Epictetus stated that sexual desire is the greatest threat to the integrity and equilibrium of a man's mind. Remaining abstinent during temptation, thus, was a victory. Mastery over one's desires and emotions leads to spiritual peace. An oft-quoted statement of Epictetus is, 'We are disturbed not by events, but by the views which we take of them'. He commented that one should embrace problems in life rather than avoiding them, and these problems are spiritual exercises. For him, contentment and serenity was the greatest good and peace of mind was of the highest value.

For Stoics, whatever is good must be of benefit to its possessor under all situations. Hence, things like money cannot fall under the category ('I may be wealthy, and I may choose to use money to

⁵http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Sanzio_01_Plato_Aristotle.jpg; accessed on February 10, 2010

⁶<http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Epicurus>; accessed on April 28, 2010



The Holy Prophet Mohammed Bin Abdullah (Peace be upon Him) just like all the holy ones who have realised the unity of Divinity, never reacted to criticisms because he knew that children do not throw stones at trees that are barren. His life and example were the very message which he preached.

The Prophet used to take a certain route to preach the Message of Allah to the people. Along this route there lived one woman whose heart could not take in the message of the Prophet. Day and night she was lost in thought brooding and planning how to injure the Holy one. At last she came up with a stratagem. 'Although I may not be able to stop him from preaching this strange doctrine,' she thought to herself, 'I am going to disturb his peace and ignite the fire of anger in his heart.'

Even before the rays of the sunrise had entered her windows, she was busy sweeping her house. She carefully collected all the garbage in a basket and placed it on the roof of her house waiting eagerly for the Prophet to pass that way as was his custom everyday. Her intention was to provoke the Prophet to anger, and to disturb his peace so that he can be an object of laugh and scorn to people.

Everyday, she would stand by her window listening for the approaching footsteps announcing the coming of a man dressed in clean white clothes. She would then climb to the roof of her house taking the basket in her hand and throw the garbage on him as he passed. But much to her dismay, the Prophet used to continue on his journey without saying a single word, or looking up to see who was pouring the garbage on him. The Prophet was the same in praise and blame.

This routine continued and the woman became more determined to provoke the Prophet. The Prophet did not want to disappoint the woman and so he continued to walk down the street everyday, instead of picking an alternate route and prayed for the woman to recognise the Truth.

One morning, the Holy Prophet did not receive his usual shower of garbage as he was passing by her house. So he stopped and looked up; he did not find the woman on the roof. This worried him because he thought something must have happened to her. So he knocked at her door. 'Who is it?' asked a feeble fainting voice. 'Muhammad Bin Abdullah' was the reply. 'Can I come in?' The woman was apparently very sick and feared that Mohammed had come to take revenge on her for what she had been doing. But the love she felt in the voice of the Prophet made her allow him in.

Mohammed entered the house and told the woman that not finding her on the roof had worried him, and he thus wanted to inquire about her health. On finding out how ill she was, he gently asked if she needed any help. Overwhelmed with the power of love which poured forth into her soul as the Prophet spoke to her, she forgot all her fear and asked for some water. He kindly gave her some and prayed for her health, while she quenched her thirst. She was then gripped with remorse for being so cruel to him in the past, and she apologised for her mean behaviour. Mohammed immediately forgave her and thereafter came to her house everyday, cleaned her surroundings, fed her and prayed for her, till she was on her feet again. The kind attitude of the Holy Prophet transformed her totally and through that she recognised the message of Love and Peace which the Prophet preached.

Source: From the article 'The Enigma of Islam' by Father Charles Ogada, a Catholic Priest of the Order of the Holy Ghost Fathers and Brothers.

Refer http://media.radiosai.org/Journals/Vol_06/01MAR08/03-coverstory.htm; accessed on June 1, 2009. Used with permission.

corrupt others and myself”), but will fall under the category of ‘indifferents’ i.e. neither good nor bad. Thus, the only good things are values or characteristics such as wisdom, courage, etc.

VIRTUE ETHICS

Virtue theory, a branch of moral philosophy, emphasises character, rather than rules or consequences, as the key element of ethical thinking. Virtue ethics was the prevailing ethical thinking in the West in the ancient and medieval periods. The tradition’s key concepts is derived from ancient Greek philosophy and these concepts include *arete* (excellence or virtue), *phronesis* (practical or moral wisdom), and *eudaimonia* (flourishing). Virtue ethics place emphasis on being rather than doing. As per virtue ethics, morality comes as a result of intrinsic virtues. In *Nichomachean Ethics*, Aristotle held that human nature is characterised by aim. Of all the aims, the most important one is the good. Virtue theorists believe that *eudaimonia* is a state or an outcome to be reached by a person by practising the virtues through this life. A virtue is a habit/quality that allows the bearer to succeed at her/his/its purpose. For example, the virtue of a knife is sharpness and that of a racehorse is speed. Thus, to identify the virtues of human beings, one must have an idea of what the human purpose is.

In *Ethics and Values in Business Management*,⁷ authors Rinku Sanjeev and Parul Khanna say, ‘A person’s character is the totality of his character traits. The character traits can be good or bad, admirable or not. The admirable character traits or the marks of perfection in character are called virtues. Virtue ethics theories maintain that habitual development of sound character traits determines the ethical values of persons. Persons with strong character have cultivated intellectual, moral, emotional and social virtues to achieve the self-discipline to do the right thing. Character provides moral foundation for one’s actions’.

An excerpt from an interview with Deependra Moitra, former youngest general manager at Lucent Technologies, and associate vice president with Infosys Technologies, in India gives us an idea of all the factors that contributed to shaping his character:

‘The personal principles that are most important to me are integrity and honesty. I can never compromise on that. It is important to me how I communicate to others. Whether it is empathic, whether it makes the person comfortable, is very important to me. And it is very painful for me if people do not tell me the truth or when they are not trustworthy. I can tell very easily if someone is not telling the truth or is displaying a dual personality.

Another thing that is very important to me is living with a purpose. Here’s an example of what that means to me is: There are millions and millions of people on this earth and yet there are names of people who stand out – names like Mother Teresa and Mahatma Gandhi. What is the reason that these names stand out from among the millions of other people who live on this earth? The fundamental reason that comes to my mind is that they all lived with a purpose.

I do not want to live with a purpose so that my name can stand out, just as none of these people focused on having their names stand out. So, living with a purpose is something that is very important to me and I am making my best attempts to live in this way – it is an issue

⁷*Ethics and Values in Business Management*, Rinku Sanjeev, Parul Khanna, Ane Books, India, 2008

of passion and emotion. I still have struggles from time to time between my own self-interest and a larger purpose that I should focus on.

Next, my fundamental goal is to help others succeed, so I am willing to sacrifice a lot to do that. I do not regret this; I am willing to let others grow, blossom and achieve things at the cost of my own time and effort. I help a lot of people without feeling any selfish motive. When I see someone succeed, I do feel joyful, and this is important to me.

There is one more thing that I am trying to practice: to position myself as someone who has no ego, who is a “nobody”. I have seen that when we think we are important, it puts a lot of pressure on us. For example, if I am giving a talk somewhere and I think that I must give a great talk, then I feel a lot of pressure. I want to operate without an ego, as if I am no one special. This is still difficult for me to practice, but I am working on it.

Even though I have only lived a short 32 years, my experiences with ego have been very revealing. I have seen that the root cause of all difficulties is ego. There is a spiritual scripture that says, ‘Renounce ego is the Lord’s request. And you shall become God is the Lord’s promise.’ This is a very powerful statement and I am trying to live this. Currently, I do feel that I help people without a selfish motive; however, I do not yet feel that I am a nobody. So I still have room to grow.’⁸

Through Moitra’s reflection, it can be understood that:

$$\text{Spiritual character} = (\text{Spiritual context} + \text{Spiritual purpose} + \text{Spiritual values}) / \text{Ego desires}$$

In this equation, spiritual context is how purely we live by a spiritual view of life that gives meaning to everything we do. Spiritual purpose is how focused you are in fulfilling your most essential goals in life. It supplies direction and energy to our work, beyond the normal motivation to do a good job. Spiritual values embody the spiritual qualities most important to an individual. Ego desires is the extent to which we lead a life to fulfill self-centred and self-serving needs and wants.

For Moitra, the spiritual context was ‘living with a purpose’, while the spiritual purpose was ‘to help others succeed’. Some of his spiritual values were ‘empathy’, ‘integrity’, ‘honesty’ and ‘sacrifice’.

Ancient Indian mathematicians are credited with the development of the concept of the number ‘zero’. Indian scholars used the Sanskrit word *śhūnya* to refer to zero or void (i.e. the idea of nothingness in Indian philosophy). It is said that zero was also represented as a single dot to symbolise the empty one-pointedness of mind during deep meditation, when one communes with the Infinite. The equation about spiritual character indicates that, as our ego desires approach zero, our spiritual character approaches infinity.

BUSINESS ETHICS

Business ethics constitute the ethical/moral principles and challenges that arise in a business environment. Some of the areas related with – and not limited to – business ethics include the following:

⁸Quotations extracted from the public knowledge base of the ‘Spiritual Based Leadership Research Programme’ are © 2006 by the Global Dharma Center (GDC). GDC retains the copyright to all excerpts from this knowledge base.

- **Finance and accounting:** Creative accounting, Earnings management, Financial analysis, Insider trading, Securities fraud, Facilitation payment.
- **Human resource management:** Executive compensation, Affirmative action, Workplace surveillance, Whistle blowing, Occupational safety and health, Indentured servitude, Union busting, Sexual harassment, Employee raiding.
- **Sales and marketing:** Price fixing, Price discrimination, Green washing, Spamming, Using addictive messages/images in advertising, Marketing to children, False advertising, Negative campaigning.

Presented here is a perspective of a business leader from the media world; his account indicates the role marketing plays in defining us. Says Ashoke Maitra, former director of human resources for the *Times of India*, founder of the Centre for Human Resource Development and the Sri Ramakrishna International Institute of Management in India, on the influence of ethics and marketing in our daily lives:

‘We have all been taught by a consumerist society that the more we consume the happier we will be. In our organisation and throughout my work, I have tried to explain to people that our ego is an ego that the society has given us. The self-concept that we all have is not our original self-concept. We have never cared to look within to see who we are. Our self-concept has been given to us by a marketing man; and from his view, he is right in doing that. The more he can confuse and segment us and differentiate, the more he will sell. But why do we have to suffer? It is right for him, but in the process we have lost our freedom and choice in this madness’ (refer Footnote #8).

- **Production:** Animal testing, Pollution, Genetic modification
- **General management:** Corporate social responsibility, Industrial espionage, Acquisitions and takeovers, Political contributions, Cultural imperialism, Biopiracy, Patent/copyright/trademark infringement.

Since a business organisation or a corporation consists of individuals, it is individual social responsibility that takes the ‘collective’ voice of corporate social responsibility. It is individual ethics that takes the ‘collective’ voice of business ethics. Organisational transformation can happen only when individual transformation occurs. Hence, the cultivation of virtues in an individual is paramount.

Before reading the following incident that James Sinclair, chairman and CEO of Tan Range Exploration (USA and Tanzania) had to go through, read Mahatma Gandhi’s quote cited at the beginning of this chapter to better understand that men of integrity indeed continue to walk the planet.

‘When I was the chairman of the Board for Sutton Resources in the late 80s/early 90s, their stock price grew from 19 cents to \$56 and was then bought by a major corporation. How did we do this? We raised our corporate profile by our personal behaviour. I went to Tanzania, Africa and lived with the people and we acted as responsible citizens, undertaking the needs of an area of a developing country that was within the scope of our economic impact and environment. We saw to the needs of the people and their health; we built a hospital. My influence with this company was from 1989-1995. The last book that I wrote dealt with this subject – how you do business in a developing world.

But then after this level of success, the management began to act in extremely unethical, bad ways. They were doing some very bad things like stealing money from the stockholders for themselves and hurting people. I knew they had never done these types of acts before and therefore they shouldn't do them now. I first went to my management and said, "Can I convince you not to act in this way?" No. "Can I plead with you not to act in this way?" No. "Can I pay you not to act in this way?" No. So I fired the management. The problem with this was, the management was also on the board, so they turned around and fired me. Then I called a special meeting of the shareholders to determine what to do with all of this, and that is called a proxy.

In all of this, I became a warrior and fought against them. I asked them to cease and desist and change their policies and asked them to liquidate their major asset, which was a piece of land that they were going to build a mine on to extract gold. When they refused I executed the public proxy against them, which cost me personally US\$5 million. Even though this was a modest company, the legal battle reached the level as if it were between two of the largest corporations in America. I went so far as to hire the people who did the Nabisco take-over proxy to represent me.

The management immediately began to throw dirt at me, but through all of it, I never deviated from the high road. The way I handled this publicly was to say that they weren't capable of building a mine and therefore the asset should be sold. I knew if you put US\$300 million in these guys' hands, it would have been a disaster. So that's why I executed a proxy to force the sale of the company.

I knew these fellows had shown their true colours and were not ethical people. Even though I made them very rich initially, I threw the whole company into a major turmoil with this proxy. In all of this I became a warrior. What I did every morning was to say to myself, "Was Napoleon angry because he had a battle. No, he was happy. So let's go today and fight successfully." I was a warrior that never left the high road. I never attacked them as individuals for their ethics, even though that was the whole fight.

I was drinking 16 double espressos every day just to stay awake with all of the tension and fatigue, and eventually I went blind in one eye. At this point I said, "Okay, if you want both eyes, take them. I'm still going to continue my battle." I am now blind in one eye as a result, and could have died if I had remained there because the tension was so great. They attempted to ruin my reputation. They took my money on three different occasions using legal manoeuvres, but even after all of that I ended up beating them.

What won in the end was nature. Nature was on my side. This property was so valuable that a company came in and bought it. But I had to fight for over a year and a half. I had to take many punches: they sued my wife, they had detectives trailing my children, they said I was part of the mafia. It's hard to believe what they did to try to stop me.

I never stopped my fight against them and they couldn't understand why. I had 21 lawyers and took this fight of ethics to the level of the Fortune 500, as if it were between two of the largest corporations in America. Do you know what hell is like? Hell is having 21 lawyers working for you. I put every cent I had in the world into it. No one paid me anything to do this. I did this because following God through my spiritual teacher, and my sense of ethics had made me a warrior.

Initially I lost the proxy because they paid one of the stockholders to get his votes, but even then I still got 47.3 percent of the total vote. But that didn't stop me. After that they had so many lawsuits that they couldn't get financing to build the mine; I wouldn't let them off the hook. So here they won, but they couldn't get financing. Nothing could make me stop. Why? Because I knew I was to be a warrior and I was to fight.

During all of this I felt like I was dying. I hurt from the bottom of my feet to the top of my head and every day I felt like I was going to my execution. At one point one of the executives came up to me and said, "Look, it's nothing personal; it's only business." And I said, "You better get out of my physical presence so I can control myself."

What could I do? I couldn't change what was happening; this was what was on the plate. Was I going to run? If I had run they would have killed me. So I fought to the end. Even during this extreme tension, I took the time to be quiet. I wouldn't miss that time for anything in the world. When I couldn't sleep at night, I went to my meditation room. Why waste your life if you can't sleep? Even if you can't meditate, you can pray. Prayer for me is not "God help me." Prayer for me is "give me courage, give me strength" (refer Footnote #8).

Many a time it would be difficult to come to the 'right' conclusion. There will be conflicting interests. Choosing a specific action may result in an action that is the best for one stakeholder but that choice may not be good for another stakeholder. A decision favouring the shareholder may not be in the best interest of the society. Choosing a specific action is substantially influenced by how the organisation defines the purpose of business and the purpose of its existence.

SPIRITUALITY AS THE EMERGING CONTEXT OF BUSINESS LEADERSHIP

We have heard statements like, 'The business of business is to make profit. Period.' This used to be the dominant thought for a considerable period of time. In *Spirituality: The Emerging Context for Business Leadership*,⁹ William and Debra Miller speak about how the dialogue and practice of the 'purpose of business' has been evolving in the west (refer Exhibit 5.1). They mention the four stages of evolution:

- *Stage 1:* Wealth and power for owners and shareholders;
- *Stage 2:* Wealth and power with dignity... for owners, shareholders and employees;
- *Stage 3:* Wealth with accountability to all stakeholders; and
- *Stage 4:* Spiritual fulfillment and service to society, which is derived from and motivated by a transcendent consciousness.

The actions that an organisation chooses will be based on the stage at which they are operating at. At Stage 1, profit maximisation will be the sole measure of success. The organisation's business decision, thus, will be based on this parameter. As the organisational thought on how it defines its purpose evolves, the organisation will move through satisfying all its stakeholders (triple bottom-

⁹'Spirituality: The Emerging Context for Business Leadership', by William Miller, Debra Miller, Global Dharma Center, 2008 (www.globaldharma.org/Files%20-%20Adobe%20Acrobat/SBL/Spirituality.%20Emerging%20Context%20for%20Bus.%20Ldrship%20UPDATED%20Oct08.pdf)

line approach) and finally reaching a stage where it will be focusing on purity and unity of thought, word and deed.

Exhibit 5.1 Four stages of evolution of leadership and attributes related to each stage

	<i>Rationalist</i>	<i>Humanistic</i>	<i>Wholistic</i>	<i>Spiritual-Based</i>
Purpose of business	Wealth and power for owners, shareholders	Wealth and power with dignity... for owners, shareholders and employees	Wealth with accountability to all stakeholders	Spiritual fulfillment and service to society, that is derived from and motivated by a transcendent consciousness
Measures of success	Financial – profit maximisation	Financial, Employee Surveys ('100 Best companies to Work for')	'Triple bottom line': Financial, social, environmental	Purity and unity of thought, word, and deed (reflected in external measures)
Leadership metaphors	Military machine	Sports team, Family	Ecology, Community	Watering the spiritual roots
Leadership style	Command and convince	Participative empowerment	Stewardship	'Radiating' spiritual nature
Nature of man	Needs to be controlled	Willing to do good, be good	Interdependent and self organising	Same energy/consciousness as the transcendent
Motivation	Extrinsic: carrot and stick	Needs ('find a need and fill it')	Moved by wholistic principles for good of self and society	Fulfilling one's spiritual purpose and operating from one's spiritual character
Managing people	Give structure and roles. People are interchangeable parts; jobs based on talent/skills fitting into organisation's needs	Give structure and roles. People are unique; build jobs around talent as much as fit talent to jobs	People are key asset and resource; have them self-define their roles; great flexibility in job definition	People are spiritual in nature; enable them to follow their dharma and express their spiritual purpose

Already, we are witnessing such an evolution – which is also a revolution – as is indicated by the thoughts of Carol Franklin, former head of human resources for Swiss Re Insurance and former CEO of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) in Switzerland.

'The purpose of business is to make the world a better place for our children. I do not think that the business of business is business. You can say that the purpose is to make a profit, but it must be an ethical profit, profiting the employees and the communities they are in, making products that are worthwhile and that do not harm the world. Only sustainable businesses that care for people, the planet and profit will survive.'

ETHICS POLICY

‘Dushasan was disrobing Draupadi in the king’s court amidst great personages such as Bheeshmacharya, Kripacharya and Dronacharya who were aware that it was wrong. All wise men were aware that what was being done was an atrocious act but all remained mute spectators. It was only Vidura who gathered the courage to tell Bheeshma in no mistaken terms, “You are a man who can discriminate between good and bad. Such a noble person like you should not remain a silent spectator when such an atrocious act was being perpetrated. Why do you just keep quiet?” Bheeshma replied, “What can I do when the wicked people perpetrate such sub-human acts.” To which, Vidura reacted thus: “No! The one who does, the one who encourages, the one who watches, the one who acts as a mute/helpless witness, and the one who does not express the disapproval in unequivocal terms despite being aware that it is wrong – all are equally guilty.”’¹⁰

Ethics policy comprises internal policies pertaining to the way employees and management of the company conduct themselves. These can be referred to as ethics statements or ethics code. A highly generalised language typically represents the former, while the latter may represent specific mode of actions. Many organisations have developed an ethics policy that takes care of all aspects of the organisation’s operations, including the whistle-blowing policy, gift policy, etc. An organisation believes that such policies will result in increased awareness about ethical conduct. A strong corporate ethical identity is positively related to high levels of stakeholder satisfaction, which, in turn, has a positive influence on firm financial performance.¹¹

Tata Steel, as part of its gift policy states: ‘The company, regardless of the circumstances, does not permit the soliciting of gifts.’¹² *The Guardian* newspaper thus summarises its editorial code: ‘A newspaper’s primary office is the gathering of news. At the peril of its soul it must see that the supply is not tainted.’ The most important currency of *The Guardian* is trust. This is as true today as when CP Scott marked the centenary of the founding of the paper with his famous essay on journalism in 1921. The purpose of this code is, above all, to protect and foster the bond of trust between the paper and its readers, and therefore to protect the integrity of the paper and of the editorial content it carries.’¹³

Critics say that some organisations use these policies as a marketing tool or as lip-service to gain favour from the public and the government alike; but they do not put those policies into (daily) practice. Thus, it has been suggested that the policy should have the unequivocal support of the top management, which demonstrates that ethics policy is put in action in the organisation. Some companies appoint ethics officers, ethics counsellors, compliance officers, business conduct officers and the like.

While the ethics policy will help a company to communicate its stand on the ethics aspect to its employees, what matters more is whether the top management is actually living those policies. VV

¹⁰‘Man Management: A Values-Based Management Perspective’, Sri Satya Sai Students and Staff Welfare Society, 2009. Excerpts used with permission.

¹¹‘Corporate Ethical Identity as a Determinant of Firm Performance: A Test of the Mediating Role of Stakeholder Satisfaction’, by P Berrone, J Surroca and JA Tribo, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 2007

¹²Tata Steel, www.tatasteel.com/corporate-citizen/pdf/gift-policy.pdf; accessed on April 28, 2010

¹³*The Guardian*, <http://image.guardian.co.uk/sys-files/Guardian/documents/2007/06/14/EditorialCode2007.pdf>; accessed on April 28, 2010

Ranganathan, former senior partner with Ernst & Young India, co-founder of Pinnacle Opportunities, and Compassites, a product incubation company in Bangalore, speaks about the role of business leaders and abiding by publicised statements like the ethics policy or mission statement:

‘We are moving into a time when a phenomenal transition is taking place in the mission statements of many companies, where they are saying that people are important. Hundreds and hundreds of years ago, Kautilya¹⁴ said, “In the happiness of the subjects lies the King’s happiness; in their welfare his welfare. He shall not consider as good only that which pleases him, but treat as beneficial to him whatever pleases his subjects.” These are the words that, couched differently, adorn the corporate corridors of today in the form of vision and mission statements.

There are unfortunately some organisations that are adopting these mission statements just because they are the popular thing to do. Then if they get into financial difficulty or restructure their business, they are the first to hand out pink slips and let people go. But there are also organisations that have adopted these types of mission statements who are really trying to live by them. In hard times, they are keeping their people and are trying to work through the tough times...’ (refer Footnote #8).

An ethics policy/mission statement becomes successful only when the top management lives and breathes those the same in their own lives. Here is an inspiring example from the life of John Behner, former country manager for Nabisco in El Salvador:

‘You have to have discipline, but at the same time I always tried to protect my employees, and I was a good friend with everybody. Even when I had 300 employees, I would find time to sit down with each one of them and talk to them for three or four minutes, “How are the kids? How far away do you live? Do you have trouble getting here?”

A lady told me she had a problem getting on the bus to go to work because of the trouble with her legs. She lived only about six blocks from the company, so I said, “We’ll send a car for you in the morning, don’t worry about it.” Immediately I asked a salesman, who used to come early in the mornings, to go and pick up the lady, who worked in the accounts department.

The people working for me were very appreciative of the love and the way they were treated, and the personal interest that I showed in them and their welfare. There was an instance when one of the girls in the reception who was pregnant had a miscarriage. One of the accountants made a negative comment about an expense item I had had. She was very, very upset and said, “How can you think of accusing Mr. Behner of anything like that?” She was so upset that she had a miscarriage as a result of it.

She wasn’t a spiritual person at all, but afterwards I told her that children who die in such circumstance are very advanced souls, they have hardly anything that they need to do in life in order to become united with God. “Your child has had that experience,” I said. “Instead of feeling sad, you should feel very happy that you had a child that has been able to unite with God.” She was really depressed, but when I told her that, her attitude changed.

¹⁴Kautilya’s *Arthashastra* is the oldest book on management available to the world. It was written by Kautilya in 300 BC. When literally translated it means ‘Scripture of Wealth’. The main focus of the book is on creation and management of wealth. Kautilya is considered a remarkable Indian teacher, guide and philosopher.

At the same time, I went up to the accountant who had commented about my expense report and said, “I really appreciate your attentiveness, that you catch little things and bring them to the attention of the controller when you have a doubt.” I explained to him what the expense was. My expense reports were a joke, because I was a vegetarian and only ate one main meal a day. I would go to New York for a meeting and stay in a cheap place instead of the hotel where the meeting was, to save money for the company.’ (refer Footnote #8).

In effect, an ethics policy can be guided by a stakeholder–management approach, which holds that corporations should treat all their constituencies fairly. In a stakeholder approach, the organisation takes into consideration the influence of non-market forces in addition to market forces. The theory – *a subset of ethical principles can result in significant competitive advantage*¹⁵ – has become popular in recent times if an organisation was to adopt a win-win outcome.

Joseph W Weiss¹⁶ suggests the following to help an individual to take a decision during an ethical dilemma:

1. The golden rule – Explained later in this chapter.
2. Intuition – When we are engaged in unethical behavior, there is an inner voice that pricks us. If one follows that voice, one will follow the appropriate path.
3. Means and ends – Are the means we adopt as good as the end? Are we being misdirected due to the glamour attached to the ‘end’?
4. One’s best self – Is the action that I am planning to take congruent with the idea of myself when I am in my ideal role?

RELIGIOUS VIEWS ON BUSINESS ETHICS

Here, let us first consider one of two stories:

Three priests were discussing what they do with the money offered by people in the collection plates/boxes kept at various places of worship.

The first priest said, ‘I draw a circle on the ground, and throw the money up into the air. Whatever lands inside the circle belongs to God and I take the rest.’

The second priest said, ‘Oh...that’s nice. I too draw a circle and then throw the money up in the air. Whatever lands outside the circle belong to God and whatever falls on the inside, I take.’

The third priest said, ‘Interesting! I also do something similar. I draw a circle on the ground and then throw up the money in the air. God catches all that he can and I keep the money that falls down.’

¹⁵‘Instrumental Stakeholder Theory: A Synthesis of Ethics and Economics’, Thomas M Jones, *Academy of Management Review*, April 1995

¹⁶*Business Ethics: Concepts and Cases*, Joseph W Weiss, Cengage Learning, California, 2009

The second story as told by Sri Satya Sai Baba¹⁷ goes like this:

Once, a dog came to meet Lord Rama. The dog was bleeding from various blows. Lakshmana, the younger brother of Lord Rama, was sent to enquire on why the dog received such blows.

‘I was beaten by a brahmin with a stick’, said the dog. The brahmin was called for questioning. On questioning, the brahmin said that the dog was annoying him by coming across his path.

In response to Rama’s question of how the dog want to punish Brahmin, the dog said, ‘Make him a manager of a temple’.

Then, Rama, replied in wonder that such an action would be a reward and not a punishment.

‘No, I was a manager of a temple in my previous birth. It was impossible not to mishandle or misuse or misappropriate some fraction of God’s money. When he is that manager, he too will get, like me, this canine birth and perhaps get beaten too in his subsequent birth,’ said the dog.

And then Sai Baba says, ‘In fact not only the dog or the brahmin but every one of us are lining off the property of God, for does not all this belong to Him? What do we do in return for all benefits we derive from the property of the Lord? We should not simply eat and sit quiet. We have to render service to the poor and the helpless in a manner suitable to us.’

These two stories lend a clue to how (not) to conduct business. Increasing number of organisations – educational institutions, for-profit companies, non-for-profit companies, etc. – are offering specialised courses and training programmes on business ethics. In Bharat, spirituality and ethics are the foundation for all day-to-day activities. Spirituality is not different or distinct from mundane existence; all life is yoga. Honesty is expected both in the family and in business. A person cannot say that he/she is ethical when it comes to family responsibilities and unethical in work responsibilities. Life is one indivisible whole. A person who is unethical in one sphere of life will soon become unethical in other spheres as well. Similarly, a person who is affirming ethical values in one sphere of life will try to affirm ethical decisions in other spheres of life too. In Bharat, rituals were expected to be applied with underpinnings on universal values and they were interpreted in the context of *desham/desh* (space or location), *kaalam/kaal* (time) and *patram/patra* (the actor).

Scriptures of all religions encourage us to enhance and enrich our thoughts. Jainism played a major role in the development of ethical values, in areas as wide as cuisine and business. Jains consider right faith (*samyak-darshana*), right knowledge (*samyak-gyana*), and right conduct (*samyak-charitra*) as the three jewels that need to be cultivated together to end human sufferings. The five ethical principles that a sincere Jain practices are as follows:

1. Non-violence (*ahimsa*) – to cause no harm to living beings.
2. Truth (*satya*) – to always speak the truth in a harmless manner.
3. Non-stealing (*asteya*) – to not take anything that is not willingly given.
4. Celibacy (*brahmacharya*) – to not indulge in sensual pleasures.
5. Non-possession (*aparigraha*) – to detach oneself from people, places and material things.

¹⁷www.ineval.org/sai/Teachings/Chitta/s1032.html; accessed on April 28, 2010

Due to these principles, Jains typically avoid professions related to the killing of animals. The Jain community is synonymous with success in diamond trading. Similar principles can also be found in the teachings of other religions and spiritual leaders. *The Holy Bible* indicates that we should serve not just whom we are comfortable with, but should include all:

‘And if you lend money at interest to those from whom you hope to receive, what quality of credit and thanks is that to you? Even notorious sinners lend money at interest to sinners, so as to recover as much again.’ (Luke 6:34)

Basavanna, who was also known as Basava and Basaveshwara, is considered a prophet of *Veerashaivism*. He spoke about leading a moral life and exhorted people to consume only what they required and to contribute the surplus to society. He spoke about the necessity to practice honesty and truthfulness in the endeavour to generate wealth and to transcend the senses by not aspiring for meat, alcohol and lustful pleasures. By practicing *Kayakave Kailasa* (work is the means and end to bliss). Basaveshwara elevated manual work, which was then considered menial, to being a sacred offering.



A painting by Andrea Mantegna (1431) depicting Luke writing the Gospel attributed to him¹⁸

THE GOLDEN RULE OF RECIPROCITY

Once, the teacher asked students in a primary school, ‘What is common between Jesus, Krishna, Ram, Gandhi, Mahavira, Nanak, Muhammad and Buddha?’

A student replied, ‘They were all born on government holidays...!!’

The connecting link which that primary school student was able to find, we are unable to find in our daily endeavours. The religions of the world do offer us a connecting link to lead an ethical life. The mandates about ethical living given in various religions can be linked to how we would like others to treat us. In that, the way another person treats an individual will define how that very individual considers as the right or wrong behaviour. If a person does not like another person lying to him, and prefers that the others speak truthfully, then, for that person, speaking truthfully is *dharma* and telling lies is *adharma*. The golden rule – **the ethic of reciprocity** – has been a prevalent theme in all religions, as is reflected in the following quotes:¹⁹



Parable of the Good Samaritan, a painting by Vincent Van Gogh²⁰

¹⁸Image source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mantegna,_altare_di_san_luca_01.jpg; accessed on February 10, 2010

¹⁹www.globaldharma.org/Files/%20-%20Adobe%20Acrobat/Booklet%20about%20GDC%20.pdf; accessed on April 28, 2010

²⁰Image source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Vincent_Willem_van_Gogh_022.jpg; accessed on February 10, 2010

Buddhism

‘That which you do not desire for oneself, do not do to others.’ (The Staff of Wisdom)

Christianity

‘Do unto others what you would have them do unto you.’ (Mathew 7.12)

‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ (Luke 10.30)

Confucianism

‘Do not impose on others what you yourself do not desire.’ (Analects XII.2)

Hinduism

‘Do nothing to your neighbor which you would not have your neighbor do to you.’
(*Mahabharata*)

Baha’i

‘Lay not on any soul a load which you would not wish to be laid upon you.’ (Baha’u’llah LVXI)



The Bahai House of Worship also known as 'Lotus Temple', New Delhi²¹

Islam

‘Do to all men as you would they should do to you; and reject for others what you would reject for yourself.’ (Mishkar-el-Masabih)

Jainism

‘A man should wander about treating all creatures in the world as he himself would be treated.’
(Sutra-krit-anga)

²¹Image source: <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:LotusDelhi.jpg>; accessed on February 10, 2010



'I died as a mineral and became a plant,
I died as plant and rose to animal,
I died as animal and I was Man.

Why should I fear? When was I less by dying?

Yet once more I shall die as Man, to soar
With angels bless'd; but even from angelhood

I must pass on: all except God doth perish.
When I have sacrificed my angel-soul,
I shall become what no mind e'er conceived.

Oh, let me not exist! for Non-existence
Proclaims in organ tones,
To Him we shall return.'

~ Mawlānā Jalāl ad-Dīn Muḥammad Balkhī (Jalāl ad-Dīn Muḥammad Rūmī),
13th century Persian mystic, theologian and Islamic jurist

Judaism

'What is hurtful to yourself do not to your fellow man.' (Talmud)

Sikhism

'Treat others as you would be treated yourself.' (*Adi Granth*)

Zoroastrianism

'Do not do to others that which is not well for oneself.' (Shayast-na-shayast 13)

SO, HOW DID WE CREATE A SPLIT AMONGST US?

When we do something that is of a non-value to us, it creates guilt/fear/conflict in us. Even seemingly trivial matters create conflicts within us. This indicates that we cannot dismiss ethical values. While we can say that ethics are relative, we also need to say that they have universality. At the onset, an individual may feel hurt when an intimate friend betrays her/him. People in different parts of the globe – be it Americans, Australians or Austrians – or even of different caste, race, religion or gender will react similarly.

The argument that everything is *Mithya* also does not help us till we are in a state where we consider certain things are good and certain things are bad. If someone tell that the book that you are reading now do not exist the way you see it, but is only a quantum soup, we may not be appreciating it. Till the moment we experientially realise both good and bad as *Mithya*, ethical dilemmas will continue to exist. Believing that such dilemmas do not exist will not help either. Only when a person do not have any concern of how others treat him/ her - be it with respect or with scorn, and behaves with ease and equanimity in all situations, be it positive or negative, we can say that the individual has transcended the value system.

When our code of conduct is defined by external factors or influences, we would follow different behavioural standards for others and for ourselves. Many a times, we look forward to consistency and regularity in what others say, while not practicing these values in our own life. We practise certain universal values as an obligation, not due to the value we associate to those values.

Right from childhood, the whole world has been advising us about the necessity to tell the truth. While I much value the fact that others should be truthful to me, am not yet clear about the benefit that I get by being truthful to others. On the contrary, I find that by telling a lie I can accrue some immediate comforts too. Thus, speaking truth is a half value for me, and I find the existence of two different value systems within me. This creates a split within me. While we would expect others to give truthful answers to our questions, we may tell trivial lies to them – be it about our age, income, qualifications etc. At the same moment, we are aware that we are telling a lie. So I have two personalities here. One is the ‘irritant’ aspect of me that prods from within to speak the truth (and later feel guilty for not telling the truth) and the other is that which does the act of telling the lie. This disconnect is deepened when we go on performing actions which are not congruent to our deeper selves.

This knower-doer split result in a state where we cannot enjoy anything. I can enjoy the job only when I am in complete awareness about the action. While having *gulab jamun*, if my mind is planning for next day’s schedule, I cannot enjoy *gulab jamun*. In *The Value of Values*, Swami Dayananda Saraswati says, ‘In India, the mother instructs the child, ‘Eat and don’t talk. When you are eating, eat. Talk later.’ In the western culture, talking is mixed with eating, only the first spoonful of food is appreciated. The rest of eating becomes mechanical. We eat and talk and then we find that we cannot eat more, we infer that the meal was good and that we have eaten a sufficient amount... This kind of eating is mechanical and often uncontrolled, whereas, eating, when the thinker is there alongside, can become an enjoyable ritual’.²² When I have the knower-doer split, am not able to enjoy what I am doing. To appreciate the beauty of life, togetherness thus becomes a necessity. And that will happen only when I do not have half-values in me.

WHEN WILL THE HALF-VALUE COME TO AN END?

Anything I choose to do is based on my belief that the choice will bring comfort to me. If I choose to tell a lie, I believe that telling a lie will bring some form of comfort - be it an escape from receiving a scolding from someone, be it access to some material resources, or be it some enjoyment of putting others to trouble. When I have the clarity that the choice that I exercise will bring about suffering to me, I will refrain from making that choice. When I am convinced that speaking untruth brings suffering to me, then I will not speak untruth, at any situation. Speaking truth becomes a spontaneous action – a situation where there is no necessity to assess the positives and negatives of an action. The situation, then, becomes choiceless – as the speaker does not even see the option of speaking untruth. (Do we have a daily dilemma about brushing the teeth?) Only when our half values get fully assimilated (to full values), we stop having dilemmas/conflicts in our life.

Duryodhana’s Dilemma, on Making a Choice

In *Prapanna Gita*, Duryodhana witnesses a rare moment of introspection. as he speaks about his dilemma to Sri Krishna:

Jaanaami dharmam na ca me pravritti

Jaanaami adharmam na ca me nivritti

²²*The Value of Values*, Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Arsha Vidya Centre, 2007

Meaning: I know very well what *dharma* is, but I am not inclined to follow it. I know very well what *adharma* is, and yet I cannot come out of it.

This is the same dilemma that many are facing today: while harbouring thoughts that are far from ideal, performing actions that are away from ideal, or while speaking words that are far from ideal, we are, at all times, aware that we are doing wrong. And, it is our anguish – like that of Duryodhana's – not knowing how to come out of such erroneous habits.

This is where the role of wisdom traditions comes in. These traditions equip students with the inner strength that moves in and moves out when required (these traditions will be discussed in Chapter 6). Let us consider the perspective of Rajan Govindan, former senior managing director with Bankers Trust, and chief operating officer of Bear Stearns Asset Management in the USA, on making choices during ethical dilemmas:

'I think that in all of my work, I have had to make ethical choices all the time. In the banking business, the rule is that if the bank made a mistake, then the bank had to pay for it. However, sometimes when an error was made, it was in the bank's favour. For example, a bank employee was supposed to sell 500 shares from a given stock and sold 5000 shares instead. If the market saw a downturn, then the sale could mean that the bank's customer had incurred a loss. However, most of the time, customers were not even aware that such a thing (profit or loss) had happened. So, how bank employees handled such issues was always an ethical dilemma.

My feeling, however, is that once we go down the path to try to cover up our mistake – even if it was in the customers' favour – we cannot gain the true respect of our customer. We may be able to rationalise all of this in our own mind, but in reality we can ever expect to have the customer's respect and trust. So I believe that we must set clear rules and follow them. The moment we are wishy-washy we set a trend.

I have also always told the people who worked for me to be honest when they filled out their expense report. I said, "Don't try to add a \$5 tip to your hotel expense just because you can get away with it. Even such little things will haunt you." I always taught the people to be clean in everything they did. This way we don't have to look over our shoulder and worry about what might happen to us.

In the last one and a half years that I worked at Bankers Trust, we made presentations to the board about projections we thought we could meet. Then, when we had to get down to achieving the target, my colleague wanted to manipulate the figures in order to show that we had achieved the projected results, rather than actually work towards our proposed target.



*Duryodhana in Javanese Wayang*²³

²³Image source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Duryodana-kl.jpg>; accessed on February 10, 2010

He would continually pitch for projects, but then pressurise us to eliminate costs. One way he wanted to deal with this was to capitalise the costs, so they wouldn't show up as current expenses. At this juncture, I felt this was wrong and so I had to end the relationship' (refer Footnote #8).

TEACHING ETHICS

A training programme in ethics can take into consideration the following points:

- (a) Why people behave ethically, and how can this be reinforced?
- (b) Why people behave unethically, and how can this be corrected?
- (c) People's belief systems on how they should behave.
- (d) The ethical reasoning process.
- (e) Relevance of values based ethics and rules based ethics.

At the same time, the ethics training programme should be capable of:

1. Empowering individuals to cultivate and strengthen their human values.
2. Making an individual sensitive to issues that affect others and helping employees to identify the ethical dimensions of a business decision.
3. Making an individual aware of the need to act as advocates of best ethical practices through personal examples.
4. Cultivating people who will act as moral and ethical compasses during periods of stress and downturn.
5. Helping people to work in an organisation, where some of the practices may be promoting unethical behavior.
6. Introducing participants to ethical concepts and tools.
7. Inspiring and creating whistle-blowers when a company practice is not in concordance with the greater common good of society.
8. Guiding and assisting people in creating ethical codes and audits.
9. Imparting awareness about how the organisation would be held responsible for the ethical transgressions of the individuals.

Ideally, the person who espouses an ethic should be an embodiment of that virtue. There is a story attributed to Mahatma Gandhi: A mother was very concerned about the quantity of sugar her son was consuming. She requested Gandhiji to tell her son to stop eating sugar. Gandhiji asked her to visit him next week. When they returned the following week, Gandhi told her son to stop eating sugar. This prompted the mother to ask Gandhiji, 'It was very difficult for us to visit this place again. You could have said the same thing to my son the previous week itself... Why didn't you?' Gandhiji said, 'When you came to me, I was eating sugar. This week, I gave up that habit.' This story indicates the importance of 'practising what we preach; especially those individuals who occupy responsible positions should do so. Gandhiji first practised what he wanted to preach. Similar stories abound various cultures across the globe; they all speak about the necessity to 'talk our thought and walk our talk'.



'...All have equal right to experience divinity. But one should have purity of heart to experience His grace. The heart should be filled with compassion. But today, there is no compassion, there is only fashion!

Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar was the epitome of compassion. He along with his aged mother lived in a village near Calcutta. They lived in such abject poverty that they had hardly anything for food other than gruel. As Vidyasagar had sincerity and earnestness, he used to study even under street lights. Sraddhavan Labhate Jnanam (one with sincerity and earnestness alone can attain wisdom). One with sincerity can accomplish any great task. Vidyasagar passed the law examination and obtained a good job. Neither happiness nor sorrow is permanent. One follows the other with the passage of time. Likewise, Vidyasagar's days of poverty were over when he began to earn a handsome income.

One day, he told his mother that he wanted to buy some good saris and jewels for her as he was earning sufficient money. He asked his mother to express her wish. The mother said that she did not need anything at that time and would express her wish at the appropriate time. Being an obedient son, he would never force his mother in any matter. As months passed by, his salary increased substantially. On a particular Sunday, he sat by his mother's side and said, "Mother, I have a lot of money with me, I pray you express your wish at least now." The mother said, "son, I want three jewels. As there is no school in our village, the children are forced to walk a long distance to attend the school. The parents are concerned about their safety and spend anxious moments till they return from school in the evening. So, please construct a small school in our village. This is the first 'jewel' I desire from you." Accordingly, Vidyasagar got a school constructed in his village. After some time, his mother expressed her second wish. She said, "Our villagers are suffering from lack of medical facilities. When the children are afflicted with any disease, the mothers have to carry them to the town for treatment. So, I want you to construct a small hospital in our village. This is the second 'jewel' I expect from you." Vidyasagar built a hospital too. As days rolled by, Vidyasagar's name and fame spread far and wide. People were all praise for his social service activities. After some time, his mother expressed her third wish. She said, "Son! The water in all the wells of our village has been reduced to a trickle. The villagers are suffering due to lack of drinking water. So, I want you to make arrangements for water supply in our village."

As per his mother's wish, Vidyasagar provided drinking water to the villagers. His mother was overjoyed. She blessed her son saying, "I wish every mother had a noble son like you who dedicates his life to the welfare of the society. What is the use of having many sons who bring disrepute to the family as did the sons of Dhritarashtra?"

Source: A discourse of Sri Satya Sai Baba; www.sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume33/ss33-09.pdf; accessed on July 2, 2010. Used with permission.

The foundation of a nation is built at home. Parents are the first teachers. If parents are not ideal role models, how can one expect the new generation to be role models? That children are keen observers, can be gleaned from the following example:

One day a little girl was sitting and watching her mother preparing for the evening prayers. She suddenly noticed that her mother had several strands of white hair sticking out in contrast to the otherwise black hair.

She looked at her mother and inquisitively asked, 'Why are some of your hairs white, Mother?'

Her mother replied, 'Well, every time that you do something wrong and make me cry or unhappy, one of my hairs turns white.'

The little girl thought about this revelation for a while and then said, 'Mother, how come ALL of grandma's hairs are white?'

Children are as quick-witted as they are keen. When parents bring in conditionality – say, in the form of rationing their affection based on the child's performance in school or relative to her/his performance with classmates – then the child imbibes these values. When a parent asks her kid to tell a lie (e.g., When the telephone rings, the father asks the child to tell the caller that he is not at home), the child is learning the value that it is absolutely fine to tell a lie. So, when it comes to children, does character-building require effort and time? It does. However, today's families have undergone major changes. For instance, earlier the mother was present and had a major role to play in the day-to-day activities of a child. Even if she did go out to work, it was because of economic compulsions to meet the family's basic needs. With increasing glorification of one's rights (and decreasing emphasis on one's duties), families are affected. The bond among family members is more fragile as 'money is after all a very slender thread to blind people'²⁴

The men of character that we see in this world are owing to the grooming they have received from their parents, especially the mothers. Ishwar Chandra Vidya Sagar, Mahatma Gandhi and Swami Vivekananda were well-developed personalities because of the mentoring and sacrifice of their mothers. With changing lifestyles, the old pattern of value education underwent a change. Parents have less time and inclination towards their own individual *sadhana*, as is reflected in the time and inclination they show in the character-building of their children. 'Nature abhors a vacuum'; soon, television and movies began to take upon the role of instilling values in children due to the absence of their parents, who are working. On the other hand, parents, who are now emotionally unsound (what with the increasing stress that they have created for themselves) and guilt ridden, have succumbed to the unfair demands of children and are unable to say 'no' to their children even when they should be doing so.



Principles of Spiritual Living

Remember the rights others have over you, and forget the rights you have over others! We have duties, no rights or demands.

No one can give you rest. You will have to learn to take it.

Whatever goal you have chosen to pursue in life, BE FIRM and determined in your efforts to realize it!

Never believe in anything unless it happens.

Do not hesitate to act.

Have faith in the inherent goodness of others.

Expect that tragedy can strike you at any moment. Do not be surprised when misfortune comes into your life.

Learn to be flexible in your everyday living.

Adopt the ways of Nature. Her method is one of Patience.

Swami Tejomayananda

²⁴Human Values and Ethics, SK Chakraborty, D Chakraborty, The ICFAI University Press, 2006

Not so long ago, the mothers in Indian households would derive satisfaction from the satisfaction of their family members. We need to keep in mind that children learn more from observing what happens around them rather than from what is taught to them. When a child finds that both her/his parents are highly ambitious and are in pursuit of their own ego desires, how will that child imbibe the value of selfless service? Ironically, grandparents have a new role nowadays – that of babysitters. Earlier, this role was theirs by choice, now there is a direct/indirect compulsion upon them to look after the grandchildren. At times, the duty of bringing up the child is also handed over to some boarding school or to a helper (maid). In order to compensate for the lack of time that parents are expected to spend with their children, the children are provided with enough pocket money to buy the means to occupy their time – thereby initiating the child to take to conspicuous consumption at an early age. Of course, there are exceptions when it becomes an economic necessity for both husband and wife to work. Yet, in many situations, both parents working out of home is more a result of choice rather than compulsion.

Due to the influence of messages and advertisements propagated through various media, children expect their parents to role model those they see in TV serials, etc. Sadly, a significant amount of these visual messages and movies convey and promote violence, negativity and instantaneous excitement. It is interesting to note that three men who appeared in the infamous ‘Marlboro man’ tobacco ad campaigns died of lung cancer.²⁵ A study conducted by the University of Michigan in 2004 revealed that the type of movies a respondent watched influenced her/his hormonal levels such that it affected her/his affiliation or aggressive behaviour.²⁶

Human beings have the power to choose what to accept or allow through their senses. It is our responsibility to exercise discrimination and caution when making decisions for ourselves and for the members of our family. It means that our choices should take into account the welfare of each one and not that which is easy and convenient for our own selves. This is one way to keep an open heart instead of relying solely on our thinking ability while making decisions that affect other people.

In India, sincere seekers of truth are recommended to consume a vegetarian diet. Vegetarian food not only includes what we eat or drink, which is of course important, but everything that we ingest through each of the five sense organs: eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin. Whatever we see, hear, taste, breathe in, or touch acts as a kind of food. In addition to what is taken through the mouth, the other two main categories of non-vegetarian food include all that we see and hear.

Everyday thousands of impulses enter into us through our eyes – when we watch TV, movies and theatre, or read books, magazines, and newspapers. Many of these impulses are far from ideal and



*Picture of Bhuvaneshwari Devi
'I am indebted to my mother
for the efflorescence of my
knowledge'*

~ Swami Vivekananda

²⁵http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marlboro_man; accessed on April 28, 2010

²⁶www.ur.umich.edu/0304/July19_04/23.shtml; and www.umich.edu/news/index.html?Releases/2004/Jul04/r072004a; accessed on April 28, 2010

can bring about unpleasant reactions in us, at some time in the present or future. We are also party to conversations involving gossip, criticism of others, or salacious stories, in addition to music that could adversely affect our health and comfort. All such inputs will fall under the category of non-vegetarian consumption.

Let us now move towards the next level where ethics is 'taught'. If we look at some of the educational institutions, they have now become Temples of *Lakshmi*,²⁷ instead of being Temples of *Saraswathi*.²⁸ If the fee charged by these institutions, under any pretext, continue to chart such an upward trend, then it may not be far when students stop referring to such places as educational institutions, if they have not already.



An excerpt from the website of American Psychological Association (www.apa.org), on 'Television viewing and its impact on children and teenagers'

'Violent programs on television lead to aggressive behavior by children and teenagers who watch those programs.' These words are from a 1982 report by the National Institute of Mental Health, that confirmed and extended an earlier study done by the Surgeon General. As a result of such research findings, the APA passed a resolution in February 1985 informing broadcasters and the public of the potential dangers that viewing violence on television can have for children.

What does the research show?

Psychological research has shown three major effects of watching violence on television:

- Children may become less sensitive to the pain and suffering of others;
- Children may be more fearful of the world around them; and
- Children may be more likely to behave in aggressive or harmful ways toward others.

Children who watch a lot of TV are less aroused by violent scenes than are those who only watch a little; in other words, they're less bothered by violence (in general) and are less likely to find anything wrong with violent acts. For example, in several studies, those who watched a violent program instead of a non-violent one were slower to intervene or to call for help when, a little later, they saw younger children fighting or playing destructively.

Studies by Dr George Gerbner, University of Pennsylvania, have shown that children's TV shows comprise about 20 violent acts per hour and also that children who watch a lot of TV are more likely to think that the world is a mean and dangerous place.

Children often behave differently after they've been watching violent programs on TV. In one study conducted at Pennsylvania State University, about 100 preschool children were observed both before and after watching TV. Some watched cartoon shows with many aggressive and violent acts, and others watched shows that had no violence of any kind. The researchers noticed real differences between the kids who watched the violent shows and those who watched non-violent ones.

'Children who watch violent shows, even in 'just funny' cartoons, were more likely to hit out at their playmates, argue, disobey class rules, leave tasks unfinished, and were less willing to wait for things than those who watched the nonviolent programs,' says Dr Aletha Huston, now at the University of Kansas.

Real life studies

Findings from the laboratory further support field studies in showing the long-range effects of televised violence. Dr Leonard Eron and his associates at the University of Illinois found that children who watched many hours of TV violence when they were in elementary school tended to also show a higher level of aggressive behavior when they became teenagers. By observing these youngsters until they were 30 years old, Dr Eron found that those who had watched a lot of TV when they were eight years old were more likely to be arrested and prosecuted for criminal acts as adults.

Source: www.apa.org/pi/vio&tv.html; accessed on June 10. 2009

²⁷Hindu Goddess of Wealth

²⁸Hindu Goddess of Learning

Various studies on organisation behavior show that the influence of national cultures is pre-dominant over company cultures.²⁹ Any manager will vouch for the dominating influence of the local culture on the company culture. Similarly value education, character building and business ethics (as a subset of the former two) is not something that can be inculcated solely through a course during the business management programme. The values and character of an individual are influenced by societal values. A course on business ethics is only a continuation of the value education inculcated through the earlier phases of education. The 'Dharma Intervention Model' of Pandey and Mohan³⁰ (refer Exhibit 5.2) looks into the causal process of unethical behavior and how one can become ethical.

This model illustrates the causal factors that give rise to unethical behavior based on the principles expounded in *Bhagavad Gita*, and suggests how one can bring in characteristics of *dharma*, as stated in *Manusmriti*, to cure the ailment of unethical behavior in one's own life. Professor GD Sharma says, 'The one quality that had been repeatedly mentioned in all the *shastras* is that of self-control and discipline (*indriya vijay*). This is the sterling virtue. The *Rig Veda*'s dictum '*Swarat Samrat Bhavati*' – meaning, he who conquers himself (*indriya vijay*), conquers the world – has immensely inspired Indian thoughts. Guru Nanak, the great religious leader and visionary, echoed the dictum when he said '*Ap jita, Jag jita*'.³¹

PERSPECTIVES ON ETHICS

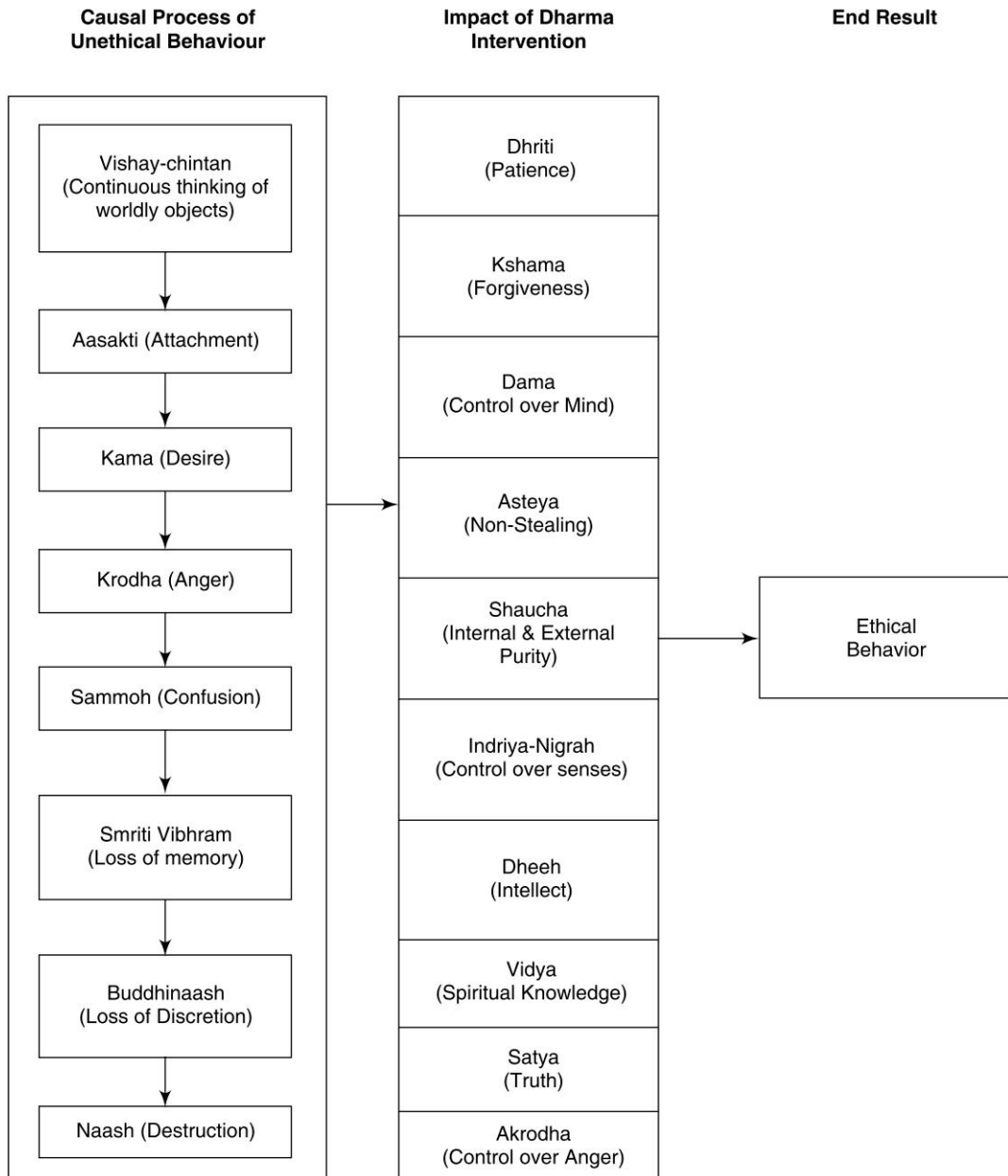
SK Chakraborty, founder convener of the Management Center of Human Values, IIM Kolkata, considers Sri Aurobindo, Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore and Swami Vivekananda as the compasses during his journey of writing about Indian ethos at work. Let us look into the perspectives of these spiritual leaders on ethics and values:

1. ...the kernel of the true ethical being remains always the same – will, character, self-discipline, self-mastery - these are almost the first conditions for human self-perfection. (Sri Aurobindo, *The Human Cycle*)
2. There is only one safe rule for the ethical man, to stick to his principle of good, his instinct of good, his vision of good, his intuition of good and to govern by that his conduct. He may err, but he will be on his right road in spite of stumblings, because he will be faithful to the law of his nature. (Sri Aurobindo, *The Human Cycle*)
3. For me, it is enough to know the means (Mahatma Gandhi, *Young India*, December 1924)
4. Impure means result in an impure end... (Mahatma Gandhi, 'Who Is A Socialist?', *Harijan*, July 1947).
5. I feel that our progress towards the goal will be in exact proportion to the purity of our means. (Mahatma Gandhi, D. G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma*, Vol.5, 1st Ed.)
6. I must confess that I do not draw a sharp line or any distinction between economics and ethics. Economics that hurts the moral wellbeing of an individual or a nation is immoral and, therefore, sinful (Mahatma Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj*)

²⁹International Dimensions of Organisational Behaviour (4th Ed.), NJ Adler, South-Western College Publishing, Cincinnati, 2002

³⁰'Dharma Intervention Model' for developing Ethical Leadership', *Purrushartha: A Journal of Holistic Approach to Management*, January 2010

³¹*Management and the Indian Ethos*, GD Sharma, Rupa and Co., 2004

Exhibit 5.2 *The Dharma Intervention Model (refer Footnote #30):*

7. Our life should become daily simpler and not more complex. We should be progressively more self-restrained. (*Selected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Ed. S Narayan)
8. Without mental purity external action cannot be performed in a selfless spirit. (*Selected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Ed. S Narayan)
9. A moral act must be our own act; it must spring from our own will. (Mahatma Gandhi, *Ethical Religion*)
10. ...we have neither practiced nor known ethical religion so long as we do not feel sympathy for every human being... higher morality must be comprehensive; it must embrace all men. (Mahatma Gandhi, *Ethical Religion*)
11. ...goodness is for the sake of goodness. And upon this wealth of goodness – where honesty is not valued for being the best policy, but because it can afford to go against all policies – man's ethics are founded. (Rabindranath Tagore, *Personality*)
12. Perpetual giving up is the truth of life. The perfection of this is our life's perfection. (Rabindranath Tagore, *Personality*)
13. The moral side represents training of unselfishness, control of desire; the spiritual side represents sympathy and love. They should be taken together and never separated. The cultivation of merely moral side of our nature leads us to the dark region of narrowness and hardness of heart, to the intolerant arrogance of goodness; and the cultivation of the merely spiritual side of nature leads us to still darker region of revelry in intemperance of imagination. (Rabindranath Tagore, *Personality*)
14. In sin we lust after pleasures, not because they are truly desirable, but because the red light of passion makes them appear desirable; we long for things not because they are great in



On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. 'Teacher,' he asked, 'what must I do to inherit eternal life?' 'What is written in the Law?' he replied. 'How do you read it?' He answered: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind"; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' 'You have answered correctly,' Jesus replied. 'Do this and you will live.' But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbor?'

In reply Jesus said: 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins [Greek: two denarii] and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

'Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?' The expert in the law replied, 'The one who had mercy on him.' Jesus told him, 'Go and do likewise.'

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Good_samaritan; accessed on June 30, 2010

themselves, but because our greed exaggerates them... These exaggerations... break the harmony of our life at every step, we lost the true standard of values. (Rabindranath Tagore, *Personality*).

15. One of the greatest lessons I have learnt in my life is to pay as much attention to the means of work as to its end. (*The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol.2).
16. Renunciation is the very basis upon which ethics stands. There never was an ethical code preached which had not renunciation for its basis. Ethics always says, 'Not I, but thou.' Its motto is, 'Not self, but non-self.' The vain ideas of individualism, to which man clings when he is trying to find that Infinite Power or that Infinite Pleasure through the senses, have to be given up — say the laws of ethics. You have to put yourself last, and others before you. The senses say, 'Myself first.' Ethics says, 'I must hold myself last'. (*The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol.2).
17. One idea stands out as the centre of all ethical systems, expressed in various forms, namely, doing good to others. The guiding motive of mankind should be charity towards men, charity towards all animals. But these are all various expressions of that eternal truth that, 'I am the universe; this universe is one.' Or else, where is the reason? Why should I do good to my fellowmen? Why should I do good to others? What compels me? It is sympathy, the feeling of sameness everywhere. (*The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol.2).
18. '...What is the use of doing good?' The answer is in the first place, that we must work for lessening misery, for that is the only way to make ourselves happy. (*The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol.2).

Key Concepts

1. 'Ethics' is derived from the Greek word 'ethos', which has its roots in the word 'ithihaas'. Ethics is a branch of philosophy that encompasses the right conduct and good life.
2. Socrates' opinion was that virtue was the most valuable possession and the ideal life was spent in search of good. If an individual is aware of the consequences of his action, he would make the right choice. A person, who knows what is right, will naturally do what is good. The criminal would not engage in crime if the perpetrator was aware of the consequences of her/his actions. Thus, Socrates gave prominence to self awareness and self knowledge.
3. Aristotle was of the view that to become virtuous, one should engage in virtuous activities, and not just study what virtue is. He held the view that awareness of one's nature and developing the talent would lead to happiness, the ultimate goal. 'Good' is considered to be the goal of every endeavour.
4. Epicurus was one of the earliest known Greek philosophers who believed that gods do not reward/punish human beings. He believed that everything that occurred in the world is the result of atoms colliding, rebounding and entangling with one another. He spoke about

Ataraxia, a state of freedom, where there is no worry. This state suggested a detached and balanced state of mind, which transcends the material world. Epicurus suggested that, 'Of our desires some are natural and necessary, others are natural but not necessary; and others are neither natural nor necessary, but are due to groundless opinion'.

5. Stoics opined that a person who had attained moral and intellectual perfection are immune to the misfortunes like fear and envy, as they were false judgments or arose from false judgments. According to them, only the sage is free while all others are slaves. Epictetus stated that sexual desire is the greatest threat to the integrity and equilibrium of a man's mind. Remaining abstinent during temptation, thus, was a victory. Mastery over one's desires and emotions leads to spiritual peace. 'We are disturbed not by events, but by the views which we take of them'. He commented that one should embrace problems in life rather than avoiding them, and these problems are spiritual exercises. For him, contentment and serenity was the greatest good and peace of mind was of the highest value.
6. Virtue ethics place emphasis on being rather than doing.
7. Virtue ethics theories maintain that habitual development of sound character traits determines the ethical values of persons. Persons with strong character have cultivated intellectual, moral, emotional and social virtues to achieve the self-discipline to do the right thing.
8. $\text{Spiritual character} = (\text{Spiritual context} + \text{Spiritual purpose} + \text{Spiritual values}) \div \text{Ego desires}$
9. Business ethics constitute the ethical/moral principles and challenges that arise in a business environment.
10. The 'metrics' for measuring success of an organisation in the field of business has been evolving through the past 100 years. Initially, it used to be profit maximization, the sole measure of success. As the organisational thought on how it defines its purpose evolves, the organisation will move through satisfying all its stakeholders (triple bottom line approach) and finally reaching a stage where it focuses on purity and unity of thought, word and deed.
11. Ethics policy refers to the internal policies pertaining to the way employees and management of the company conduct themselves. These can be referred to as ethics statements or ethics code. A highly generalised language typically represents the former, while the latter may represent specific mode of actions.
12. If there exist men of character, it is owing to the grooming they have received from their parents, especially the mothers.
13. As parents have less time and inclination towards their own individual *sadhana*, this will get reflected in the time and inclination

they show in the character building of their children. 'Nature abhors a vacuum'. Television and movies have emerged to substitute the role of parents when it comes to instilling values.

14. A training programme in ethics can take into consideration the following aspects: (1) Why people behave ethically, and how can this be reinforced? (2) Why people behave unethically, and how can this be corrected? (3) People's belief systems on how they should behave. (4) The ethical reasoning process. (5) Relevance of value-based ethics and rule-based ethics.
15. When we do something that is of a non-value to us, it creates a split within us. When I have two personalities – the aspect of myself that prods from within and the other is that which does the action. This knower-doer split result in a state where I cannot enjoy anything. To appreciate the beauty of life, togetherness thus becomes a necessity. And that will happen only when I do not have half-values in me. Only when my half values get fully assimilated (to full values), I stop having dilemmas/conflicts in my life.
16. The golden rule of reciprocity – 'do unto others what you would have them do unto you' – is an ethical theme found in the scriptures of all religions of the world.


Key Words

Ethics,	Epicureanism,	management
Ethos,	Stoicism,	approach,
<i>Ithihaas</i> ,	Virtue ethics	<i>Samyak-darshana</i> ,
Applied ethics,	Spiritual character,	<i>Samyak-gyana</i> ,
Business ethics,	Spiritual context,	<i>Samyak-charitra</i> ,
<i>Eudaemonia</i> ,	Spiritual purpose,	<i>Asteya</i> ,
Moral virtues,	Spiritual values,	<i>Brahmacarya</i> ,
<i>Sophia</i> ,	Ethics policy,	<i>Aparigraha</i> ,
<i>Phronesis</i> ,	Ethics statement,	Golden Rule,
<i>Ataraxia</i> ,	Ethics code,	<i>Mithya</i>
	Stakeholder	

Classroom Exercise

- I. Visit www.globaldharma.org/sbw-book2.htm, and read the following four articles:
 - Spiritual character Part 1: Defining your spiritual context
 - Spiritual character Part 2: Identifying your spiritual purpose
 - Spiritual character Part 3: Embodying spiritual values
 - Spiritual character Part 4: Reducing ego desires

Answer the introspective questions in these four articles.

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2. 'Aristotle kept the view of an intermediate condition between two extremes - excess and deficiency.' Find out similarities to this thought in Indian scriptures like *Bhagawat Gita*.
 3. Make two lists of companies/industry/sectors that you believe contribute to social wellbeing and those that you believe are averse to social wellbeing. List 10 Mutual Funds from India and see whether each invests in areas that contribute to social wellbeing or whether it invests in those areas that retard social wellbeing.
 4. How does the American Marketing Association define 'marketing'?
 5. Find out which are the top Indian/foreign companies operating in India that follow/practice/set an operating standard higher than the one defined by the American Marketing Association.

Introspective Exercise

1. Refer to the section on 'Religious views on business ethics' on pg.156. Based on this, what do you think would be an appropriate way for you to render service to the poor and the helpless?
2. Refer to the section on 'Perspectives on ethics' (pg.169) and answer the following:
 - Of the 18 quotes presented herein, which one do you find most intriguing, challenging, or appealing?
 - What is the significance of this quote in your life right now?
 - What are some possible implications of this quote in your work?
3. The template of the game, 'Win as much as you can' is available on the Internet. Play this game, preferably with someone experienced in playing it, and discuss the following questions:
 - What impact did group behaviour have on the results?
 - Did you and the team hold on to human values?
 - How other team members influenced you?
 - Did you compete or cooperate?
 - What did you learn from this experience?
4. Here is an excerpt from the book *Man Management: The Gita of Management*.³²

'India is not a poor country. In the past, many foreign invaders i.e. Turks, French, British, etc. invaded India. If she was a poor nation, then what motivated the aforementioned invaders from far away

³²*Man Management: The Gita of Management*, Sri Satya Sai Students and Staff Welfare Society, 2005. Excerpts used with permission.

places to invade India? India was a very affluent nation. In the Indian state of Punjab, in the yesteryears, there were houses with plinth area of 30 x 40 yards, walls covered with silver plates and doors made of gold. The Turks plundered all this gold and silver. The British had only 3000 soldiers while India had 50,000 soldiers; why, then, could such a strong army not safeguard its own security? It was because of the bribes that the Indian soldiers received from the British in exchange for vital defence secrets; the disunity among Indians was the reason for the establishment of foreign rule in India.

Thus, in the context of the first instance we should love our country. As Lord Rama said, 'The mother and motherland are more valuable than even heaven'. People should have a national feeling and respect Indian culture. Sacrifice, moral values, and righteousness are very important and every Indian should cultivate these ideals.

King Harischandra of *krita yuga* practised these ethics in his life. He, in order to uphold the truth, sold his own wife, sacrificed his kingdom and gave up his only son. Truth alone triumphs at the end. When he was the caretaker of a crematory, the body of a rich businessman was brought for cremation. The body was placed on the pyre which was then lit. The body was raised (normally, the body bends forward because of the natural reaction of fire touching the spinal column), as Harischandra did not place a log of wood over the area of the chest of the dead body. Then the body fell back. Harischandra, who was new to the environment of the crematory, thought that the businessman was alive and had risen only to see if his relatives were around. On finding no relations, he had collapsed and died. Watching the entire episode, Harishchandra developed an aversion for life, ruminating over its impermanence. He also realised that no one would accompany him after death, no one was genuinely bothered about his welfare and that everyone was self-centred and would care little for his happiness. As soon as he realised about the transience of the world and recognised the truth, Lord Shiva appeared before him.'

Based on the excerpt, answer the following questions:

1. Have you undergone trying experiences similar to King Harischandra? If yes, make a note of the same.
2. Who are the leaders you admire who steadfastly hold on to righteousness?
3. Have you met any challenges while practicing righteousness in your life?
4. In retrospect, how better you could have handled that challenge?

Review Questions

1. Write notes related to the ethical viewpoints proposed by Socrates, Aristotle, Zeno, Epicurus and Epictetus.
2. Explain 'The golden rule of reciprocity'. Suggest some quotes from scriptures that suggest ethic of reciprocity.
3. Explain the four contexts for business leadership.
4. What are the rules suggested by Joseph W Weiss that will help an individual to make a decision during an ethical dilemma?

Choose the Correct Answer

1. _____ spoke about *Ataraxia*, a state of freedom, where there is no worry. This state suggested a detached and balanced state of mind, which transcends the material world.
 - (a) Epicurus
 - (b) Socrates
 - (c) Plato
 - (d) Aristotle
2. Who said, 'We are disturbed not by events, but by the views which we take of them'?
 - (a) Zeno
 - (b) Epictetus
 - (c) Epicurus
 - (d) Plato
3. Which branch of moral philosophy emphasizes character, rather than rules or consequences, as the key element of ethical thinking?
 - (a) Virtue theory
 - (b) Consequentialism
 - (c) Deontology
 - (d) Utilitarianism
4. Who among the following viewed moral virtues as a mean between two corresponding vices?
 - (a) Aristotle
 - (b) Mahatma Gandhi
 - (c) Socrates
 - (d) Jawaharlal Nehru
5. For Aristotle, the highest goodness was associated with *Eudaimonia*. What does this Greek word mean?
 - (a) Wellbeing

- (b) Critical thinking
- (c) Pleasure
- (d) Determination

Answers: (1) Epicurus; (2) Epictetus; (3) Virtue Theory; (4) Aristotle; and (5) Wellbeing

State whether True or False

1. For Socrates, knowledge that has an influence on the human life was to be considered the prominent knowledge.
2. Socrates' was of the opinion that virtue was the most valuable possession and that the ideal life was spent in search of Good.
3. 'General justice' is where justice is meted out based on the context – weighing all evidences and looking into each situation as a unique situation.
4. 'The ethic of reciprocity' is the golden rule that has been a prevalent theme in all the religions.
5. Aristotle was of the view that to become virtuous, one should engage in virtuous activities, and not just study what virtue is.

Answers: (1) True; (2) True; (3) False; (4) True; and (5) True

Recommended Reading

- *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, Mahatma Gandhi, Navjivan Trust, Ahmedabad, 1929
- *Put Your Spirituality to Work*, Debra and William Miller, Global Dharma Center, 2006 (Download this three book series free of cost, at www.globaldharma.org/sbw-home.htm).

Recommended Websites

- www.ishafoundation.org/Mar-2008/Intelligence-Gets-Hijacked-by-Hormones-Video-March-2008.isa – Video featuring Sadguru Jaggi Vasudev, 'Intelligence Gets Hijacked By Hormones'
- www.ted.com/talks/daniel_goleman_on_compassion.html – A video featuring Daniel Goleman, speaking about compassion

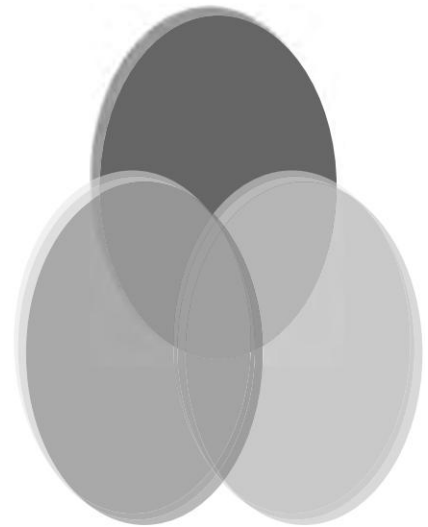
Chapter 6

Educational Systems in Ancient India

Learning Objective

This chapter aims to convey and clarify the following:

- An inquiry into 'Who am I?'
 - The constituents of 'mind' and the nature of mind
 - The three *gunas* and personality attributes based on the same
 - Transforming an individual's *guna* composition
 - Cultivation of one's personality
 - Managing stress and anger
 - *Pancha kosha* and *Ashtanga yoga*
 - Imagery of *The Bhagavad Gita – Ratha Kalpana*
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-



'As we grow and as we mature, we understand the futility of many things which we considered important. By the time this awareness emerges, energy is lost.'¹

~ Professor JK Mitra,
Dean, Faculty of Management Studies, University of Delhi

¹International conference on 'Integrating Spirituality and Organisational Leadership,' held at Pondicherry in February 2009

The two prestigious centres of learning – Nalanda and Takshashila – are indicators of the importance ancient India gave to education. Nalanda, the world's first international residential university, flourished between 427 AD – 1197 AD. *Wikipedia* states, 'In its heyday it accommodated over 10,000 students and 2000 teachers. The university was considered an architectural masterpiece, and was marked by a lofty wall and one gate. Nalanda had eight separate compounds and ten temples, along with many other meditation halls and classrooms. On the grounds were lakes and parks. The library was located in a nine storied building where meticulous copies of texts were produced. The subjects taught at Nalanda University covered every field of learning, and it attracted pupils and scholars from Korea, Japan, China, Tibet, Indonesia, Persia and Turkey.'² Takshashila, as a centre of learning, dates back to 500 BC. Chanakya was associated with Takshashila as a teacher while Chandragupta Maurya and Charaka are said to have studied at Takshashila. The university not only drew scholars and students from India, but also from central Asia and Middle East.³ In addition to secular topics like military science, law, etc., these centres of learning also emphasised upon philosophy, reasoning and knowledge related to the metaphysical. As indicated by the presence of scholars from around the world, these institutions promoted values like universality of knowledge. These centres of learning contributed tremendously to cultural linkages between India and other regions of the world.

INDIAN PHILOSOPHICAL SYSTEMS

Indian literature encompasses all realms of life, sacred and secular. Most of the sacred literatures in India consider Veda as the source from which other literature have drawn inspiration from. The four *Vedas* are:

1. *Rig Veda*
2. *Yajur Veda*
3. *Sama Veda*
4. *Atharva Veda*

There are also four secondary Vedic texts:

1. *Ayur Veda* – The text on living and healing
2. *Dhanur Veda* – The text on statecraft, martial arts etc.
3. *Sthapatya Veda* – The text on architecture and sculpture
4. *Gandharva Veda* – The text on music, dance and literature

Moreover, there are six supplementary texts – *Vedangas* – to understand and tradition of the *Vedas*. They are:

1. *Shiksha* – Pronunciation/ Phonetics
2. *Chandas* – Poetic meters
3. *Vyakaran* – Grammar



Dhanvantari, god of healing and ayurveda⁴

²http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nalanda#Overview_of_Nalanda_University – Accessed on January 8, 2010

³'Managerial Ethos of the Indian Tradition: Relevance of A Wisdom Model', SR Chatterjee, *Journal of Indian Business Research*, 2009

⁴Image source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Dwanandhari_Deva.jpg; accessed on February 15, 2010

4. *Nirukta* – Etymology
5. *Jyotish* – Astrology/Astronomy
6. *Kalpa* – Rules/ Rituals

The roots of the word ‘philosophy’ lies in two Greek words, ‘*philo*’ which refers to loving, and ‘*sophia*’ which refers to wisdom/divinity. Thus, philosophy can mean ‘divine love’ or ‘love towards the divine’ or ‘love towards wisdom’. The metaphysical literature of the Indian tradition dealt with deeper philosophical issues and also the universal questions pertaining to individual behaviour, models of social functioning, leadership and organisational governance in details (refer Footnote #3). The intellectual tradition of Bharat nourished knowledge by permitting diverse thinking options. All this knowledge was focused on one goal – to liberate the individual from sorrow. The ancient Indian educational systems conveyed that the trials and tribulations prevalent in the world are an opportunity provided to refine our personalities; the challenges offered by the world are a blessing in disguise. These philosophical schools were referred to as *darsanas* (*darsan* meaning vision or sight), and seers were referred to as *darasanikas*, meaning, people who had the vision of the reality.

Indian philosophy spanned the following schools of thought:

Orthodox schools (*Astika*):

1. *Nyaya* – The school of logic, proposed by Aksapada Gautama.
2. *Vaisheshika* – The school of atomism, proposed by sage Kanada, postulates that all objects in the physical universe are reducible to a finite number of atoms.
3. *Samkhya* – The school of enumeration, founded by sage Kapila
4. *Yoga* – The school of Patanjali that looks into the cultivation of mind
5. *Purva Mimamsa* – The school that enquires into the nature of *dharma*, based on interpretation of *Vedas*.
6. *Vedanta* – The school that focuses on the Vedic philosophy

Heterodox schools (*Nastika*)

7. *Charvaka* – The atheistic school of thought named after its founder that spoke about religious indifference
8. *Jainism* – The school that traces its philosophy to the teaching of Mahavira
9. *Buddhism* – The school that focuses on empirical, based on the teaching of Gautama, The Buddha.

It is believed that the emergence of India as a leader in software services is not only due to cost and language advantage but also due to the *shruti* system of learning (oral pedagogy) (refer Footnote #3). In India, learning by rote is emphasised in school systems and abstract thought is revered in scholarly studies. Philosophy was viewed as a practical necessity to be cultivated in order to understand how life can best be led. Writings on Indian philosophy were focused on the same and writers of philosophical texts tried to explain a unitary underlying order that resulted in the phenomena observed outside. All such literature was designed to guide the student in her/his quest of answers to three questions: ‘Who Am I?’, ‘Where Am I From?’, and ‘Where Am I Going?’. Unlike many other philosophical systems, Indian philosophical systems, through the years, were able to maintain their attunement to the alleviation of suffering.

‘Who am I?’

In his article ‘Vedanta and Science – Human Life and Evolution of Consciousness’,⁵ Dr TD Singh, director, Bhaktivedanta Institute, states, ‘Inquiry, *jignasa*, is the fundamental quality of life. Everyone inquires about something or other... Srila Prabhupada says that unless a person is awakened to the position of questioning his sufferings, he is not to be considered a perfect human being. Humanity begins when this sort of inquiry is awakened in one’s mind... Can a bird inquire about the meaning of its existence? Innocent and ordinary living beings like birds and animals inquire only of bodily needs.... However they do not have the capacity to inquire about the deeper purpose and meaning of life. But in the human form of life, one is endowed with the unique ability to inquire beyond these bodily needs... human beings can make different levels of inquiry including the deeper questions about life.’

The learned people of the land say that the world can be divided into two aspects – objects (*Kshetra*) and subject (*Kshetrajna*). Objects include all those that can be known or seen; subject is the one who is the knower/seer of these objects. The object and the subject are not the same.

I see the sea. I am also aware of the fact that I (the subject) am not the sea (the object). I see the flower. I am also aware that I (the subject) am not the flower (the object). I know that Gandhiji was born in Porbandar. Here too, I, the subject, is different from the knowledge. Thus, the thing which is seen/known is different from the seer/knower. We can thus infer that objects that are known/ seen are not ‘I’.

Then, who am I? Am I the sense organs? I am not the tongue, eyes, ear, nose, skin. I am not the reproductive organs; I am not the excretory organs. Why? Because I know about them – I know that my legs are paining, I know that my ears are sharp, I know that my skin is itching, etc. Thus, I am different from my sense organs.

Then, who am I? Am I the mind? At times we say, ‘I think and hence I exist’. Thinking is a process. We know when we are thinking. Thus, I am not the thought too. I know the states of my mind – like feeling pleasure, suffering, excitement, sadness, moodiness etc. Then the mind is also the object of my knowledge. Hence, I am not the mind.

If I am not the mind, then who am I? Am I the intellect? We are aware of situations where we did not use our intellect. We are also aware of situations where we used our intellect as our guide. Thus I know the intellect. The knower and the known being different, I am different from the intellect.

I am not the sense organs, I am not the mind, I am not the intellect, I am not the other objects in the world. Everything we see or know in the world is different from I. Then who am I?

To continue with the journey of understanding who we are, let us consider the following paragraph from *Man Management: The Gita of Management*:⁶

‘...This *atma* drives the various senses of the body. He is the master of the body, but not the body. Normally, we all feel that we are the body. First, we have to ask or tell ourselves. This is my body, this is my mind, this is my *buddhi* (intellect) but I am separate from my mind, body and *buddhi*. In this process, you have to inquire, “Who am I?” Only then will you realise who

⁵‘Vedanta and Science – Human Life and Evolution of Consciousness’, TD Singh, *Savijnanam*, 2002

⁶*Man Management: The Gita of Management*, Sri Satya Sai Students and Staff Welfare Society, 2005. Excerpts used with permission.

you are. Now you ask who am I? You will say, "I am Srinivas." Who named you Srinivas? Your parents named you: on the 12th day they called you Srinivas, Rama, Krishna, or Govinda. What about the first 12 days before the names have been given since the body has been born. So, *atma* is neither born nor dead. All these thoughts have to be explored well. In this way if you train your children to enquire, a certain growth in their intelligence will be seen.'

Scriptures of this land speak about three states of life: (1) The waking state; (2) The dream state during sleep; and (3) The deep sleep state. In the waking state our sense organs are active; our mind is active. However, in the dream state, our sense organs are inactive, yet the mind is functional. Eyes are closed, but still we see dreams. In the dreams, we taste saltiness though the tongue is inactive. We hear many sounds in our dreams, though our ear is inactive. Now, in the deep sleep state even the activities of mind are sublimated. We do not see any dreams during this phase of sleep. We are not affected by emotions of fear, excitement, etc. during this state of sleep. In the deep sleep state, knowledge of everything remains absent. But then, people who wake up from such state says, 'I slept well'. If knowledge of everything remained absent, then how did that person gained the knowledge that he/she slept well? What registered this knowledge?

'Who are You?'

Adi Shankaracharya, who mastered all the four *Vedas* by the age of eight, travelled towards the northern part of India in search of a teacher. On the banks of the river Narmada, Shankara met Govinda Bhagavatpada, who asked Shankara about his identity. The reply, which is referred to as *Nirvana Shatakam*, went thus:

*Mano Buddhi Ahankara Chitta Ninaham
Nacha Shrotra Jihve Na Cha Ghrana Netre
Nacha Vyoma Bhoomir Na Tejo Na Vayu
Chidananda Rupa Shivoham Shivoham*

Translation:

I am not mind, nor intellect, nor ego,
nor the reflections of inner self
I am not the five senses.
I am beyond that.
I am not the ether, nor the earth,
nor the fire, nor the wind
I am indeed,
That eternal knowing and bliss, Shiva,
love and pure consciousness.

*Na Cha Prana Sangyo Na Vai Pancha Vayu
Na Vaa Sapta dhatur Na Vaa Pancha Koshah
Na Vak Pani Padam Na Chopastha Payu
Chidananda Rupa Shivoham Shivoham*



A statue of Adi Shankaracharya⁷

⁷Image source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Adi_Shankara_Statue.jpg; accessed on February 10, 2010

Translation:

Neither can I be termed as energy,
 nor five types of breath,
 nor the seven material essences,
 nor the five coverings.
 Neither am I the five instruments of elimination,
 procreation, motion, grasping, or speaking.
 I am indeed,
 That eternal knowing and bliss, Shiva,
 love and pure consciousness.

*Na Me Dvesha Ragau Na Me Lobha Mohau
 Mado Naiva Me Naiva Maatsarya Bhavah
 Na Dharmo Na Chartho Na Kamo Na Mokshah
 Chidananda Rupa Shivoham Shivoham*



To you it was shown, that you might know that the LORD Himself is God; there is none other besides Him....Therefore know this day, and consider it in your heart, that the LORD Himself is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other.

Source: Deuteronomy, Chapter 4, (pg.35, 39)

Translation:

I have no hatred or dislike,
 nor affiliation or liking,
 nor greed,
 nor delusion,
 nor pride or haughtiness,
 nor feelings of envy or jealousy.

I have no duty,
 nor any money,
 nor any desire,
 nor even liberation.
 I am indeed,
 That eternal knowing and bliss, Shiva,
 love and pure consciousness.

*Na Punyam Na Papam Na Saukhyam Na Dukham
 Na Mantra Na Teertham Na Veda Na Yajna
 Aham Bhojanam Naiva Bhojyam Na Bhokta
 Chidananda Rupa Shivoham Shivoham*

Translation:

I have neither merit,
 nor demerit.

I do not commit sins or good deeds,
nor have happiness or sorrow,
pain or pleasure.
I do not need mantras, holy places,
scriptures, rituals or sacrifices.
I am none of the triad of
the observer or one who experiences,
the process of observing or experiencing,
or any object being observed or experienced.
I am indeed,
That eternal knowing and bliss, Shiva,
love and pure consciousness.

*Na Mrityu Na Shanka Na Me Jati Bhedah
Pita Naiva Me Naiva Mata Na Janma
Na Bandhur Na Mitram Gurur Naiva Shishyah
Chidananda Rupa Shivoham Shivoham*

Translation:

I do not have fear of death,
as I do not have death.
I have no separation from my true self,
no doubt about my existence,
nor have I discrimination on the basis of birth.
I have no father or mother,
nor did I have a birth.
I am not the relative,
nor the friend,
nor the guru,
nor the disciple.
I am indeed,
That eternal knowing and bliss, Shiva,
love and pure consciousness.

*Aham Nirvikalpo Nirakara Roopo
Vibhut Vaakhya Sarvatra Sarvendriyanam
Sada Me Samatvam Na Mukthir Na Bandhah
Chidananda Rupa Shivoham Shivoham*

Translation:

I am all pervasive.
I am without any attributes,
and without any form.
I have neither attachment to the world,
nor to liberation.



What can I do, Submitters to God? I do not know myself.

I am neither Christian nor Jew, neither
Zoroastrian nor Muslim,
I am not from east or west, not from land or sea,
not from the shafts of nature nor from the
spheres of the firmament,
not of the earth, not of water, not of air, not of
fire.
I am not from the highest heaven, not from this
world,
not from existence, not from being.
I am not from India, not from China, not from
Bulgar, not from Saqsin,
not from the realm of the two Iraqs, not from the
land of Khurasan
I am not from the world, not from beyond,
not from heaven and not from hell.
I am not from Adam, not from Eve, not from
paradise and not from Ridwan.
My place is placeless, my trace is traceless,
no body, no soul, I am from the soul of souls.
I have chased out duality, lived the two worlds
as one.
One I seek, one I know, one I see, one I call.
He is the first, he is the last, he is the outer, he
is the inner.
Beyond "He" and "He is" I know no other.
I am drunk from the cup of love, the two worlds
have escaped me.
I have no concern but carouse and rapture.
If one day in my life I spend a moment without
you
from that hour and that time I would repent my
life.
If one day I am given a moment in solitude with
you
I will trample the two worlds underfoot and dance
forever.
O Sun of Tabriz (Shams Tabrizi), I am so tipsy
here in this world,
I have no tale to tell but tipsiness and rapture.
*Mawlānā Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Balkhī (Jalāl
ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī), a Persian mystic,
theologian and Islamic jurist who lived in the
13th-century.*

I have no wishes for anything
 because I am everything,
 everywhere,
 every time,
 always in equilibrium.
 I am indeed,
 That eternal knowing and bliss, Shiva,
 love and pure consciousness.

While these lyrics present the highest flights of Indian philosophy, there is also a tale that draws caution. The story goes that a disciple of Shankaracharya started using *Shivoham* ('I am Shiva'), in a routine manner, without being aware of its essence. Once, Shankaracharya, along with the disciple, visited a blacksmith's house. There, Shankaracharya drank a tumbler of molten iron. When the *acharya* (teacher) asked his disciple to do the same, the latter was unable to do so. The *acharya* counselled that, for himself, there is no difference between molten iron or ice cold water because he had realised that he was no different from Lord Shiva. Whereas, for the disciple, who had been chanting 'Shivoham' it may not be appropriate till a time that he had attained that same state of being.

The *Taittiriya Upanishad* (1.11) includes an invocation by the teacher to the student when the student 'graduates' from the center of learning and is about to enter the role of a householder.

Having taught the *Veda*, the teacher exhorts the pupil,

'*Satyam vada, Dharmam chara...*'

Meaning, Speak the truth; practice righteousness...

'From study swerve thou not. Having offered dear wealth to the teacher, cut thou not the progeny's line.' Do not deviate from the truth. Do not deviate from *dharma*. Do not neglect personal welfare. Do not neglect prosperity. Do not neglect learning and teaching, nor from duties to gods and manes. Treat your mother as god; treat your father as god; treat your teacher as god; treat your guests as god. Resort to only those works that are free from fault, not others. Respect the wise. Whatever is given should be given with faith, not without faith, with joy, with modesty, with kindness. If there should be any doubt with regard to any sacred act or with regard to conduct, behave as the wise men do, the wise men who are thoughtful, zealous, well-versed, not cruel, desirous of righteousness. This is the direction; this is the advice; this is the true purport of the scriptures; this is the command; thus should you observe; thus should this be observed.

This invocation reflects the objective of the ancient Indian educational system – to imbue students with universal values and to sensitise them to duties and responsibilities. Furthermore, it suggests the importance of leading a life that is an example for others. While the student can be imparted the knowledge to discriminate between the moral and the immoral, such a process need not guarantee that the student will choose the good. Mere knowledge of what is virtue and what is not does not enable an individual to be virtuous.⁸ This brings into focus the need to have role models who have reached

⁸'Holistic Personality Development through Education: Ancient Indian Cultural Experiences', C Panduranga Bhatta,, at the Conference on 'Exploring Cultural Perspectives in Education', 2007

the pinnacles of character development. Ideally, teachers should be in that state of existence. Like the sculptor who turns an ordinary rock into a masterpiece of art, beauty and inspiration, through a persistent and devoted effort of chiseling and engraving, it is the teacher who transforms ordinary students to those who can perform extraordinary feats. No wonder, in India, the teacher is known as *guru*. *Gu* stands for *gunaatheetha* (one who transcends the three *gunas*⁹) and *Ru* for *rupavarjita* (one who is formless). Also, *Gu* means darkness, the darkness of ignorance; *Ru* means to remove – therefore, *guru* is one who dispels the darkness of ignorance.

THE NATURE OF MIND

Come to think, while there may be those students who never did any such thing, there are those students who have bunked classes, been late, procrastinated on assignments, studies, etc.

Have you ever wondered what will happen if, like us:

- A. The earth decides that it will go on a *hartal* by stopping its rotation for a minute?
- B. The sun decides that it will engage in a ‘go slow’ strike by coming late for two hours, every day for a week?

These questions may have spurred you to have numerous thoughts. Where are these thoughts coming from? Have you asked yourself the question, ‘What is mind?’...

The secular scientists studied the outer field of material objects while the religious investigators looked into the field of the one who experiences these material objects and the experience. It is obvious that both the external and the internal worlds have to be prepared properly to eke out happy experiences in life. We are able to know the condition of our physical body by looking at it or by looking into a mirror. When anything goes wrong, we recognise the faults and set them right before further deterioration. When the organs are defective, we consult a doctor to diagnose and cure the malaise.

It is difficult for an individual to recognise the defects of the inner equipment of the mind and intellect. Many are even ignorant about the existence of such equipment. The mind is the seat of impulses. Animals also possess a mind. When animals come in contact with the world, impulses or feelings are generated in their minds and these are straightaway manifested in their respective actions. Thus, when we pull a dog by its tail, it generates the feeling of anger, which is expressed by barking or biting. The dog does not have the capacity to judge and determine the intention behind our actions.

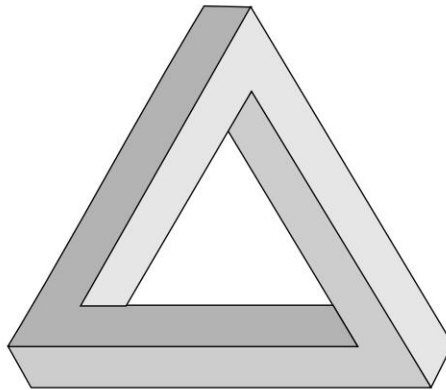
The faculty of discrimination, this power of judgment, this capacity to discern what is right and what is wrong, what is to be done and what is to be avoided, is the function of the intellect. The dignity and culture of mankind lie in the exercise of this faculty and when it is neglected, man is bound to deteriorate to the status of an animal and suffer the consequences. Animals have a mind but not a fully developed intellect. Man has a mind and an intellect that can develop to its full potential. Developing the potential of intellect becomes a necessity when we understand that the impulses we receive through the senses are fragile. Figures 6.1, 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4 present a dilemma about reality.

⁹Explained later in the chapter

Figure 6.1 Which is the building, which is the shadow?¹⁰



Figure 6.2 Penrose triangle¹¹



¹⁰Image source: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/cpstorm/151540983/>; accessed on February 10, 2010

¹¹Image source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Penrose_triangle.png; accessed on July 17, 2010

Figure 6.3 *Static circles or dynamic circles? Move your face closer to the black dot in the centre...¹²*

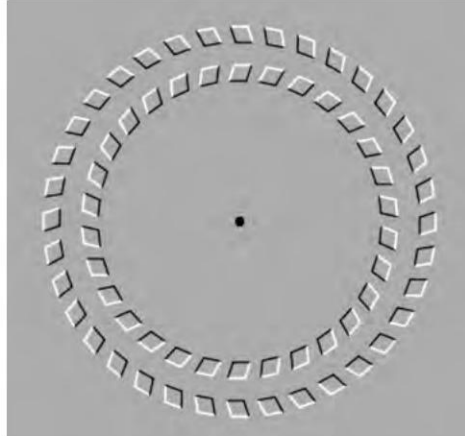


Figure 6.4 *A young girl or an old lady?¹³*



¹²Image source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Revolving_circles.svg; accessed on February 10, 2010

¹³Image source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:My_Wife_and_My_Mother-In-Law_%28Hill%29.svg; accessed on February 10, 2010

These four figures depict illusory effects, clearly indicating that the sense organs have limitations. All the impulses about the external world are received through these senses. In such a context, it becomes more important that the intellect is developed to its potential. The students of various philosophies studied the nature of mind. Scriptures from Bharat suggested that the mind comprises four functional attributes:

1. *Manas* – The functional aspect which is always in doubt and confusion. Evolved people used to refer to this aspect as the ‘monkey mind’;
2. *Buddhi* – Refers to intellect (perceptive intelligence);
3. *Antahkarana* – The source of ego, ‘I’ feeling; and
4. *Chitta* – The part where memory exists; impressions are created here.

The mind is the one that creates diversity, whereas *buddhi* brings about unity. When we take 2½ meters of cloth to the tailor to stitch a shirt, he cuts it into different pieces with the scissors and then uses a needle to stitch the pieces into a shirt. The mind is like the scissors that creates diversity, whereas *buddhi* (intellect) is the needle used to bring about the unity.¹⁴

Swami Vivekananda writes¹⁵,

‘How hard it is to control the mind! Well has it been compared to the maddened monkey. There was a monkey, restless by his own nature, as all monkeys are. As if that were not enough someone made him drink freely of wine, so that he became still more restless. Then a scorpion stung him. When a man is stung by a scorpion, he jumps about for a whole day; so the poor monkey found his condition worse than ever. To complete his misery a demon entered into him. What language can describe the uncontrollable restlessness of that monkey? The human mind is like that monkey, incessantly active by its own nature; then it becomes drunk with the wine of desire, thus increasing its turbulence. After desire takes possession comes the sting of the scorpion of jealousy at the success of others, and last of all the demon of pride enters the mind, making it think itself of all importance. How hard to control such a mind!’

Now, moving on to the thoughts of Philip Budin, CEO of Royaltons (USA):

‘I think that part of going back into business in 1981 was interacting with business people who were not necessarily on a spiritual path at the time we interacted. But after meeting me, a lot of them came to me for help and asked me to teach them how to meditate and how to do this and that. I started doing this, and I began to feel uncomfortable about it. So I told my spiritual teacher what was happening and asked him about it. He said, “Yes, continue to teach them. More will come.”

So maybe this is part of the reason why my spiritual teacher sent me back into business, I don’t know. But I do know that a whole lot of people are interested in learning how to meditate and are interested in learning how to be calm. It’s totally alien to them, and when they interact with me they get high. I’m not doing it; they’re just quieting down and feeling the calm.

¹⁴ *Man Management: The Gita of Management*, Sri Satya Sai Students and Staff Welfare Society, Prasanti Nilayam, 2005, Excerpts used with permission

¹⁵ *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol.1 (Raja Yoga, Chapter 6), Pratyahara and Dharana

When someone comes to me, meditation is the primary path that I recommend to them. The meditation I teach to others is to follow their breath and see how long they can do that before a thought comes in. As soon as they realise they can't do this for more than 2 or 3 seconds, they become quite surprised and upset. They become especially upset when I ask them, 'If you are not controlling your mind, then who is?' It's a great question and is one that really blew me away. When I tried to focus on something years ago, I couldn't do it. That's when I asked, "If I'm not controlling my mind, then who the heck is?" That was a scary thought, at least to me. So when I am talking to people who are running companies and are in high profile positions and ask them this question, it makes them crazy. Some of them will run away and some of them will really work on it. Either way it is okay with me.'¹⁶

Students of Indian philosophy learn that an agitated mind results in sorrow while a tranquil mind results in joy. This can be inferred from the world around us. While there are many millionaires who live in palatial apartments and have access to the best that the world can offer, how many of them are still happy about their lives? Some continue to mourn about their lives. On the contrary, village farmers who do not have much material wealth lead satisfied lives and find enjoyment in simple pleasures. So what is the source of that happiness? Is it the availability of material wealth?



Saha nāv avatu,
saha nau bhunaktu,
saha vīryam karavāvahai,
te jasvināḥ adhitam astu,
mā vidvisāvahai,
Aum, Santih, Santih, Santih.

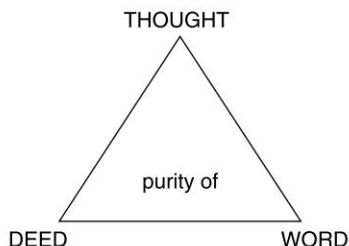
Translation:

May the Supreme Truth protect us both--Guru and Sishya
May we together experience the bliss of Truth:
May we create a channel of divine energy;
May we be endowed with the lustre of wisdom.
May there be no discordance between us.
Aum, Peace, Peace, Peace.

Source: *Taittiriya Upanishad*. II.I Invocation

Bunty told Bubbly, 'I like Black Forest cake.' Bubbly responded, 'I don't like it at all.' Some students have a fondness for pastry, they derive pleasure and joy in eating it. Then there are those students who do not like even the sight of pastries. Though pastries taste the same, some enjoy eating it while others were averse to the very thought. Ditto, for coffee or juice – while some prefer it, others dislike it, although the product tastes the same to all.

¹⁶Quotations extracted from the public knowledge base of the 'Spiritual Based Leadership Research Programme' are © 2006 by the Global Dharma Center (GDC). GDC retains the copyright to all excerpts from this knowledge base.

Exhibit 6.1 The purity and unity of thought, word and deed (Trikarana shuddhi)

This indicates that what is internal to us has a strong role in contributing to the pleasure and joy that we feel. So, who contributed to that pleasure and joy? The mind contributed to the pleasure and joy. Seers suggest that the goal is to master the mind. Once that art is learned, human beings will not find it enticing to pursue external objects in search of peace/happiness. Many rituals of the Indian ethos are designed to take human beings to the zenith of her/his existence, through the purity and unity of thought, word and deed (*Trikarana shuddhi*) (refer Exhibit 6.1). Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi said, 'It is the nature of water to flow downwards, but the sun's rays lift it up towards the sky. Likewise it is the very nature of the mind to go to lower things, to objects of enjoyment, but the grace of God can make the mind move towards higher objects.'¹⁷

Any action has the tendency to imprint/condition the mind and induces a person to repeat the action whenever the opportunity arises. This mark/impression, with the possibility of reappearing, is referred to as *sanskara*. Every thought, word or deed leaves an impression on the mind. Our personality at this moment is determined by the summation of these impressions. The summation of impressions contributes to the character of an individual.

PERSONALITY ATTRIBUTES BASED ON THREE GUNAS

The *Bhagavad Gita* speaks about three qualities of the mind: *Sattva guna*, *Rajo guna* and *Tamo guna* (*sattva*, *rajas*, *tamas*) (refer Exhibit 6.2). Sri Aurobindo says, '*Sattwa* is the force of equilibrium and translates in quality as good and harmony and happiness and light; *Rajas* is the force of kinesis and translates in quality as struggle and effort, passion and action; *Tamas* is the force of inconscience and inertia and translates in quality as obscurity and incapacity and inaction. Ordinarily used for psychological self-analysis, these distinctions are valid also in physical Nature. Each thing and every existence in the lower prakriti contains them and its process and dynamic form are the result of the interaction of these qualitative powers.'¹⁸ Each of us is a combination of these three *gunas*; they are not water-tight compartments. Based on the predominance of the personal characteristics, one's personality type can be determined. It is possible, by effort, that one can move up from *Tamas* to *Rajas* and from *Rajas* to *Sattva*. The journey is about moving towards the more subtle – moving towards the origin or source where the individual came from.

¹⁷The Holy Mother – Her Teaching and Conversations, Swami Nikhilananda, Sri Sarada Devi, Skylight Paths Publishing, 2009

¹⁸The Synthesis of Yoga, Sri Aurobindo, Aurobindo Ashram Trust, 1996

Exhibit 6.2 Characteristics of the three *gunas*

<i>Propensities</i>	<i>Sattvic</i>	<i>Rajasic</i>	<i>Tamasic</i>
Amount of stress	Least stress	Maximum stress	No stress
Nature	Wisdom and happiness	Action and desire	Ignorance and laziness
Goal in life	Enlightenment	Accomplishments	Comfort
Effect	Peace	Pain	Distress
Food	Vegetables/fruits	Animal products	Old/ junk food
Sacrifice	As a duty	For results	For wrong purposes
Austerity	For purity	For recognition	As self-torture
Speech	Sweet and truthful	Clever and manipulating	Harsh and deceptive
State of mind	Peaceful	Agitated	Tormented
Charity	For the right cause	For fame	To the unworthy
Motive for renunciation	For higher knowledge	For freedom from sorrow	For freedom from fear
Religious vision	God in all	God in some form	No god
Power of reasoning	Calm and clean	Disturbed by desires	Perverse and distorted
Source of joy	The greater good	Pleasure of the senses	Chaos and pain
Work	Steady and leisurely	Spasmodic and workaholic	Lazy, indifference and procrastinate
Mode of action	Without attachment	With lot of effort	Causing harm
Motive of action	Universal wellbeing	Selfish attachment	Stupidity and despair
Commitment	To organisational goals, shared values and higher performance	To ego, name, fame and power	To bad habits, rumour and sleep
Care	Sensitive to others needs, Understand feeling	Honour, protective to subordinates	Slavish, imprudent
Reason	Subtle, discerning and harmonious	Sharp, quick, aggressive and decisive	Faulty and stubborn
Self expression	Refined and elegant	Impassioned	Vulgar and distorted
Passion	To altruistic ideals. To do good. To be good.	To fight, argue, to prove a point	Mullish and suicidal easily swayed
Energy level	Intellectual	Passionate	Physical

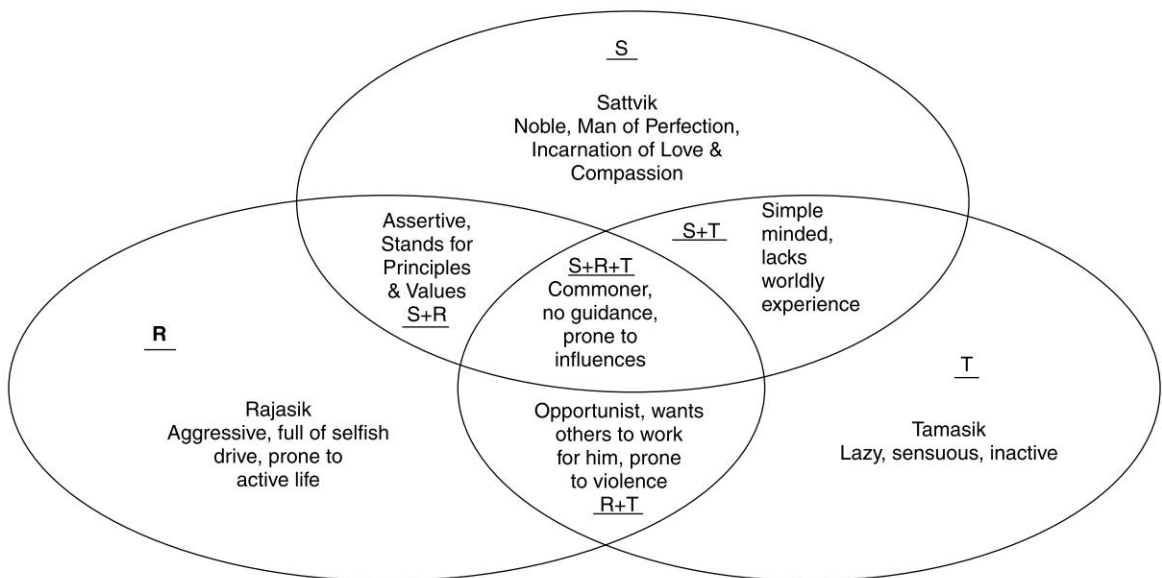
Anand Pillai, head of the Learning and Development Department, HCL Technologies (India) talks about his journey:

‘I would go to church and feel such love for mankind, but then I came home and hated my neighbour next door. I decided that I just couldn’t keep living a life like that back and forth. Then I went to a conference where they were talking about *Practising the Presence of God*, a book written by a Catholic priest. The priest shares in the book how he just talks to god – how it was a normal part of his life throughout the day. The people at the conference also talked about the pursuit of holiness in their everyday lives. In all of this I realised that I could live a better life just by being deeply spiritual. I don’t have to have some external form of spirituality; I can actually put that spirituality to work in my everyday life.

The *Bible* clearly shows us that everything necessary for life and godliness is given to us. We just have to “be” and go back and connect to the source. For example, if some electronic equipment is not working, then I go back to its instruction manual. When that too does not explain what I want it to explain, then I go back to the manufacturer. If I as a human being am not functioning well, then I go back to the manual, the *Bible*. If I don’t understand the *Bible*, then I will go back to the manufacturer, god’ (refer to Footnote #18).

Exhibits 6.3, 6.4 and 6.5 are illustrations¹⁹ of the personality model suggested by Swami Ishwarananda from Chinamaya Mission. This model incorporates the three modes of mind – *Sattvik*, *Rajaksik*, *Tamasik*.

Exhibit 6.3 Three modes of the mind – *Sattvik*, *Rajasik*, and *Tamasik*



¹⁹© Swami Ishwarananda, Chinmaya Mission. Images used with permission.



Did God put animals here for our use?

Adam's 'dominion' over animals (Gen.1:26, 28), we believe, conveys sacred stewardship, since God immediately afterward prescribed a vegetarian diet (1:29–30) in a world God found 'very good' (1:31). Created in God's image of love (1 John 4:4), we are called to be caretakers of God's Creation, not tyrants over God's creatures.

Genesis 1:21–22 relates that, before God created humanity, God regarded the animals 'good' and blessed them. Further evidence that we should consider animals as inherently valuable comes from Genesis 2:18–19, which indicates that God made animals as Adam's helpers and companions: 'Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." So out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them...' (RSV). Adam named the animals, which we believe shows concern and friendship. We don't name the animals we eat.

God endowed pigs, cattle, sheep, and all farmed animals with their own desires and needs, which is apparent when these animals are given an opportunity to enjoy life. For example, pigs are as curious, social, and intelligent as cats or dogs. Pigs can even play some video games better than monkeys. Similarly, chickens enjoy one another's company and like to play, dust bathe, and forage for food. Jesus compared his love for us to a hen's love for her chicks (Luke 13:34).

Source: From *Are we good stewards of God's creation?*, published by the Christian Vegetarian Association (www.all-creatures.org/cva/honoring.htm; accessed on April 28, 2010)

Exhibit 6.4

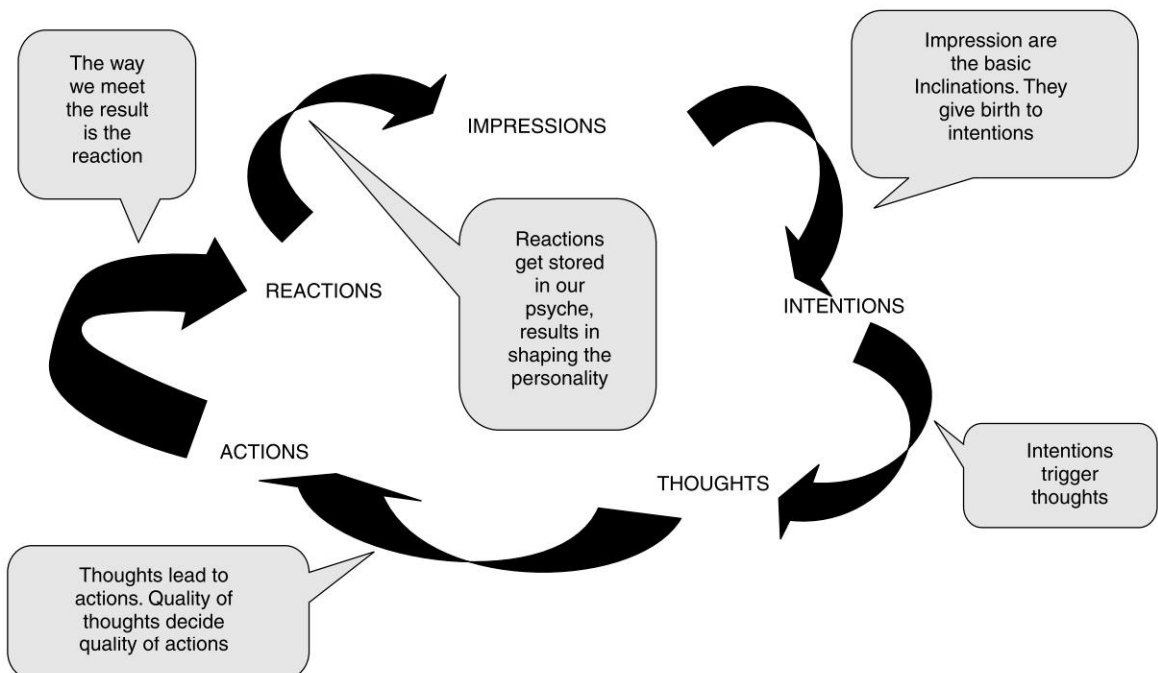
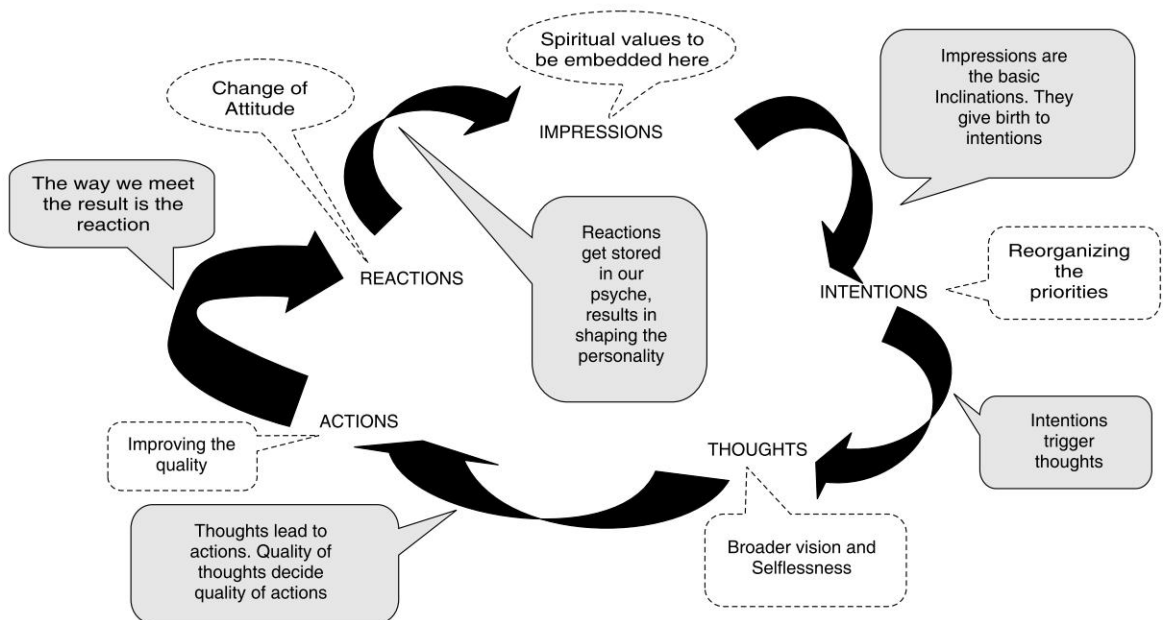


Exhibit 6.5

PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS: METHODS TO ALTER ONE'S GUNA COMPOSITION IN THE POSITIVE DIRECTION

Sri Satya Sai Baba says:

‘When you go to the market, you cannot get anything without paying its price. Likewise, you cannot attain divine grace unless you offer your love to god, who in turn would shower his grace on you. With surrender, you have to offer all your wicked qualities and wicked thoughts to god and receive sacred qualities and sacred thoughts in return. Just as a damaged currency note is accepted only by the Reserve Bank of India, similarly your polluted mind and heart will be transformed to good when offered to God.’²⁰

1. Food

As per Ayurveda, *Agni* (root of the English word ‘ignite’) or ‘digestive fire’ is responsible for absorbing the nutrients and essential elements required by the body, and also for burning the waste. Ayurveda states that strong *agni* leads to our wellbeing while a weak *agni* leads to *ama* or toxic residue in our cells. *Ojas*, the subtle substance extracted from digested food, brings clarity to mind, sustains the physical body and balances our emotions. In order to promote the creation and flow of *ojas* through the body, Ayurveda recommends a diet focused on *Sattvic* food, which the body can

²⁰ *Man Management*, Sri Satya Sai Baba.

easily digest. This diet includes organic milk, rice, fruits, sesame, almonds, etc. It is difficult and sometimes impossible to create *ojas* from processed food items (canned, frozen, reheated), leftovers (old or stale food), meat, poultry, fish, fried, oily foods, cheese, and foods that are excessively sour or salty. Moreover, consuming alcohol and smoking cigarettes destroys *ojas*. Hence, maintaining a diet that produce maximum *ojas* will help in creating an evolved body and mind. Actions disrupting the digestive fire include eating too fast, overeating, lack of attention towards food while eating (e.g. eating while watching TV, chatting, etc.), immoral emotions and actions, eating when upset, etc.

Bhagavad Gita suggests that one should migrate to those foods which are wholesome and pleasing to the heart. Foods that are too bitter, too sour, salty, hot, pungent, dry and burning can cause distress, misery and disease. And, food prepared more than three hours before being eaten, food that is decomposed and putrid, is dear only to those in the mode of darkness.

Ricardo Levy, CEO, Catalytica Energy Systems, (USA) shares thus:

‘I think that longing and belonging are two of the most important concepts. Our longings are windows into our spirituality. In a sense they are interlinked with two aspects of belonging: love and compassion. It’s all a marvellous intertwining circle. One of my favourite quotes from Abraham Joshua Heschel is: Needs are spiritual opportunities. I find this so true, just as longings are also opportunities for us to learn about our spirituality.’

Another, slightly longer quote, from the Hindu book *Will I be the Hero of My Own Life?*, expresses the same concept about needs:

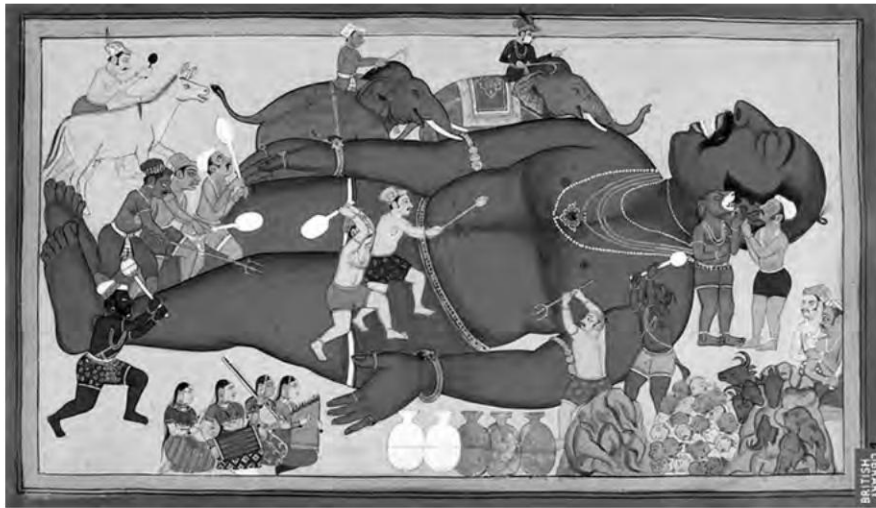
‘We are such creatures of wants that even simple things like being hungry set up an intense inner vibration from which our mechanism speaks. Generally speaking we then just want to respond to that vibration to feed the system. Rarely do we take the time to observe the nature of the vibration itself. We do not use the hunger as an opportunity to understand our own essence and the dynamics at work in us. We don’t let the vibration intensify and change to reveal its subtler component. Were we to do so, we would begin to recognise the nature of wanting itself, independent of its particular form.’ (refer to Footnote #16).

Holy books like *The Bible* promote a sentient diet. A vegetarian diet is in alignment with the central biblical principle of stewardship. To cite an extract from *Are We Good Stewards of God’s Creation?*²¹: ‘In Eden, all creatures lived peacefully, and God told both humans and animals to consume only plant foods (Genesis 1:29–31). Several prophecies, such as Isaiah 11:6–9, foresee a return to this vegetarian world, where the wolf, lamb, lion, cow, bear, snake, and little child all coexist peacefully.’ Many Christians believe that one should strive towards the harmonious world Isaiah envisioned, to try to live in accordance with the prayer that Jesus taught, ‘Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven’ (Matt. 6:10).

The *Bible* includes an incident that occurred after the resurrection of Jesus Christ; here is a quote from the *Amplified Bible*:

‘And behold, that very day two of [the disciples] were going to a village called Emmaus, [which is] about seven miles from Jerusalem.

²¹www.all-creatures.org/cva/AWGSgc-Mar07.pdf; accessed on April 28, 2010



*Waking up Kumbhakarna, the brother of Ravana, the king of Lanka. Kumbhakarna is the representation of Tamo guna while Ravana and Vibhishana represent Rajasic and Sattwic gunas respectively.*²²

And they were talking with each other about all these things that had occurred.

And while they were conversing and discussing together, Jesus Himself caught up with them and was already accompanying them.

But their eyes were held, so that they did not recognise Him....

....Then they drew near the village to which they were going, and He acted as if He would go further.

But they urged and insisted, saying to Him, Remain with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is now far spent. So He went in to stay with them.

And it occurred that as He reclined at table with them, He took [a loaf of] bread and praised [God] and gave thanks and asked a blessing, and then broke it and was giving it to them.

When their eyes were [instantly] opened and they [clearly] recognised Him, and He vanished ([i]departed invisibly).²³

~ Luke 24: 13-16, 28-31

The Bible does not say what caused his disciples to recognise him. Could it be the unique way in which Jesus broke the bread, a way that nobody else can imitate? An embodiment of divine sees divinity in everything. The way Jesus broke the bread could be incomparable; he would have done so with utmost respect, reverence and prayerfulness, as if the bread was in itself his Father.

A holistic diet helps at a grosser level too. Research suggests that vegetarianism plays a vital role in facilitating spiritually sustainable behavior (Y Narayanan and D Marinova 2006).²³ Dr RK

²²Image source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Waking_up_Kumbhakarna.jpg; accessed on February 10, 2010

²³*Sharing Wisdom for Our Future: Environmental Education in Action*, S Wooltorton and D Marinova (Eds), Proceedings of the 2006 Conference of the Australian Association of Environmental Education

Pachauri, chairman, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, states, 'In my view an important component of lifestyle changes relates to changes in diet, which in actual fact may bring about an improvement in human health. In the case of meat consumption, there are benefits not only to the individual who reduces consumption of meat, but clear advantages in terms of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.'²⁴ In his blog, 'Lifestyle Changes for A Healthy Planet', Pachauri explains how a vegetarian diet helps the planet.²⁵

2. *Satsang* or Communion

'All virtues are said to be natural to those
Who acquire character as a duty'

~ Thirukural 981²⁶

The company of holy thoughts, holy people and holy books help an individual to develop her/his character. There is a code – ABCDEFG – that is quite useful to a sincere aspirant. 'ABCDEFGF' stands for Avoid Bad Company, Don't Ever Forget God. The theory of Differential Association developed by Edwin Sutherland speaks about how an individual's interactions with others influence her/his learning of ethical and unethical behavior. As the saying goes, 'Show me your friends and I'll tell you who you are'.

Here is what Ashoke Maitra, director, HR, at the Times Foundation (Times of India group), says about *satsang*:

'When we have a reputation for being a good corporate citizen it reduces our costs. When we are seen as philanthropists, when we are seen as spiritual, when we are good to this world, our own costs go down. The image works as currency.'

When you first take the decision in life that you want to be good and that you want to do good to society, then the Master automatically comes and takes care. Your decision has to come first. Let the businessman take the decision to be good first and the rest will follow. He may not be spiritual in the first step; that may be the sixth step. But when he takes this first step, then energy will start flowing towards him. Let him start creating good vibes and good energy will flow.

In *Vedanta* it is said that the first step is *satsang*, which is to mix with good people. When you mix with good people, you start having good thoughts, which lead to good feelings and good actions. It is all about having the right company. When you take the decision to lead a pure life, then the right people come and that is the first step in spirituality.

To my mind spirituality is a process; it is a process of awakening. God is the source of spirituality and society makes us un-spiritual. Spirituality is only a going back to where we started. We go from purity to impurity in life and if consciousness dawns, then we go back to purity' (refer to Footnote #16.)

²⁴<http://blog.rkpachauri.org/blog/4/Lifestyle-Changes-for-A-Healthy-Planet.htm>

²⁵The blog states: 'An interesting comparison between a vegetarian meal and a beef steak, for instance, was provided by *The New York Times* (27 January 2008) which is revealing. A meal consisting of 1 cup of broccoli, 1 cup of eggplant, 4 ounces cauliflower and 8 ounces of rice results in 0.4 pounds of emissions of CO2 equivalent. On the other hand a 6 ounce beef steak results in 10 pounds of CO2 equivalent emissions, which amount to 25 times that of the vegetarian meal with which the comparison was made.'

²⁶As translated in *The Kural*, PS Sundaram, Penguin Books, 1990

Now, let us look into the life of André Delbecq, former dean, and professor and director of the Institute for Spirituality and Organisational Leadership at the Santa Clara University School of Business (USA), to see how he consciously makes an attempt to grow spiritually. Says he:

‘My first spiritual exercise begins at dawn. I am awakened every morning, much earlier than I would wish, by a four-legged exercise machine. So my first spiritual practice each day is to be accepting of my dog’s enthusiasm for dawn. No matter how tired I am, I take him for a morning walk. This requires discipline. It would be easy to be grumpy about Augustus’ delight in the dawn, but I’ve learned not to be grumpy. I just rise and begin a morning walk along San Francisco Bay with this wonderful English Mastiff. Then when I return, I read the newspaper, have a cup of coffee, and eat a light breakfast.

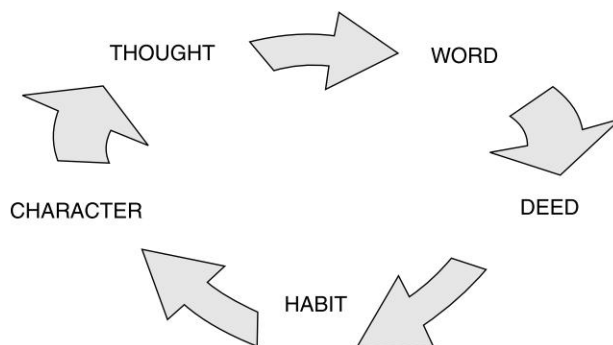
My second spiritual exercise (after accepting the needs of Augustus and walking mindfully) commences when my wife and I read together the Liturgy of the Hours, readings from the Psalms together with prayers and hymns. After praying with the Psalms, I spend twenty to thirty minutes in ‘apophatic centring prayer’. Centring prayer is Father Thomas Keating’s synopsis of a form of Christian meditative practice; it follows the spiritual text, *Cloud of Unknowing*. The form prescribes that the minute you are aware of a thought or a feeling, you detach from either as gently as a feather touching a pillow. Then you simply speak a sacred word as a sign of intention to remain open to the presence of the divine, letting go of the imposition of personal thought or feeling.

So my second regular prayer discipline consists of the Liturgy of the Hours reciting the Psalms morning (and evening) combined along with the centring prayer.

Outside of prayer, a third conscious practice is to carry mindfulness into the actions of my day. In the Christian tradition, there is the discipline referred to as ‘living in the presence of god’. Lawrence of the Resurrection spoke of the practice. It is the belief that one should commence each task conscious of God’s presence, much as a Buddhist seeks to enter each task “with a beginner’s mind”. The intent is to be fully present to the next task, to be fully present to the next person one meets, and to be present with purity of intention that by doing so the task or relationship is turned into prayer. For example, before I open my e-mail I remind myself that I need to be present to the people who are trying to communicate with me. Before I pick up the phone, I pause to be present to the person calling. Before I begin writing, I try to be present to the truth and beauty in the content and to be mindful of those I will never meet who will read the words.’ (refer to Footnote #16.)

The company of the holy also helps in refining one’s thoughts. Exhibit 6.6 indicates the connection among thought, word, deed, habit and character. Thoughts are manifested in the form of words and, further, through actions. Continuous sequence of a particular action soon becomes habit, which contributes to the character of an individual. The character further influences the occurrence of thoughts.

It can be said that our actions become wholesome only when our thoughts are wholesome. *Satsang* helps in achieving the latter. In *Lives of Saints*, the biographical account about Lord Buddha, written by Swami Sivananda, there is an incident in Buddha’s life that indicates the significance of the Holy Communion:

Exhibit 6.6 Connection among thought, word, deed, habit and character

‘Once, Buddha went to the house of a rich Brahmin with a bowl in hand. The Brahmin became very angry and said, “O *bhikshu*, why do you lead an idle life of wandering and begging? Is this not disgraceful? You have a well-built body. You can work. I plough and sow. I work in the fields and I earn my bread at the sweat of my brow. I lead a laborious life. It would be better if you also plough and sow and then you will have plenty of food to eat.” Buddha replied, “O Brahmin! I also plough and sow, and having ploughed and sown, I eat.” The Brahmin said, “You say you are an agriculturist. I do not see any sign of it. Where are your plough, bullocks and seeds?” Then Buddha replied, “O Brahmin! Just hear my words with attention. I sow the seed of faith. The good actions that I perform are the rain that waters the seeds. *Viveka* and *vairagya* are parts of my plough. Righteousness is the handle. Meditation is the goad. *Sama* and *dama* – tranquillity of the mind and restraint of the *indriyas* (senses) – are the bullocks. Thus I plough the soil of the mind and remove the weeds of doubt, delusion, fear, birth and death. The harvest that comes in is the immortal fruit of Nirvana. All sorrows terminate by this sort of ploughing and harvesting.” The rich arrogant Brahmin came to his senses. His eyes were opened. He prostrated at the feet of Buddha and became his lay adherent.’

The influence of holy company on an individual is prominent even in the advice of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. He says, ‘Pray to God with a longing heart. He will surely listen to your prayer if it is sincere. Perhaps he will direct you to holy men with whom you can keep company; and that will help you on your spiritual path. Perhaps someone will tell you, “Do this and you will attain God.”’²⁷

3. Seva or Service

Service has been an important aspect of all religious systems. *Sarbat dah phalla* or *Sarbat da bhala*, a Punjabi term that means ‘may everyone be blessed’ or ‘may good come to all’ is an important aspect of the Sikh philosophy. Some of the ways in which sincere practitioners of the Sikh religion

²⁷The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Nikhilananda, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Chennai, 2006

manifest this concept is by reaching out to serve others as an expression of devotion. For a Sikh, remembering gods's name (*simran*) and *seva* go together. Sikh religion sanctions *seva* through physical means (*tan*), mental apparatus (*man*), and material resources (*dhan*). *Guru Granth Sahib* explains that one should center one's awareness on *seva*.

Sri Sri Ravishankar says,

'Our first and foremost commitment is to do *seva* in the world. When you make the service your sole purpose in life, it eliminates fear, brings focus in your mind, purposefulness in action, and long-term joy. When we do *seva*, it brings naturalness and human values back in society, it helps in building a society that is free from fear and depression.'



An image of Mata Khivi serving at 'Guru ka Langar'²⁸

Significantly, as the power of intention to serve others grows, the availability of resources to engage in causes of greater common good will increase naturally, as will the individual's ability to withdraw from narrow desires. *Pravritti* (positive inclination) to serve others will increase only in proportion to the *nivritti* (disciplined withdrawal) from the impulse to serve the need of one's self (not Self).³⁰

The cultivation of respect and care towards all will happen when an individual is trained to keep her/his inner self free of pollution. The ancient *gurukul* system, where the student lived near the teacher was designed with this objective. In this system, students stayed together as equals. In addition to formal learning, they also performed other duties which developed their overall personality and confidence. The residential program, under the direct observation of the teacher, helped to create an environment conducive to learning. An incident that speaks about how an individual goes beyond mundane desires (which create inner pollution) and instead seeks the highest glory of life is depicted in the life of a young brave boy named Nachiketa.

The Meeting between Nachiketa and Yama

Katha Upanishad sets the stage for a dialogue between Nachiketa and Yama, the god of death and time. Nachiketa's father, Vahasravas, performs a *Viswajit* sacrifice where he gives away all his possessions. Vahasravas offers old and feeble cows as *dakshina* (present or tribute) to the priests for conducting the sacrifice. Nachiketa feels that his father would not gain any merit by giving away such cows. Further, his conviction leads him to conclude that, since his father had decided to give away all possessions, it also included his son. If the sacrifice had to be fruitful, his father would have to give away his son. Being a dutiful son, Nachiketa indirectly hints that he too should be given

²⁸Image source: www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Mata_Khivi; accessed on February 11, 2010

²⁹*Deccan Herald*, www.deccanherald.com/Content/Nov122007/city2007111235285.asp; accessed on June 1, 2009

³⁰SK Chakraborty, *Foundations of Managerial Work*, Himalaya Publishing House, 1989

away, and gifting him would be worthier than giving away the useless cattle. Initially, Vahasravas ignores the boy's prodding ('whom shall I be gifted to?') However, he is irritated when the boy persistently raises the same question thrice. Anger wells up in Vahasravas, and he comments that Nachiketa would be given away to Yama (the god of death).

Now, Nachiketa embarks on a journey to reach Yama. On reaching the abode of Yama, Nachiketa finds that Yama is away. He waits there patiently, for three days and nights, without food and sleep. When Yama returns, he is pleased with Nachiketa and offers him three boons. As the first boon, Nachiketa requests Yama that he be received with affection by his father and by the world upon his return to the world. Yama grants this boon and waits for the second request. Now, Nachiketa asks for knowledge about those practices that take one to heaven, the abode where there is no fear, no hunger, no thirst, no old age, etc. Yama grants him this knowledge too. Now Yama asks Nachiketa for the third boon. Nachiketa's third request is related to eternal truth. He requests Yama to explain the mystery behind death, and what happens after death. Yama evades this question saying that even gods have a doubt about this, and that it is a secretive, subtle and complex subject. Thus, he prods Nachiketa to ask for another boon. However, Nachiketa persists. Yama tests Nachiketa's qualifications to seek such wisdom. He offers Nachiketa all objects for an affluent life – wealth, kingdom, health, beautiful girls, etc. Nachiketa refuses to be enticed by any of these and thus wins the test. Thus impressed, Yama offers Nachiketa the highest knowledge.

It is remarkable that a boy has the maturity to discriminate (discern) between what is good and what seems/feels good. Nachiketa was able to discriminate that which is eternal from that which is short-lived. Wise men always focus on *sreyas* (that which is good) rather than *preyas* (that which seems/feels good). The pursuit of truth would lead to the ability to discern between that which is appropriate and that which is pleasing.³¹ In *Human Values and Ethics: Achieving Holistic Excellence*, SK Chakraborty speaks about two kinds of freedom: 'freedom of' and 'freedom from'. Furthermore, Rabindranath Tagore made a distinction between 'life of desires' and 'life of purpose'.

Francisco Roberto Canada, director and partner, Errepar S.A., Longseller S.A., Eco.Errepar S.A. and Deva's S.A., Ciudad de Buenos Aires (Argentina) shares his perspective³² that has much to do with the concept of *sreyas* and *preyas*:

'A concept from Buddhism and Hinduism, *dharma*, has had an enormous impact on my life. Ordinarily, this term is translated into 'right action' or 'acting righteously,' but to me this term is much more than these definitions imply. For me it really is all about responsibility. Given my nature, my wish to be silent, it is difficult for me to be a business leader, but my concept of dharma as responsibility has helped me a lot to understand my position as a leader. It has also helped me to make the difficult decisions I have had to make, such as those dealing with firing people.

Whenever we have to make a decision, and we don't do it in a dharmic way, in the long run it becomes obvious, that it was not the right way to decide and not the right decision to make. On some occasions we have had to refuse publishing a book if it did not align with our principles, even if the book would obviously sell many copies and give financial success to the company. The managers are very focused on earning money, and in many cases they have

³¹ 'Wisdom from Ancient Indian Philosophy for the Corporate World', Priya Rajeev, *International Management Review*, 2007

³² www.globaldharma.org/sbl-home.htm

proposed publications which were not *dharmic* – meaning in these cases that they would not inspire people to act in a proper way. Such books we have turned down.

In the beginning, this attitude sometimes created confusion, but little by little the employees understood that their work, and those affected by our work, was to lead them in the direction of spiritual growth. When we select a book for publication, we focus on quality, in the broad, spiritual sense of the word.’ (refer Footnote #16.)

Nowadays, as people are becoming more and more health-conscious, companies are introducing and promoting food products that are healthier. PepsiCo classifies their products under three categories: ‘Fun for you’, ‘Better for you’, and ‘Good for you’ products.³³ ‘Fun for you’ products include snacks sold under brands namely Doritos, Lays, Cheetos, etc. ‘Better for you’ products include Diet Pepsi, Pepsi Max (low in calories and sugar free), etc. ‘Good for you’ products include products like Quaker Oats and cereals, Tropicana juices and non-carbonated drinks under the Gatorade brand. The company aims to triple its revenues from the ‘Good for you’ segment by 2020.³⁴

PANCHA KOSHAS AND HUMAN VALUES

Vedanta speaks about the five sheaths – *Pancha Koshas* – that cover the *atma* (the self), and constitute the human being. Noa Belling said, ‘According to the *kosha* system in Yogic philosophy, the nature of being human encompasses physical and psychological aspects that function as one holistic system. The system refers to these different aspects as layers of subjective experience. Layers range from the dense physical body to the more subtle levels of emotions, mind and spirit. Psychology refers to the emotional, mental and spiritual aspects of our being. Together, all aspects make up our subjective experience of being alive.’³⁵

Enlisted here are the five sheaths, described from the grosser to the subtler:

1. *Annamaya kosha* or the sheath of physical self, named from the fact that it is nourished by food. This self undergoes changes and dies a physical death.
2. *Pranamaya kosha* or the sheath of vital air. *Prana* is the vital principle or the life-force that vitalises and holds together the body and the mind. As long as this vital principle exists in the organisms, life continues.
3. *Manomaya kosha* or the sheath of mind-stuff.
4. *Vijnanamaya kosha* or the sheath of intellect/wisdom.
5. *Anandamaya kosha* or the sheath of bliss. It is also referred to as the causal body or *karana sarira*.

When an individual says that she/he is affected by stress, it typically relates to the first three sheaths – *Annamaya kosha*, *Pranamaya kosha* and *Manomaya kosha*. One of the ways to stop the creation of stress is to focus on the subtler parts of the human body – *Vijnanamaya kosha* and *Anandamaya kosha*. As we focus on more subtle aspects and disassociate with the grosser aspects,

³³http://money.cnn.com/2010/04/27/news/companies/indra_nooyi_pepsico.fortune/, Accessed on July 17, 2010

³⁴http://money.cnn.com/2010/04/27/news/companies/indra_nooyi_pepsico.fortune/, Accessed on July 17, 2010

³⁵*Yoga for Ideal Weight and Shape*, Noa Belling, New Holland Publishers, 2006

stress ceases to be created. This does not mean that one should make the physical body suffer. The following words of Sri Sathya Sai Baba³⁶ will bring in more clarity about the sheaths:

‘The five values of truth, righteousness, peace, love and non-violence are related to different inner instruments of the body. The value of truth is expressed through speech or words. The value of righteousness is expressed through the body. This is related to the physical sheath. Peace can be experienced only in the mental plane. For *satya*, *dharma* and *shanti* one has to purify the instruments of speech, body and mind. Love comes out of the mental and bliss sheath. Non-violence comes from bliss sheath. Love (*prema*) flows as an undercurrent in all the inner instruments and purifies them. So all the five values are related to the five sheaths:

Shanti (peace) comes from *Manomaya kosha*

Satya (truth) comes from *Vijnanamaya kosha*

Dharma (duty) comes from *Annamaya kosha*

Prema (love) comes from *Praanamaya and Manomaya kosha*

Ahimsa (non-violence) comes from *Anandamaya kosha*

In these five sheaths are encased three types of bodies: physical (*sthoola*), subtle (*sookshma*) and causal (*kaarana*) *sharirars* (forms or bodies). *Annamaya kosha* represents the physical body. It is like the tyre of a lorry. If we increase the intake of food, it grows and the weight of the body increases. There is divinity in all the sheaths of the body. It is Constant Integrated Awareness in different forms in speech, action and feelings.’

Vedanta classifies existence into four states – the wakeful state or *jagrat*, the dream state or *swapna*, the deep sleep state or *sushupti*, and a state beyond these three – *turiya*. The physical body or *sthula sharira* is active in the wakeful state, the *sukshma sharira* or the subtle body operates in the dream state and the *karana sharira* or causal body operates in the state of deep sleep.

Sthoola sharira refers to *Annamaya kosha*. The *Pranamaya kosha*, the *Mano Maya kosha* and *Vignanamaya kosha* belonging to one body are called *Sukshma sharira*. *Sukshma Sharira* is the subtle body which constitutes the *jiva*. The *atma* or brahman resides in the *Karana sharira* (causal body), which is also the body of ignorance. It is so because it is not aware of itself. On account of this *Advidya* or *Karana* it is subject to rebirth. *Vedanta* says that during the time of death, one’s emotions and values are carried as *vasanas*, which influences the next birth. In the next birth, the psyche is built with the appropriate mix of *Trigunas* (the three *gunas*), based on the *vasanas* of its previous births.

Ashtanga Yoga

Through meditation, in the conventional sense of the word, one attempts to move beyond the thinking mind to a deeper state of awareness. Meditation has been a practice among many religions and is also practiced outside traditional religions. While some types of meditation focus on the field or background perception (mindfulness), others focus on a pre-selected specified object (concentrative meditation). According to Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, Ashtanga Yoga (eight limbs) consists of *Yama*,

³⁶12 April 1993

Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi. The first five are called external aids to Yoga (*Bahiranga Sadhana*). They are:

1. **Yama** refers to the five precepts of *ahimsa* (non-violence in thought, word and deed), *Satya* (truth, in thought, word and deed), *asteya* (non-covetousness), *brahmacharya* (always having holy thoughts), *aparigraha* (non-possessiveness).
2. **Niyama** refers to the five observances of *shaucha* (cleanliness of body & mind), *santosh* (satisfaction with what one has), *tapas* (austerity and associated observances for body discipline and mental control), *svadhyaya* (study of the means of knowledge to know about god/truth), *ishvarapranidana* (surrender to God).
3. **Asana** refers to the discipline of the body through rules and postures to keep it disease-free and for preserving vital energy.
4. **Pranayama** refers to the control of breath.
5. **Pratyahara** refers to the withdrawal of senses from their external objects.

The final three, *Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi* are the internal aids to yoga, also called as *Antaranga sadhana*.

There is increasing awareness about the Yoga '*asana*' aspect. It is necessary to cultivate all the eight limbs of Yoga, not just the *asana*. Cultivating these eight limbs will develop a student into a self-confident and self-competent personality. A sincere and devoted practice of the eight limbs of yoga can also result in oneself becoming an unfailing and reliable source of feedback to her/him. Such introspection stimulates a lasting – even if gradual – transformation of one's response towards events and individuals.³⁷ It is better to have effective self-reflection than to draw criticism from others in the name of feedback! One's life will elevate to higher possibilities on practising even a few of these tenets. It is possible to derive many propositions as to how these tenets will make an individual more effective in any role, be it at home or in office. Even workplaces can be more effective. Some of the benefits that a workplace/worker can derive from the practice of these tenets of Yama (*Ahimsa, Satya, Asteya, Aparigraha, Brahmacharya*) may be listed as follows:

- *Ahimsa*: The individual will not have any intention to hurt others. Organisations will not engage in polluting the planet. Employees will be non-violent with one's self and will avoid traits like alcoholism and abusive behaviour that can ultimately hurt one's own self.
- *Satya*: A seeker of truth will be more open to oneself – to one's higher possibilities as well as to one's weaknesses. Such a seeker will be less defensive and will be open to new ideas. There will be sincere and truthful communication among workers.
- *Asteya*: As non-covetousness is the guiding value, there will be effective, efficient and respectful utilisation of company resources. Patricia Doyle Corner, professor, Strategic Entrepreneurship, Auckland University of Technology, proposes that *asteya* may promote collaborative work as it forbids drawing undue benefit from others' work for personal gains.³⁸
- *Brahmacharya*: There will be increasing focus on one's work; energy will be channelised to goals and objectives that promote individual and societal wellbeing, and not towards

³⁷ *Foundations of Managerial Work*, SK Chakraborty, Himalaya Publishing House, 1989

³⁸ 'Workplace Spirituality and Business Ethics: Insights from an Eastern Spiritual Tradition', Patricia Doyle Corner, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 2009

temporary pleasures. A workplace where *brahmacharya* is practised will exude respect for an individual's true worth, and not just external appearances.

- *Aparigraha*: The individual will be non-possessive. They will work only for what they need and would not like to possess what they desire. This may result in a situation where employees do not hanker after promotion and pay-rise. Individuals do not try to be autocratic and dictatorial, or to control everything and everyone as if they possess others.

This is what Nilofer Merchant, president and founder of Rubicon Consultants, a marketing consulting firm in the USA, has to say about contemplation and silence:

'One of the assignments professor Delbecq gave us was to identify an issue or a cause that caused us tension. Then we had to go and just "be" in that setting. It was so difficult for every student in the class. As a result of this experience, I now go on a regular basis to a homeless shelter and do service. Now I do not think of any separation between me and them. I feel like we are just here together and I can look them in the eye and speak with them with a respect that I would not have had earlier. Earlier, I would have felt the desire to solve their problems and be of use to them as if I were separate. So he taught us that just "being" was a compassionate exercise. The act of just recognising yourself as one part of the whole.

I went into a 2–3 day silent retreat not too long ago. If you would have told me that I would be able to sit quietly for that many days, I would have said that you had lost your mind. But it was really Andre's course that helped me to understand about silence. For several days after this, I was so conscious and present and connected and could clearly hear God's voice from within.

Before we went into silence, the leader said something that really struck me, he said, "Even in silence you can have community. And in fact, in silence you can actually have a deeper community than you can while talking." When I first heard him say this, it was hard for me to believe. If you think about it, anytime we are in a social setting, we always go through the social protocol to find out how the other person is doing and that's how we think we should get to know each other. While in this silent retreat, we were not able to do this. By the end of the three days, I felt so connected to every person in that setting and I really understood what he was saying. I was amazed by this and found it to be the greatest gift' (refer Footnote #16.)

Underscoring the importance of practices like *Vipassana* (form of meditation), Anil Bhatnagar, a Reiki master, author and motivational speaker says, 'Sometimes a brilliant insight downloaded from nature through silence or 'non-doing' can save months or years of work.'⁴⁰ Researchers have



The subtle body in Indian mysticism, from a Yoga manuscript in Braj bhaasha (language) (1899).³⁹

³⁹Image source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sapta_Chakra,_1899.jpg; accessed on February 11, 2010

⁴⁰Life Positive, www.lifepositive.com/Mind/work/corporate-management/business-spirituality.asp

agreed on the value of developing greater focus at work when engaging in *Vipassana* on a regular basis.⁴¹ People engaged in professions like law,⁴² medicine^{43 44} and teaching^{45 46} have found that mindfulness meditation has helped them in their professional practice.

THE BHAGAVAD GITA – *RATHA KALPANA*

Bhagavad Gita summarises the entire Vedic philosophy, and thus offers the easiest point of accessibility towards Vedantic philosophy: ‘Ideas in books, however sacred they may be, cannot and will never, constitute a culture. *Bharatiya* culture prevails only when the generation strives to live the philosophical truths of the mystic *Rishis* (sages) in daily life. How to live spiritual beauty and bring its laughter and cheer into the world of fears and competitions, conflicts and confusions, joys and sorrows is the theme of the art of living discussed in *Bhagavad Gita*,’ says Swami Chinmayananda.⁴⁷ *Bhagavad Gita* is synonymous with the image of Lord Krishna and warrior Arjuna in a chariot. This image – *Ratha Kalpana* (chariot imagery) – represents one of the powerful messages of *Bhagavad Gita*. Swami Sandeepananda Giri, director, School of Bhagavad Gita, contemplates likening this image to running anti-virus software that quarantines the six viruses namely, *kama* (desire), *krodha* (anger), *lobha* (greed), *moha* (delusion), *mada* (pride), *matsarya* (envy) and combinations thereof in human life. The image is associated with the verses from *Katha Upanishad* (paragraph 3, Chapter 1):



Image courtesy: School of Bhagavad Gita (www.sobg.org)⁴⁸

*Atmanam rathinam viddhi sareeram rathameva thu,
Buddhim thu sarathim viddhi manah pragrahameva cha,
Indriyani hayanahuh vishayamsthesu gocharan
Atmendriya mano yuktam bhoktetyahuh maneeshinah*

⁴¹‘Vipassana Meditation as a Path toward Improved Management Practices’, Joan Marques, Satinder Dhiman, *Journal of Global Business Issues*, 2009

⁴²‘A Mindful Law Practice: Lawyers Stay Calm and Focused with the Help of a Meditation Technique’, S Keeva, *ABA Journal*, March 2004

⁴³‘Mindful Practice’, RM Epstein, *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1999

⁴⁴Mindful Medical Work, TN Hanh & A Kotler (Eds.), *A Joyful Path: Community Transformation and Peace*, Parallax Press, 1994.

⁴⁵‘The Elusive Art of “Mindfulness”’, C Johnson, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 2001

⁴⁶‘Moving Beyond Polite Correctness: Practicing Mindfulness in the Diverse Classroom’, B Vacarr, *Harvard Educational Review*, 2001

⁴⁷*The Art of Man Making*, Swami Chinmayananda, Central Chinmaya Mission Trust, 2007

⁴⁸Image used with permission

Deciphering the Code Behind the Imagery of *Ratha Kalpana*

‘The world is one huge battlefield. The real Kurukshetra is within you. The battle of the Mahabharata is still raging within. Ignorance is Dhritarashtra; the individual soul is Arjuna; the indweller of your heart is Lord Krishna, the charioteer; the body is the chariot; the senses are the five horses; mind, egoism, mental impressions, senses, cravings, likes and dislikes, lust, jealousy, greed, pride and hypocrisy are your dire enemies.’

--- Swami Sivananda, *Bhagavad Gita*, 4th July, 1942

‘We must understand that the senses are simply instruments (*indriyas*) of the mind, that although they ‘cast man’s mind adrift’ this is the reversal of the natural order, that it is the mind that is meant to ‘drive’ the senses, the way a charioteer drives the horses that pull the chariot.’

--- Swami Nirmalananda Giri, A commentary on the *Bhagavad Gita*, 2008

‘There is a conflict in Arjuna’s heart between his emotionalism and his duty. The nearer we are to [beasts and] birds, the more we are in the hells of emotion. We call it love. It is self-hypnotisation. We are under the control of our [emotions] like animals. A cow can sacrifice its life for its young. Every animal can. What of that? It is not the blind, birdlike emotion that leads to perfection. ... [To reach] the eternal consciousness, that is the goal of man! There emotion has no place, nor sentimentalism, nor anything that belongs to the senses — only the light of pure reason. [There] man stands as spirit.’

--- Swami Vivekaanandha, San Francisco, May 28, 1900

‘Just as the unintelligent chariot is directed by a charioteer, there must be a Charioteer who directs the unintelligent *manas*, seated in it and having it as His vehicle. The “motive force” that activates the “inner instruments”, the senses of action, the senses of knowledge, the five *pranas*, that “Force is God”.’

--- Sri Satya Sai Baba, *Upanishad Vahini*

While depicting the grand war on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, sage Vyasa speaks about various heroes blowing their conches, prior to the start of the war. The illustration related to *Ratha Kalpana* shows Lord Krishna blowing the conch, *Panchajanya*. In *Mahabharata*, Vyasa does not say that Krishna blew the conch, instead he says that *Hrishikesh* (a synonym for Krishna) blew the conch. *Hrishikesh* means the one who rules the senses. If we look at the history of *Panchajanya*, we can find that Krishna got this conch after killing the demon *Panchajana*. If one dives deeper into the story, one can find that *Panchajana* is that one who believes that the five (*Pancha*) sensations of sound, touch, form, taste, and smell (*sabda*, *sparsa*, *rupa*, *rasa*, and *gandha*) is the eternal truth and lead a life obsessed with these sensations. *Puranas* depict such people as demons – those who believe that sense organs are truth organs. In the language of the *puranas*, killing a demon means eliminating demonic qualities. After doing away with the demonic qualities, Lord Krishna uses the same conch to establish righteousness in the society.

Key Concepts

1. The mind comprises four functional attributes: *Manas*, the functional aspect which is always in doubt and confusion; *buddhi*, which refers to the intellect; *antahkarana*, the source of ego/'I' feeling; *chitta*, that part where memory exists and impressions are created.
2. When we use 'I', it does not stand for sense organs/physical body, mind and intellect. It refers to the *atma* (consciousness).
3. The mind is compared to a maddened monkey: restless by his own nature, it then gets drunk, and becomes even more restless, and, when stung by a scorpion, jumps around, as if a demon has entered into the monkey.
4. The philosophical schools in India are referred to as *darsanas*. The word *darsan* refers to vision/sight. In *Bharat*, seers were referred to as *darasnikas* (and not philosophers or thought leaders), meaning, people who had the vision of the reality, which goes beyond the level of thought. The schools of Indian philosophy comprised *Nyaya*, *Vaisheshika*, *Samkhya*, *Yoga*, *Purva Mimamsa*, *Vedanta*, *Charvaka*, *Jainism* and *Buddhism*. In India, philosophy was viewed as a practical necessity to be cultivated in order to understand how to best lead one's life.
5. The three qualities (*gunas*) of mind are *Sattwa guna*, *Rajo guna* and *Tamo guna*. *Sattwa* is the force of equilibrium and translates in quality as good and harmony and happiness and light. *Rajas* is the force of kinesis and translates in quality as struggle and effort, passion and action. *Tamas* is the force of inconscience and inertia and translates in quality as obscurity and incapacity and inaction. All of us are combinations of these three *gunas*. It is possible, by effort, that one can evolve from a personality that is predominantly *Tamasic* to that of a *Rajasic* nature and from a *Rajasic* nature to a *Sattvic* state.
6. The type of food that we consume and the company we keep both influence the state of *guna* we are in. Giving attention to wholesome food, good company, and engaging in service oriented activities has the power to transform one's personality.
7. Nowadays, companies across the world are moving towards *sreyas* (that which is good), rather than *preyas*, (that which seems good). This is a quality that brave young heroes like Nachiketa displayed in the *Upanishad*.
8. One of the ways to stop the creation of stress is to focus on the more subtle aspects of Life.
9. Yoga has eight aspects – *Yama*, *Niyama*, *Asana*, *Pranayama*, *Pratyahara*, *Dharana*, *Dhyana* and *Samadhi*. Focus and cultivation of all these eight aspects can make an individual self-confident and self-competent.

Key Words

Nalanda,	Manas,	Cloud of
Takshashila,	Buddhi,	Unknowing,
Veda,	Antahkarana,	Father Thomas
Indian philosophy,	Chitta,	Keating,
Vedanga,	Monkey mind,	Seva,
Darsana,	Trikarana shuddhi,	Pravritti,
Astika school,	Sattvik,	Nivritti,
Nastika school,	Rajasik,	Gurukula,
Kshetra,	Tamasik,	Katha Upanishad,
Kshetrajna,	Agni,	Nachiketa,
Waking state,	Ama,	Viswajit,
Dream state,	Ojas,	Pancha kosha,
Deep sleep state,	Eden,	Ashtanga yoga,
Adi Shankara,	Bible,	Ratha Kalpana
Who am I?,	Satsang,	
Illusion,	Character,	

Classroom Exercise

1. Were you able to comprehend the unity that existed between the chants of Adi Shankara and Rumi? What is the common essence that you were able to appreciate in both these chants?
2. These two spiritual leaders existed thousands of physical miles apart. During their period, advanced communication technologies were unavailable. What do you think contributed to both these leaders communicating an essence that is similar?

Introspective Exercise

1. What is a recent experience that you had when your thoughts were not in alignment with your conscience?
2. How different the thought could have been, if they came from your conscience?
3. What is a recent experience where your thoughts and words did not align with each other?
4. How different the thoughts and words could have been, if they came from your conscience?
5. What is a recent experience where your words and deeds did not align with each other?
6. How different the words and deeds could have been, if they came from your conscience?
7. What is a recent experience where your thoughts and deeds did not align with each other?

8. How different the thoughts and deeds could have been, if they came from your conscience?
9. The following is a spiritual progress instrument adapted from *Essential Wisdom of the Bhagavad Gita*, by Dr Jack Hawley. This exercise and other articles are available for free download at www.gitawalkthrough.com

How Yogi Like Am I?

The ancient *Bhagavad Gita* is not, as one might expect, about withdrawing from life to meditate in a cave. It's a friendly guide for living a truly spiritual life in today's tough and troubling times – and staying fully active and effective in the world! The technical term for this is Karma Yoga, which hints at a major theme in the Gita: to become a sort of in-the-world 'yogi'. It's not as complicated or far-fetched as you think. Here, we have taken some of those teachings a step further, fashioning them into a modern self-inquiry instrument. Don't worry, it's not a test; there is no right or wrong answers – it's just a friendly, private tool to help you see where you are at this point on the path. So take a deep breath, dive into the teachings below, and find yourself comfortably participating in your spiritual evolvment. Proceed unhurriedly in a mood of high receptivity. Notice your awareness shift as you progress. Do not seek to learn the material, but to become it – to actually experience being the high consciousness that infuses these wondrous, ancient principles.

- Candidly rate yourself 1–9 at each of the below items based on how well you know and apply them in your life. 'To what extent do I understand and practice these things in my life now?'

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Never		Seldom		Sometimes		Often		Always

- Circle the two most important to you now.
- Mark any 'impossibilities' (unattainable at this point).
- Date this sheet and revisit it later to see progress:

■	Be humble, be harmless. Be gentle and forgiving of any hurt you receive.
■	Be personally harmonized and congruent—make sure your thoughts, words and actions match.
■	Purify your mind and heart because purity is indispensable to your spiritual growth.
■	To rid yourself of the pain and suffering that drags you down, spiritualize your life.
■	The fundamental goal of all spirituality is to know the Atma, the soul, the True Self Within. .
■	Do not see your self merely as this body-mind complex dependent on external, worldly things

■	Balance your life by giving more than you receive; to receive without giving is stealing.
■	Stop assuming that you can avoid pain and only experience pleasure. Pleasure and pain go together; asking for pleasure invites pain. Always.
■	The sweet fountain of eternal happiness flows only from the Atma, the True Self Within. The cessation of your present pain and sorrow depends on how well you know this.
■	Live your life and do your work in a particular attitude, a general mood of adoration. The act of loving is itself the spiritual experience of knowing and being divinity.

Review Questions

1. What are the four functional attributes of mind? Why is mind considered to be a 'monkey mind'? What is the metaphor offered by Swami Vivekananda about the mind?
2. What is *Trikarana shuddhi*?
3. Explain the characteristics of the three *gunas* – *Sattvik*, *Rajasik*, *Tamasik*.
4. Explain the role of the below in self-growth:
 - *Satsang* (good company)
 - Food
 - Seva
4. Explain *Ashtanga yoga*? What do you mean by *Antaranga sadhana* and *Bahiranga sadhana*?
5. Explain *Ratha Kalpana*.
6. Which are the five sheaths and the three bodies?
7. Who is a 'guru'?

Choose the Correct Answer

1. Seers in Bharat were referred to as _____, which means, people who have vision of the reality.
 - (a) Darasanikas
 - (b) Darsanas
 - (c) Astikas
 - (d) Kalpas

2. According to learned people, the world can be divided into two, namely *Kshetra* and _____.
(a) *Kshetrajna*
(b) Subjects
(c) Known/seen
(d) Matter
3. _____ helps human beings to discriminate what is right from what is wrong.
(a) Mind
(b) Intellect
(c) Senses
(d) Dreams
4. The scriptures suggested that mind has 4 functional attributes. _____ is the part where impressions are created.
(a) *Manas*
(b) *Buddhi*
(c) *Antahkarana*
(d) *Chitta*
5. _____ *guna* is the force of non-conscience and inertia. It translates in quality as obscurity and incapacity and inaction.
(a) *Sattvik*
(b) *Rajasik*
(c) *Tamasik*
(d) Dynamic
6. As per Ayurveda, _____ brings clarity to mind, sustains the physical body and balance the emotions.
(a) *Ojas*
(b) *Agni*
(c) *Ama*
(d) Vitamin C
7. In *Ramayana*, *Vibhishana* is the representation of _____ nature.
(a) *Sattvik*
(b) *Rajasik*
(c) *Tamasik*
(d) Weak
7. *Pravritti* to serve others will increase in proportion to the _____.
(a) Disciplined withdrawal from impulsive behaviour
(b) Consumption
(c) The number of books that one reads
(d) The more qualifications one has

8. _____ was the boy who impressed Yama by seeking to gain the greatest knowledge of life after death.
- (a) Prahlada
 - (b) Dhruva
 - (c) Nachiketa
 - (d) Markandeya
9. As per *Vedanta*, the five sheaths that cover the Atman or Self is called _____.
- (a) Pancha Bhuta
 - (b) Pancha Indriya
 - (c) Simran
 - (d) Pancha kosha

Answers: (1) *Darsanikas*; (2) *Kshetrajna*; (3) Intellect; (4) *Chitta*; (5) *Tamasik*; (6) *Ojas*; (7) *Sattvik*; (8) Disciplined withdrawal from impulsive behaviour; (9) Nachiketa; and (10) *Pancha kosha*

State whether True or False

1. *Dhanurveda* is the text on music, dance and literature.
2. The six orthodox schools of Indian philosophy that included *Nyaya*, *Vaisheshika*, *Samkhya*, *Yoga*, *Purva Mimamsa* and *Vedanta* were also referred to as the *Astika* schools.
3. The objective of the ancient Indian educational system was to imbue students with universal values and to sensitise them to duties and responsibilities.
4. *Trikarna shuddhi* was the phenomenon by which the human beings reached the zenith of their existence through purity of thought, word and deed.
5. The three qualities of the mind are *Sattwa guna*, *Rajo guna* and *Tamo guna*.
6. The theory of Differential Association speaks about how an individual's interactions with others influence her/his learning of ethical and unethical behavior.
7. The sheath of intellect or wisdom is the *Manomaya kosha*.
8. According to *Vedanta*, the next birth is influenced by one's emotions and values carried during the time of death.
9. *Antaranga sadhana* comprises of *dharana*, *dhyana* and *samadhi*.
10. Takshashila is the world's first international residential university.

Answers: (1) False; (2) True; (3) True; (4) True; (5) True; (6) True; (7) False; (8) True; (9) True; and (10) False

Recommended Reading

- *Sandeha Nivarini*, Sri Satya Sai Baba, Sri Satya Sai Books and Publications Trust, 1999
- *Ageless Body, Timeless Mind*, Deepak Chopra, Rider Books, 1994

Recommended Website

- www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/beau_lotto_optical_illusions_show_how_we_see.html

Recommended Film

- *Guru*, a Malayalam film directed by Rajiv Anchal, 1997

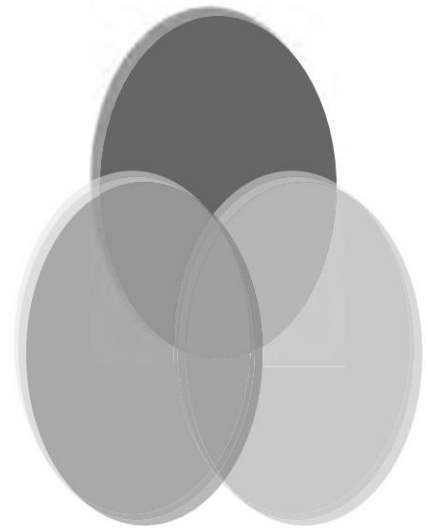
Chapter 7

Towards A World Ethos

Learning Objective

Chapter 7 intends to convey and clarify the following:

- The connection between man, nature and god
 - Developing the capability to discern between *Sreyas* (that which is good) and *Preyas* (that which seems good) – ‘Freedom from’ and ‘Freedom of’
 - Lord Krishna as a role model
 - Servant leadership and Devotional service
 - What is duty?
-
-



“Such a wonderful tree, Mom!” shouted Arya as he looked up at the huge banyan tree in the garden.

“Yes such huge branches and such beautiful leaves,” added Lila.

“And such a huge trunk mom, it’s so wonderful!” Arya said while hugging the tree trunk fondly.

“But my son, do you see what supports all this?” Lila asked Arya

and then pointed to some of the roots of the tree that had sprung above the ground.

Arya looked at them curiously.¹

¹Joy 24x7, Jeetendra Jain, Jaico Publishing House, 2008. Used with permission.

EARTH AS THE MOTHER

The only peace we seem to know today is the strained, exhausting and demoralising pause between two wars. People all over the world are clamouring for peace. Can peace and contentment be brought about by regulating the outward conduct of the nation or the external patterns of behaviour? At best, they may result in a temporary cessation of overt hostility. However, there still remains internal bitterness and enmity. What is needed is the cultivation of human values in human beings, who can make all aware about the glory of values like love and self-knowledge. The *rishis* say that there are four mothers, in addition to the birth mother: mother cow, mother earth, mother land and mother *veda* (sacred scriptures).

*Samudra vasane devi
parvatha sthana mandale
Vishnu patnee namasthubhyam
paada sparsam kshamaswa me*

Translation: O Mother Earth! O Great Goddess shining in the apparel of the Ocean and conveying maternal love through the beautiful hills which are your limbs! O beloved Consort of Lord Vishnu who sustains the whole creation! I bow unto Thee, forgive me as I walk and touch Thee with my feet, O Mother!

Many Indians say this morning prayer when they arise, before they put their feet on the ground. Doing so facilitates a remembrance of those we revere, and this makes us practice such an ethos of respect. In the speech delivered at the 2009 World Parliament of Religions, Swami Sandeepananda Giri, founder, School of Bhagavad Gita, said, ‘All the Indian scriptures took birth in the forests and among nature, in the presence of plants, animals and all the forces of nature.’² Professor GD Sharma says, ‘The first thing to observe is that the fountainhead of our culture is not in the city but in the *aranya*. In the forests, there was a lot of open space. The trees and plants, rivers and lakes, had abundant scope for man to coexist with them.’³ ‘Protection of nature is our culture. Only India has such a culture. If there is a word like ‘*aaranyaka*’ in any of the old literatures, it is only in India,’ says poet Sugathakumari.⁴ *Rig Veda* makes a mention of species of flora such as lotus, bamboo, various types of grass, and ashvatta along with fauna like peacock, swan, water buffalo, bull, lion, boar, camel and elephant. Similarly, *Atharva Veda* also mentions a range of flora and fauna. Swami Sandeepananda Giri adds, ‘Most Indian epics, *puranas* (mythologies) and scriptures begin with an appeal for the divine incarnation to heal and save the Earth. The five elements even assumed God-like forms and were given names. Why! Even names like Vishwamitra – which means friend of the universe – are proof that the ancient wise sages and men respected, worshipped and loved nature.’⁵

The worship and veneration of trees is a custom found in many cultures of the world. It is done as a respect for the life-giving quality of the tree and the fertility of the earth. Scriptures speak about celestial trees that connect beings of all kinds. Lord Shiva as Dakshinamurthy is depicted as sitting

²www.schoolofbhagavadgita.org/pdf/Speech-parliament-of-world-religion.pdf; accessed on April 28, 2010

³*Management and the Indian Ethos*, GD Sharma, Rupa and Co., 2004

⁴The Prayer of India, *Piravi*, October 2009

⁵www.schoolofbhagavadgita.org/pdf/Speech-parliament-of-world-religion.pdf; accessed on April 28, 2010



Kalpataru, the divine tree of life. Wish-fulfilling bountiful tree, being guarded by mythical creatures Kinnara and Kinnari, also divine beings; Apsara and Devata. This bas-relief is adorned wall of Pawon temple, a small, 8th century shrine between Borobudur and Mendut temple, Java, Indonesia.⁶

in silence under *Ashwath Vriksha* (a name for banyan tree). Tree marks a sacred centre. The whole of Auroville is centered around a banyan tree. We can find that many villages also have banyan trees as their centre. A banyan tree at Kurukshetra is also said to have witnessed the *Gitopadesa*.⁷ The banyan tree is found in the imagery of Kabbalah, the mystical aspect of Judaism.⁸ One tradition of Buddhist thought believes that it was the Bodhi Tree, a banyan tree of the species of Sacred Fig (under which Gautama, The Buddha experienced Enlightenment), which inspired Gautama, The



A statue of Gautama, The Buddha; at Tawang Monastery, Arunachal Pradesh, India⁹

⁶Image source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Kalpataru,_Kinnara-Kinnari,_Apsara-Devata.jpg; accessed on February 11, 2010

⁷www.freewebs.com/balakrishnanmuniapan/Kurukshetra%20-%20The%20Land%20of%20Gita.pdf; accessed on April 28, 2010

⁸www.khandro.net/nature_trees.htm; accessed on April 28, 2010

⁹Image source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:BuddhaTwang.jpg>; accessed on February 11, 2010



I was reading about how countless species are being pushed toward extinction by man's destruction of forests. Sometimes I think the surest sign that intelligent life exists elsewhere in the universe is that none of it has tried to contact us.

Source: As said by Calvin, in the comic strip *Calvin and Hobbes* (written and illustrated by Bill Watterson)

Buddha, to spread the message of *dharma* (*Dhamma*) to all rather than remaining in meditative absorption (*Pratyeka Buddha*). In the account given by Ashvaghosha about the events in the life of Gautama, The Buddha, he speaks about a female deity in the woods who supported Siddhartha's (former name of Gautama, The Buddha) determination in his quest for Awakening.

Frank Dixon, former director of research, Innovest Venture Partners (the largest sustainability research firm in the world) says: 'India has many strengths which make it one of the greatest countries in the world. I believe India's greatest strength is the Indian people, in particular their spiritual devotion and purity. Many Indians see beyond illusion and understand the interconnectedness or oneness of everything. This is displayed for example, by the custom of bowing to the God within another person when greeting them. Many westerners visit India to find spiritual inspiration, clarity and renewal. This focus on the deeper reality of humanity's oneness with nature and each other is needed to address growing environmental and social problems around the world. The Indian people model the peace, wisdom, love and respect needed to achieve the beautiful, prosperous, sustainable world that all humanity seeks.'¹⁰

One of the personalities in Indian epics, who is yet to be discovered in the context of a leading a life in reverence to mother nature is Balaram, Lord Krishna's elder brother. While Krishna fought a war against the tyranny of kings like Kansa and Jarasandha, Balaram's war was against the tyranny of materialism on the planet.¹¹ During the Kurukshetra war, Balaram goes on a pilgrimage to perform *yagnas* and *daanam* (acts of charity). While the war brings about all kinds of disturbances, *yagnas* create positive energy. Thus, Balaram performs the endeavour of *pratikraman* in response to *atikraman* (refer Footnote #10). Mythological folklore also suggests the contempt Balaram had towards the limiting short-sighted lifestyles of Yadavas. It is said that Balaram and his wife Revati stayed out of Dwarka and engaged in sustainable farming practices (possibly 'organic farming').

According to Frank Dixon, the focus on the deeper reality of humanity's oneness with nature is visible in India. Sacred groves used to be spaces for contemplation and meditation. Kalidasa's *Vikramurvashiiya* contains references to sacred groves, which existed in a variety of forms and places – the scrub forest in Rajasthan to the rainforests in Kerala. As per reports, the number of sacred groves in India comes to approximately 14,000. More than 1000 deities have been associated with sacred groves that exist in Kerala and Karnataka. These groves played the repository for Ayurvedic medicines, fruits, honey etc. It also reduced erosion, controlled desertification and helped

¹⁰As told to one of the authors.

¹¹'Mahabharata to Copenhagen: The Untold Story of Balaram', Mala Kapadia, Conference Paper presented at the International Conference on 'Indian Management for Global Effectiveness: Insights from the Mahabharata' held at Indian Business Academy, Bangalore on February 19 and 20, 2010

in recharging the water table. Evolution of culture has been influenced by these sacred groves – *Theyyam* from Kerala and *Nagmandalam* from Karnataka. Moreover, folk dances and rituals form an important aspect of the culture influenced by these sacred groves.

In the villages of India, it is commonplace to see the worship of stones anointed with oil, as an offering to the spirit within the stone. Offerings of food made to the trees have also been associated with wisdom and immortality. People believe that trees are the abode of deities. In India, *Yaksha* or *Yakshasi* (fairy or spirit beings) are said to dwell in trees. Deep Narayan Pandey, in his paper ‘Sacred Water and Sanctified Vegetation: Tanks and Trees in India’ states, ‘Sacred trees symbolise specific arrays of human conditions, possibilities and anticipation’. Married women, as part of their *vrata* (fast) honouring Savitri (who brought back her dead husband from Yama), offer their prayers to the Banyan tree (it was under the banyan tree that Satyavan, Savitri’s husband regained his life).

In Tamilnadu, famous temples are associated with the veneration of trees. The Ekambareswarar temple at Kanchipuram is home to a 3500 years old mango tree. The main deity of Thiruvanaikaval located at Tiruchirapalli is *Jambukeswara*, representing the element water. This deity is depicted sitting under a *jambu* (black plum) tree, which grows over a small stream that engulfs the deity during the rainy season. The Chidambaram temple is associated with the legend of Lord Shiva entering the mangrove forest. Pichavaram, located near Chidambaram, is the world’s second largest mangrove. The temples of Chidambaram, Kalahasti Nathar, Thiruvannamalai Arunachaleswara, Thiruvanaikaval Jambukeswara and Kanchi Ekambareswara represent the five elements of space/ether, wind/air, fire, water and earth.

Lord Vishnu is associated with Bargad, Gular and Pipal trees, Lord Shiva with Bel, Maulashri, Rudraksha; Lord Dattatreya with Gular. Trees in Tamilnadu are also associated with local deities, in addition to gods who are widely revered. Arkamma is the goddess associated with the *erukku* plant, while Panaiveriyamman is the goddess associated with the palmyra palm (*panai*). Goddess Puliyaivalaiyamman is associated with the tamarind tree (*Puli*) while goddess *Kadambariyamman* is associated with the Kadamba tree. Sal, Deodara, Rudraksha, Bel, Ashok, Kadam, Pipal, etc. are considered sacred in different parts of India. Plants are also offered protection during certain vulnerable stages of their life. The Kols living in the Vindhya mountains do not eat unripe fruits of woodapple and Indian gooseberry before Dussehra (festival in October). Such actions ensure that viable seeds are produced from the fruits. Otherwise, if consumed, the seed cannot be produced, and the species would become extinct. Indian Fig (Vad/Vat), Pipal, Gular (Udumbara), and Indian frankincense (Salai) are given similar protection in the Aravalli hills and are also considered sacred in other parts of India. Certain trees are associated with each of the 27 Nakshatras, referred to in Jyothisha, the astrological system prevalent in India (refer Exhibit 7.1). The scriptures say that one tree is equal to ten sons. While planting and nurturing any tree is encouraged, individuals are especially urged to plant trees related to their Nakshatra. This process helps in accruing merit in this life and after life. *Arthashastra* prescribes fines for those who destroy trees, groves and forests.

Exhibit 7.1 Nakshatras and the trees associated with them

<i>Star</i>	<i>Name of the tree in various Indian languages</i>	<i>English name</i>	<i>Botanical name</i>
Ashvini, Aswathy, Ashwini Bharani	Kanjiram, Yetti, Etti, Kuchala	Strychnine	Strychnos Nux-vomica
Karthika, Kritikka Rohini	Nelli, Perunelli, Aavali, Amla, Amalaki Athi, Ambar, Udumbara, Gular Njaval, Jambhali, Perunjaval	Indian Gooseberry, Amla Cluster Fig, Country Fig, Fig Jamun, Black Plum	Phyllanthus Emblica, Emblica officinalis Ficus Glomerata, Ficus racemosa Eugenia Jaambolana, Syzygium cuminii
Makayiram, Mrigashirsha Thiruvathira, Aardra	Karingali, Karungali, Kher Kari, Kumbil, Karai, Thippilli, Agar Krushnagus, Agalicandanum, Akil, Sen Santhanam, Aguru Mula, Moongil, Velu	Cucth Tree, Milmesha, Ebony Cashmere Tree, Long Pepper, Red Sandal	Acasia Catechu, Diospyros ebunum Diospyros melanoxylon, Ptero carpus Santalinus, Aquillaria agallocha
Punartham, Punarpusam, Punarvasu Pooyam, Pusam, Pushya Aayilyam, Aashlesha	Arayal, Arasamaram, Pimpal, Pipal, Aal Punna , Punnai, Nagapoo, Naagchafa, Nagkeshar, Nahar	Bamboo Sacred Fig, Peepal, Ficus Messua Tree, Alexan- drian Laurel, Beauty Leaf Poon	Bambusa Vulgais, Bamboosa arundinorea Ficus Religiosa Calophyllum Indophyllum, Mesua ferrea
Makam, Magha, Magam Pooram, Purva Phalguni, Poorva	Peral, Alamaram, Vatt, Bargad Plasu, Chamata, Palas, Khakda, Modugu, Murikku, Parasu, Polash, Desuka Jhad, Dhak, Chalcha	Banyan Tree, Indian Fig Flame of the Forest, Parrot Tree	Ficus Benghalensis Butea monosperma
Uthram, Uttara, Phalguni, Uthiram Atham, Astham, Hasta Chithira, Chitra, Chithirai	Ithi, Itti, Arali, Payari Ambazham, Marima, Nalini, Kaatuma, Velam, Chameli, Mulla, Mullai Koovalam, Vilvam, Bel, Bilvam, Bilwa,	Indian Laurel, Rose Laurel, Indian Cleaner Hog Plum, Neem, Royal Jasmine Beal Tree, Bengal Quince, Stone Apple, Wood Apple	Ficus Tinctoria, Nerium indicum, Ficus arnattiana Spondias Pinnata, Azadirachta indica, Jasminum grandiflorum Aegle Marmelos

(Contd)

(Contd)

Chothy, Swathi, Suvathi	Maruthu, Neermaruthu, Marutham, Jarul, Arjun	Arjuna Tree, Queen's Flower	Terminalia Arjuna, Lagerstroemia speciosa
Visakhham, Vishaka	Dadhipala, Vayamkatha, Vilamaram, Kaith, Naagkeshar, Nahar	Governor's Plum, Wood Apple, Ceylon Ironwood, Indian rose chestnut	Feronia Elephantum, Feronia limonia, Mesua ferrea, Limonia acidissima
Anizham, Anusham, Anuradha	Elanji, Magizh, Magizham, Maulshree, Naagkeshar	Bullet Wood Tree	Mimusops Elengi, Mesua ferrea
Thrikketta, Kettai, Jyeshta, Ketta	Vetti, Pachotti, Kuttipala, Prayan, Sambar	Bodh Tree, Stunted Jack	Aporusa lindleyana, Calammus rotang, Connatus wightii
Moolam, Mula	Kunthirikkam, Velu- thakunthirikom, Acha, Anjan, Mamaram, Raal, Sal, Shala, Ashvakarna,	White Dammar, Hard- wickia, Mango Tree, Sal Tree	Boswellia serrata, Mangiferus indicus, Shorea robusta, Hardwickia binate
Pooradam, Purva Ashada	Aattupala, Aatrupalai, Samudrakai, Vanchikodi, Vet	Fish Poison Tree, Tinospora	Salix Tetraspeama, Tinospora cardifodia, Calamus pseudo-tenuis
Uthradam, Uttar Ashada	Plavu, Pila, Pala, Sakkai Pala, Phanas	Jack Fruit Tree, Bread Fruit	Artocarpus Heterophyllus, Autocarpus cummunis
Thiruvonam, Sravana	Erukku, Vellerukku, Rui	Gigantic Swallow, Swallow Wort	Calotropis Procera, Calotropis gigantea
Avittam, Dhanishta, Shravishta	Muringa ,Paarampu, Muringai, Vanni, Vilayti kikar, Shashi	Indian Gum Tree, Indian Mesquit, Kejari	Moringa oleifera, Prosopis cinenaria, Prosepsis speciosa, Prosopis juliflora
Chathayam, Sathayam, Satabisha, Shatataraka	Kadambu, Kadambam, Katampu, Valanch	Kadam Tree, Indian Oak	Anthocephalus Cadambu, Mitragyna parviflora, Neolamarckia cadamba
Pooruruttathi, Purva Badrupada	Mavu, Maamaram, Maruthu, Aamra	Mango Tree, Arjun Tree	Magnifera Indica, Terminalia arjuna
Uthrutathi, Uttra Badrupada	Aryaveppu, Veppu, Vembu, Kadu nimbi	Margosa Tree, Neem	Azadiracta Indica, Agadirachta indica
Revathi	Eluppa, Iluppai, Moha	Indian Butter Tree, Maduca	Madhuca Longifolia, Maduca indica

Note: For a few Nakshatras, the trees recommended are different based on traditions, regions. The above table is only indicative, and an attempt has been made to include all the trees recommended for a Nakshatra.

Deepak Chopra's views about 'environment' are interesting. In an interview to Big Picture TV, he says:

'Both the biological organism and what we call 'environment' are differentiated patterns of behavior of a single reality, whether you call that reality Gaia, whether you call that Planet Earth or you call that the Sentient Universe, we are all differentiated patterns of a single Consciousness. So, you don't look at that tree and say, "Oh, that's the environment." That tree is your lungs. If it didn't breathe, you wouldn't breathe. And if you didn't breathe, it wouldn't breathe. It is inseparable. The earth is your body. The rivers and waters of our planet are your circulation. Pollute them, and you'll pollute your circulation. The air is your breath. The energies of the universe are your emotions. The information states of the universe are your thoughts. There is no difference between an electromagnetic synaptic storm in your brain and an electromagnetic synaptic storm in the sky. There is no inside, there is no outside. There is a single reality that is differentiating into the observer and the observed, the perceiver and the perceived, the subjective reality and the objective reality.'¹²



View of Mudumalai National Park, Nilgiri District, Tamilnadu.¹³ Deepak Chopra says, 'That tree is your lungs. If it didn't breathe, you wouldn't breathe. And if you didn't breathe, it wouldn't breathe.'

¹²www.bigpicture.tv/?id=3214; accessed on June 26, 2010

¹³Image source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Mudumalai_forest.jpg; accessed on March 30, 2010

Such is the intimate connection between man, nature and god. This is ingrained in us, at an intuitive level. One of the authors of this book recalls an incident during his high school, when, in the geography text recommended for class 8 students, he happened to find a sentence that spoke about 'exploiting' natural resources. The word 'exploit' made a mark on his mind, and he started thinking why people used violent and degrading words in text books. However, the author remained silent. Some days later, another student who usually topped the class asked the same question, 'Why do we use the word 'exploit' with reference to using natural resources?' It can only be said that being young and innocent minds, and having spent considerable time in the lap of mother earth, the two students were yet to be introduced to the world's nonsensical way of looking at nature. Al Gore, former US vice-president who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007 (also known for his role in the Oscar award winning documentary, *An Inconvenient Truth*) states in his book *Earth in Balance: Ecology and the Human Spirit*: 'The more deeply I search for the roots of the global environmental crisis, the more I am convinced that it is an outer manifestation of an inner crisis, that is, for lack of a better word, spiritual.'

THE ROLE OF WATER

The conventional perspective of 'exploiting' nature has resulted in a situation where the water tables are going down. Many parts of the world are witnessing water related calamities. All ancient cultures, including the one from India, considered water an example of Motherly care. The presence of water, the touch of water, and the sound of water have the capability to sooth the mind of beings. The source of life itself is water! Almost three-fourth of the human body is made of water. We feel cared for when we stand near rivers, waterfalls and seafronts.

The experiments of Hira Ratan Manek (HRM),¹⁴ a former businessman engaged in spice trading, convey that water is more than an aid in daily life. HRM, now aged 72, was inspired by the teachings of the Jain Tirthankara, Bhagavan Mahavira, and had been practising a lifestyle where he would depend on water and solar energy to sustain his daily life. He had gone through three observational studies conducted by medical experts and scientists, lasting 211 days (1995–96), 411 days (2000–01) and 130 days (2002) respectively. During this period too, he was on a diet comprising water and solar energy. With reference to HRM, the Imperial Medical College in London said: 'HRM's brain is regenerating and about 700 photographs have been taken. Neurons are reported to be active and not dying. Pineal gland is not shrinking which typically happens after mid-fifties and its maximum average size is about 6x6 mm. But for HRM, it has been measured to be at 8x11 mm.'¹⁵

HRM's experiments point out to a possibility that a day may arise where people will not die of starvation due to a lack of conventional food. For the present, with many regions witnessing a drought, there is a need to inculcate respect and sensitivity towards water and its usage. Victor-Krishna Kanu, former High Commissioner (ambassador) for Sierra Leone to the UK, Norway and Sweden, director of The African Institute of Sathya Sai Education in Zambia, would like to share with us about values based water education:

¹⁴For more details about Hira Ratan Manek, visit www.solarhealing.com

¹⁵The Hindu Businessline, www.thehindubusinessline.com/bline/2003/07/03/stories/2003070300271800.htm; accessed on April 28, 2010

'I would like here to speak about the values-based water education project. Everybody says, "Water is life." But we don't value water, because it's there; it is so common. We only value air when we are suffocating and water when we are thirsting. What is happening today, especially in Africa, but also in Asia, is that the population is increasing in leaps and bounds, but water resources remain the same or are decreasing due to their misuse and pollution. In many places the machinery that was installed by the colonial powers is still the equipment that supplies water today; that machinery is very old now, and is not efficiently used. People are moving from the rural areas to the cities where there is some supply of electricity, some roads, some businesses, some music and entertainment, some hope of finding a job of some kind. With this movement of people into cities, which become mega-cities, the need for water there increases immensely.

There is a huge problem of reaching these people, of giving them good, potable water. This is coupled with the fact that the affluent people misuse water. In Johannesburg, for example, you may find an affluent home using many hundreds of litres of water a day for the toilets, the washing, the showers, the garden in front, the garden behind, the cars. Next door, not far away, you find the shantytown where a family would really have to struggle to have 20 litres of water a day. So you have this disparity for all their needs.

Then you have a lot of vandalism, people using illegal connections because they don't have the water, tampering with meters, a lot of corruption, etc. Many countries in Africa share river basins. There have been water wars in the past and there could be water wars again.

Water education is not just about being literate, knowing the chemical composition of water, knowing the sources of water, the management problems of water, etc. Those are tangibles. Such knowledge is fine, but there are certain intangibles that are equally important – That is, the perception that people have of this element of water, their attitudes towards it, that it is sacred, and that therefore it must be used reverentially – with care and respect and without polluting it.

Value-based water education aims at bringing about a transformation of the attitudes, the perceptions of people about water, so that they come to respect it and conserve it, because water is life. Three quarters of the physical makeup of the world is water, our bodies are water, the vegetables we eat are water. Water plays a vital role in the eco-system.



**Guru Granth Sahib,
On revering nature**

Air is the Guru, Water is the Father, and Earth is the Great Mother of all.

~ Guru Granth Sahib, Jap, Salok

The Gurmukh sees the Lord on the earth, and the Gurmukh sees Him in the water.

~ Guru Granth Sahib, Raag Maajh M:3

Water is the father of the world.

~ Guru Granth Sahib, Raag Saarang, M:1

The United Nations (UN) has been very concerned about the problems of water in Africa. The technical and regulative measures, which the water utility companies have been applying, have not been proving very successful. So the UN was looking for other methods to complement the existing ones. That was why an expert group meeting was called in Johannesburg in 2001. I was invited to present a paper on 'Human Values in Water Education', presenting the human values as we know them, and what role they can play, and showing how human values in water education can be taught in all school subjects, because every subject has a water component. It's good to give scientific explanations to many things, but it's not enough, you have to ask which values can be learned or weaned from our observations.

For example, look at the roots of a plant or a tree, it's very difficult to find a straight root, they are always twisted, because they are in search of water. In the performance of their duties, they come across obstacles. If they come across a rock they go around it, they don't stop. They don't give up. That's endurance. So the science teacher can at the same time, in the same breath, talk about endurance in life. Obstacles are bound to come. The roots are not selfish, they pass the water on; that's co-operation. The science teacher brings these values out in their lessons without extra time being required.¹⁶

The above passage indicates how giving care to elements of nature and values goes together. Another example of this interconnection is when we go to places of worship and take *Tirtha*, sacred water, offered to the Divine. We've been trained not to drop even a drop of this *Tirtha*. This training was also meant to ensure that we provide the same amount of respect to all water bodies of this world, not wasting even a drop of water.



The Holy Prophet Mohammed Bin Abdullah (Peace be upon Him) has been known to have transformed areas of Arabian desert into green conclaves. A few of the many sayings of the Prophet on nurturing creations are:

1. *Whoever plants a tree and diligently looks after it until it matures and bears fruit is rewarded.*
2. *If the Day of Judgment comes, and there is a plant in one's hand, carry on and plant it.*
3. *Verily, there is heavenly reward for every act of kindness done to a living animal.*

As per the Prophet, there are seven actions one should engage in to accrue merit in this life and after life. One of them is to plant trees.

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar says, 'God lives in his creation. Caring for the environment and nature is the best form of worship...'¹⁷ If we observe the life of saints like Sri Ramakrishna or Ramana Maharshi we can find that they experienced pain when other beings, though they existed beyond the eyesight of Sri Ramakrishna or Ramana Maharshi, experienced pain. This experience of what others are experiencing exists because of *Ekatmanubhuti*, when the individual mind is attuned with

¹⁶Quotations extracted from the public knowledge base of the 'Spiritual Based Leadership Research Programme' are © 2006 by the Global Dharma Center (GDC). GDC retains the copyright to all excerpts from this knowledge base.

¹⁷www.worldspace.in/worldspace/018-pr.php; accessed on June 1, 2010

the Universal Mind. When an individual mind experiences pain, the Universal Mind experiences pain, which results in seers like Sri Ramakrishna and Ramana Maharshi feeling the pain.

Man, in the name of pursuing freedom, has become a slave to sensual pleasures, and thus forgot the connection to nature and her, his true centre. An individual who wants to enter the world arena, and be successful there has to understand what constitutes freedom, so that he, she can be a champion of the world. Realised people say that this world, and our work in this world, provides us with the perfect arena for spiritual fulfillment.



'...So freedom and love go together. Love is not a reaction. If I love you because you love me, that is mere trade, a thing to be bought in the market; it is not love. To love is not to ask anything in return, not even to feel that you are giving something - and it is only such love that can know freedom.'

~ *This Matter of Culture*, Jiddu Krishnamurti, 1964

'FREEDOM OF' AND 'FREEDOM FROM'

Magnus Vrethammar, former president for Europe at Pergo Flooring (UK), and president of an executive coaching and business development firm Creability AB (Sweden) says:

'...I only know scientifically of the Maslow ladder that says that only if you are fulfilled at lower levels, then you can be fulfilled at higher levels, and I think that is wrong too. Because I have seen so many examples where people are not fulfilled in any of the lower steps of the ladder and yet there is fulfillment in the upper ones,' (refer Footnote #16).

Though Maslow Need Hierarchy Theory has not been empirically proven, it is somehow one of the most popular motivation theories in the world. Yet, as Magnus Vrethammar has indicated, there are many examples of people who are not fulfilled vis-à-vis any of the lower needs finding fulfillment vis-à-vis the upper needs as per Maslow's need hierarchy. It would be interesting to know as to what extent the lower level needs of beings like Swami Vivekananda, Jesus Christ and Mahatma Gandhi were satisfied, though there could be substantial certainty in the fulfillment of their higher order needs.

Such factors lead one to the role that 'choice' plays in an individual's life. Many a time, we are unable to discriminate between 'freedom of' and 'freedom from'. What do these indicate? 'Freedom of' is the freedom of our senses, impulses, tendencies etc. Many a times, 'freedom of' senses, impulses, and tendencies only mean addiction related behaviors and obsessive compulsive disorders. A diabetic person will indulge his taste buds and eat the forbidden *Gulab Jamuns* knowing well that the sweetmeat is not good for his health. Here 'freedom of' tongue (tasting sense) is at work, which causes harm in the long-term. Due to ignorance and lack of maturity, the 'freedom of' choice is what is preferred by most people. The new mantra seems to be 'I can resist anything, except temptation.' To cite an incident, a devotee once asks a universal spiritual teacher whether there is any such thing as 'free will'. The teacher retorts, 'How can free will exist when people are slaves to their minds and their senses?'

The answer clearly indicates that slavery and free will cannot go together. Mahatma Gandhi said, 'It is Swaraj when we learn to rule ourselves. It is, therefore, in the palm of our hands. But such Swaraj has to be experienced, by each one for himself. One drowning man will never save another.'¹⁸ In his book *Slaves by Choice*, Étienne de La Boétie, a French political philosopher and judge, says, 'Liberty is the one thing which men have no desire for, and it seems as though the only reason this is so is that if they desired it, they would have it. It is as though they are refusing this wonderful acquisition simply on the grounds that it costs so little effort.'

'Freedom from' stands for freedom from the retarding tendencies of *kama* (desire), *krodha* (anger), *lobha* (greed), *moha* (temptation), *mada* (pride) and *matsarya* (envy). Freedom from these retarding tendencies can help human beings in reaching the pinnacle of glory, while freedom of these same tendencies retards and enslaves individuals. Human beings have to master their mind, and not be slaves of their senses. 'Master the mind, Be a mastermind'.

Daniel Goleman, the author of the bestseller *Emotional Intelligence* speaks about an experiment conducted by Dr Walter Mischel Robert, professor at the department of psychology, Columbia University. The experiment was conducted at Stanford University in the 1960s, wherein pre-school children were given a marshmallow (a confectionary made of sugar or corn syrup and flavourings). The child could choose to eat it or not eat it. However, if they controlled themselves for 20 minutes (by not eating the marshmallows), then they would be given another marshmallow. Thus, every child could then have both the marshmallows. It was found that some children were able to wait while others could not. Later, when these kids progressed through their ages, research revealed that those who had displayed the capability to wait were better adjusted, more dependable, and scored higher on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), a standardised test for college admission in the USA.

A mountaineer needs to let go of his grip on the lower rock to get a hold onto the higher one. A student aiming to perform excellently in his examination has to forego the freedom to gossip or go out frequently. A student wanting to build an athletic physique has to avoid fast foods and over indulgence. Thus, to gain 'higher order freedoms' one needs to let go of 'lower order freedoms.' This renunciation of lower order freedom for higher order freedom is visible in the lives of Gautama the Buddha, Guru Nanak Dev, Adi Shankaracharya, Swami Vivekanandha, Jesus Christ, Prophet Mohammed Bin Abdullah, APJ Abdul Kalam and the like. Mahatma Gandhi would undertake fasts, observe silence and practice *namasmarana* (remembering and chanting the name of god). Bal Gangadhar Tilak, transformed the dismal jail atmosphere into more conducive surroundings where he authored a commentary 'Gita Rahasya' based on *Bhagavad*



A late 19th century Tanjore style painting depicting the ten Sikh gurus and Bhai Bala and Bhai Mardana.¹⁹

¹⁸*Hind Swaraj*. (Ch.4), Mahatma Gandhi, Navjivan Press, Ahmedabad, 1909

¹⁹Imagesource: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Sikh_Gurus_with_Bhai_Bala_and_Bhai_Mardana.jpg; accessed on February 15, 2010

Gita. All these are examples of people forsaking lower order freedoms and moving to higher order freedoms. Ashoke Maitra, former director of HR at *Times of India*, founder of the Centre for Human Resource Development and the Sri Ramakrishna International Institute of Management in India, shares this thought: 'If you visit the Kajoraho temple you will see many erotic statues at the outside, but once you go inside to the sanctum sanatorium there is no eroticism. So, if you want to stay at the erotic level, you can choose to stay outside the temple. If you want to go to the sanctum inside the temple, then you have to give up eroticism and lift your eyes towards god. You will notice that even outside, in all of the erotic sculptures, the eyes are looking upwards.' (refer Footnote #17).



A sculpture at Lakshman Temple, Khajuraho.²⁰

This idea of lifting our view towards god is spoken about in all religious traditions. In India, *vak sanyam* (control of speech), *drishti sanyam* (control of what is seen), *shruti sanyam* (control of what is heard), *ahaar sanyam* (control of palate) and *manah sanyam* (control of mind) are given due importance. 'As the food, so the mind,' goes the saying. By making conscious and holistic choices about the types of food that we consume (including the food that we take in through eyes, ears, etc.), we conserve and channelise our mental energy and enthusiasm towards loftier goals. The rituals of Indian tradition were designed in such a manner as to ensure every opportunity for an individual to reach the pinnacle of perfection. The rituals give us an opportunity to remind ourselves about the course of action we choose – whether we have chosen that which is good or that which seems good.

STRESS MANAGEMENT: 'DON'T PUT THE KEY TO YOUR HAPPINESS IN SOMEONE ELSE'S POCKET'²¹

People have used a number of tools to alleviate stress. *The Journal of Canadian Medical Association*²² includes the following practices for stress management:

- Conflict resolution
- Exercise
- Getting a hobby
- Meditation
- Deep breathing
- Yoga

²⁰Image source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Lakshman_Temple_3.jpg; accessed on February 15, 2010

²¹Swami Chinmayananda, www.chinmaya-chicago.org/quotes.htm; accessed on April 28, 2010

²²*Canadian Medical Association Journal*, 1999, Vol.160, Issue 9

- Relaxation techniques
- Artistic expression
- Spending time in nature
- Natural medicine
- Time management
- Listening to relaxing music, particularly new age and classical music

Many of these practices are primarily used as tools to alleviate the harmful effects of stress. However, a closer observation is required to understand the nature of stress. Researchers have attempted to study the fundamental differences in studying stress according to two schools of thought, mainstream literature related to stress management and Yoga-Vedanta psychology:²³

‘Our desire to temporarily relieve our physical maladies, so we can continue our unhealthy lifestyle habits with less discomfort, encourages companies to produce innovative products to meet our demands. And we wonder why the cost of health care is spiraling out of control! Unfortunately, the workstyle we take for granted in many companies contributes to these lifestyle maladies. The internal competitiveness, the drive for career advancement, the difficulties in balancing work and family duties... all contribute to the stresses of the day,’ say William Miller and Debra Miller in a research study titled ‘Bringing Human Values to the Forefront of Corporate Innovation’.

Many a time, we ourselves contribute to our stress. In her book *Reconnecting the Love Energy*²⁴ Phyllis Krystal says, ‘But what exactly is stress? In the reverie work, I have been taught that the main cause of stress is resistance to something or someone, and the nervousness that accompanies such a reaction.’

We find it difficult to make a shift to a task that is aligned with our values and, instead, opt for a task and lifestyle that are misaligned to our selves and the natural rhythm. An individual, who has an internal alignment towards a task, will have increasing stamina to take on challenges thereof over a continuous period of time. Such an individual can do wonders for her/his own self, the organisation and the society at large. Mahatma Gandhi, Jesus Christ, Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him) are examples of leaders who facilitated the transformation of thousands of people without causing any stress-related illness to themselves.

Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev mentions, ‘Stress is not a part of your life. It is not the nature of work that you are doing which is causing the stress; it is just that you have no control over your systems. You don’t know how to function smoothly within yourself. That is why you are stressful. Have you seen, in many situations, one person would be very stressed out and another person would go through it effortlessly? So stress is not coming because of the situation. Stress is coming because of your inability to manage your inner situation.’²⁵ Vedantic literature compares the world to an ocean. Infinite number of waves constitutes the surface of the ocean, they are always tossing, agitated,

²³ ‘Stress: In Search of a Psycho-Spiritual Perspective’, Debangshu Chakraborty, SK Chakraborty, *Vilakshan: XIMB Journal of Management*, September 2006

²⁴ Phyllis Krystal, *Reconnecting the Love Energy*, Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust, 1998

²⁵ www1.spirituality.indiatimes.com/articleshow/msid-3619886,prtpage-1.cms; accessed on April 28, 2010

rising and falling. However, as we dive inside and go deeper, the same ocean remains becomes one great mass of water, serene and unaffected. Man lives and identifies with the surface, engaged in the ever-changing phenomena of objects and beings. Thus, man becomes joyful at one moment and sorrowful at another; his association with the waves is symbolic of those situations where he is tossed here and there.

Indian scriptures say that the world is made of duality. Pleasure and pain, success and failure, praise and blame, they always go together. What used to create pleasure at one point of time, will give pain at another. What we consider failure may turn out to be the stepping stone to success. What was considered a success may be a failure when looked at from a different perspective. Human beings come across such dualities throughout their lives. *Bhagavad Gita* suggests cultivating and maintaining equanimity when faced with all such duality in life.

ANGER MANAGEMENT

People often follow a certain course of action, because their colleagues or peers are doing so. This tendency to imitate what others are doing creates a lot of stress, which is clearly visible in many of the homes today. This results in tension and conflict at home. Anger is one of the evils affecting all sections of the population, even students. Though they do not want to get angry, they are unable to manage anger. It is interesting to note that 'anger' is only one letter short of 'danger'.

Swami Vivekananda says²⁶,

'A man says something very harsh to me, and I begin to feel that I am getting heated, and he goes on till I am perfectly angry and forget myself, identify myself with anger. When he first began to abuse me, I thought, "I am going to be angry." Anger was one thing, and I was another; but when I became angry, I was anger. These feelings have to be controlled in the germ, the root, in their fine forms, before even we have become conscious that they are acting on us. With the vast majority of mankind the fine states of these passions are not even known – the states in which they emerge from sub-consciousness. When a bubble is rising from the bottom of the lake, we do not see it, not even when it nearly comes to the surface. It is only when it bursts and makes a ripple that we know it is there. We shall only be successful in grappling with the waves when we can get hold of them in their fine causes, and until you can get hold of them, and subdue them before they become gross, there is no hope of conquering any passion perfectly. To control our passions we have to control them at their very roots; then alone shall we be able to burn out their very seeds. As fried seeds thrown into the ground will never come up, so these passions will never arise.'

This passage suggests that one should not consider anger as something inherent in an individual. If one believes that anger is part of individual, it will continue to remain there, perennially. Emotions like anger are to be disowned. Sri Sri Ravishankar says, 'Depression is the lack of energy; anger and aggression are a bolt of energy... If aggression crosses a certain limit, it leads you back into depression. That is what happened with King Ashoka who won the Kalinga war but became depressed.

²⁶http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Complete_Works_of_Swami_Vivekananda/Volume_1/Raja-Yoga/Patanjali%27s_Yoga_Aphorisms_-_Concentration:_Its_Practice; accessed on June 27, 2010

He had to take refuge in Buddha.... Wise are those who do not succumb either to aggression or to depression.²⁷ The character of an individual is cultivated by rising above petty likes and dislikes. When an individual transcends petty likes and dislikes, he, she acquire divine qualities and perfection. As per Swami Sandeepananda Giri, director, School of Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna is the pinnacle of perfection. The epic *Mahabharata* depicts Krishna in all his glory, beyond all attributes.

LORD KRISHNA AS A ROLE MODEL

Lord Krishna is the visible manifestation of the Indian philosophy that speaks about the inherent unity in diversity. If we look at the life of Krishna, we can find that his actions were intimately connected with the world. Speaking about Krishna, Sri Sri Ravishankar says, 'Long before Karl Marx, Lenin and Mao, a historical figure in India fought against oppression, championed the cause of the poor, denounced religious dogma and empty ritualism, and sought to inspire a righteous and selfless attitude in society'.²⁸

Krishna took birth in a prison. What a place to be born in! His childhood was with the cowherds, who in modern parlance, can be referred to as the neglected populace. One among the cowherds, he served them and protected them from numerous external attacks from demons like Aghasura and Dhenuakasura. Krishna liberated the towns of Mathura and Brindavan from the tyranny of his uncle Kamsa by killing him. This indicates that personal relationships should not become or act as a hindrance when one is engaged in any righteous duty.

Krishna can be considered the first communist. He inspired Arjuna to fight and not accept oppression, and to fight not with anger or hatred, but with intelligence, equanimity and wisdom. Krishna epitomised the art of giving. During childhood, he shared butter with all the boys. Later in life, he shared his wealth. The incident when he gives away a substantial part of his wealth to his childhood (and impoverished) friend Sudama is well-known. No wonder Krishna is referred to as *Deenabandhu/Deenavatsala* (friend of the poor). *Srimad Bhagavatam* cites that during the last days of Krishna, he would give gifts to people every morning.

Krishna never had any selfish desires. Liberating the 16,000 women imprisoned by Narakasura, Krishna asked them to go back to their homes. They told Krishna that it would be impossible for them to live with dignity in their old homes as they have been prisoners of the demon, and pleaded Krishna to protect them. Krishna took the responsibility to protect them and thus was called their '*bharta*' (supporter; not a husband in the worldly sense). There are no instances of Krishna craving for kingdom or official powers. 'The message in the *Bhagavad Gita*, for instance, is relevant to modern day managers. The *karma yoga*, as preached by Lord Krishna, is interesting because it talks of performing one's own *dharma* without being worried about the consequences. A top manager or CEO should also be a *karma yogi*, focussed on efficiency and apt decision-making without being stressed about the outcome,' says professor Prasad Kaipa, director, Centre for Leadership, Innovation and Change, Indian School of Business, Hyderabad.²⁹

²⁷ *An Intimate Note to the Sincere Seeker* – 5, Sri Sri Ravishankar, Vyakti Vikas Kendra, Bengaluru, 2005

²⁸ 'Krishna, The First Communist', *The Indian Express*, September 18, 2005

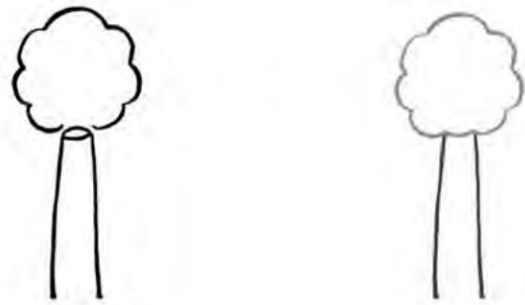
²⁹ *The Hindu Businessline*, www.thehindubusinessline.com/manager/2008/11/03/stories/2008110350371100.htm; accessed on April 28, 2010

In *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna says, '*Vidyavinaya sampanna...*', meaning, one who is wise regards all men as equal and does not discriminate people as learned, unlearned, untouchable, etc. Krishna was the epitome of such qualities. He supported the Pandavas, who were oppressed by the powerful Kauravas. Knowing that there is none to relieve the suffering of Pandavas, Krishna stood with them. Krishna also went as an ambassador of peace to Kauravas court at Hastinapura, as a representative for Pandava. There the intensity and logic of his arguments, justifications and pleadings convinced and impressed all, except Duryodhana. The reasoning and logical strength of Krishna is also manifested while counseling Arjuna during the battle of Kurukshetra.

Krishna rebelled against dogmatic practices conducted in the name of religion. 'A centuries' old pernicious practice of the cowherd community of offering ritual sacrifices was replaced with love and care for cow and its progeny – which had a significant long-term economic value for the community,' writes Dr Uday Vir Singh.³⁰ On Krishna's advice, even the sacrificial *puja* to Lord Indra was stopped and the caring service for cows (Govardhan puja) had been started. *Govardhan puja* also meant honouring the knowledge of the divinity in oneself.

The life of Lord Krishna exemplifies his innate connection with nature. Krishna's foster father Nanda was the chief of Gokula, and thus Krishna had all the opportunities to lead a luxurious life. However, during his childhood, he herded cows in the forests. Krishna took them to graze and gave tender care to the calves by allowing them to have their full share of milk from their mother cows – only then was the remaining milk used at home. He also encountered Kaliya, the mammoth, poison-fuming serpent who polluted the Kalindi river. It is said that birds flying over the river would drop dead due to the poisonous fumes emanating from the river. As the wind carried these fumes, the plant and animal life on the shores also met with destruction (does the scenario sound somewhat similar to a modern one wherein our factories are situated near rivers?). Krishna subdued Kaliya of his venom and ordered him to relocate to a remote location. This incident points at the concern Krishna had for people and the environment.

Krishna demonstrated how one can live in the world, while not letting the world living in oneself. 'There are very few who have been able to rejoice both in victory and in defeat. Sri Krishna is one who celebrated both. That is why he always wore a big smile. He took birth with a smile on



It's your choice. www.actnow.wa.gov.au

An environmental campaign from Department of Environment and Conservation, Government of Western Australia.³¹ Lord Krishna was instrumental in relocation of polluting entities.

³⁰ *Management Wisdom of Lord Krishna*, Uday Vir Singh, New Century Publications, New Delhi, 2007

³¹ Used with permission.

his face, lived with a smile, and left his body with a smile. The message that he conveyed through his life is that we should live life full of laughter' says Mata Amritanandamayi.³² Krishna gave the ideal of how one can be at supreme peace within, while engaged in dynamic action outside.

DEVOTIONAL SERVICE AND SERVANT LEADERSHIP

The aspects of devotional service and servant leadership can be best illustrated with the instances of two business leaders:

Floy Aguenza, president and COO of Planters Development Bank (Philippines) says:

'I believe in God the Father and Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and that we were placed on this earth for a purpose. I believe we have been given our life for a reason, that there is a purpose for our life and we need to discover what we are here for. The truth is, we are here to do good – to make the world a better place, to be better people, and to help others live a better life. This is what I keep trying to do everyday.

When confronted with a situation, I am basically guided by the question, 'What would Jesus do?' I read an exercise in a book by a Jesuit writer where he talked about seeing Christ in others and helping others see Christ in you. And I try to do that. All of these help me to cope as my day unfolds and, most especially, prepared me for what would be one of the greatest challenges in my life.'³³

In the second instance, Francisco Roberto Canada, director and partner of Errepar S.A., a major publishing firm in Argentina says, 'As to our earnings, our aim is to use 25 percent of our profits for paying taxes; 25 percent for reinvestment; 25 percent for us; and to give away 25 percent in donations. Sometimes we achieve our aim, sometimes we don't' (refer Footnote #16).

BHAGAVAD GITA AND MANAGEMENT

Before reading more about the relationship between *Bhagavad Gita* and Management, let us consider a personal experience – how Bhagavad Gita influenced G Narayana, chairman emeritus for Excel Industries (India), during highly challenging times in his professional work:

.'During my postgraduate studies, I stood first and received a gold medal in management. Western management was in my blood. Management by objectives, planning, organising, directing and controlling were absorbed by me. That's why my rise was so high. I had engineering plus management skills, but spirituality was missing.

Now, I had the *Gita*. Since there was no guru (teacher), only the book, I took the sacred book to Baroda (now Vadodara, in Gujarat) where I lived. The author was a well-respected Swami, so I thought of him as my guru and I followed an 18-day yoga of studying the *Gita*. What I did then, I now call 'Gita Yoga'. I read one chapter everyday, eating only one time a day, and completely avoiding alcohol, non-vegetarian food (which I did not eat anyway),

³²<http://archives.amritapuri.org/bharat/symbolism/srikrishna.php>, Accessed on April 28, 2010

³³Quotations extracted from the public knowledge base of the 'Spiritual Based Leadership Research Programme' are © 2006 by the Global Dharma Center (GDC). GDC retains the copyright to all excerpts from this knowledge base.

tobacco, onion, and garlic. I observed silence (*maun*) while studying the *Gita* and I underlined whatever appealed to me, although everything looked wonderful in the *Gita*! I practised celibacy during all those 18 days.

It was a fantastic experience. At the end of 18 days, I stood up and the world stood up along with me. I went back to the bank and assured them that I would pay back every rupee of the loan. I called my partners and told them that I would pay back their investments. During those 18 days, new revelations, new understandings flowed into my thought and consciousness. My fear was gone' (refer Footnote #36).

Dr Jack Hawley, president, John A Hawley Associates, a consulting firm, consider his relationship with *Bhagavad Gita* to be a 'great love affair'.³⁴ 'I venerate the fact that its utter truths have been tried, tested and purified down through so many centuries. Like water that gradually filters down through earth and comes out sparkling pure, these important ideas have passed the sands of time and have been scrubbed clean in the process, eventually emerging as pure truth. So it's the *truth* I love, and the *Gita* is by now a fountain of truth. It gladdens me to drink of it'.³⁵ Many people associate *Bhagavad Gita* with Karma Yoga.³⁶ The following excerpt,³⁷ about duty, is from *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol.1 ('Karma Yoga', Ch.4).



What is duty?

Duty is seldom sweet. It is only when love greases its wheels that it runs smoothly; it is a continuous friction otherwise. How else could parents do their duties to their children, husbands to their wives, and vice versa? Do we not meet with cases of friction every day in our lives? Duty is sweet only through love, and love shines in freedom alone. Yet is it freedom to be a slave to the senses, to anger, to jealousies and a hundred other petty things that must occur every day in human life? In all these little roughnesses that we meet with in life, the highest expression of freedom is to forbear. Women, slaves to their own irritable, jealous tempers, are apt to blame their husbands, and assert their own 'freedom', as they think, not knowing that thereby they only prove that they are slaves. So it is with husbands who eternally find fault with their wives.

Chastity is the first virtue in man or woman, and the man who, however he may have strayed away, cannot be brought to the right path by a gentle and loving and chaste wife is indeed very rare. The world is not yet as bad as that. We hear much about brutal husbands all over the world and about the impurity of men, but is it not true that there are quite as many brutal and impure women as men? If all women were as good and pure as their own constant assertions would lead one to believe, I am perfectly satisfied that there would not be one impure man in the world. What brutality is there which purity and chastity cannot conquer? A good, chaste wife, who thinks of every other man except her own husband as her child and has the attitude of a mother towards all men, will grow so great in the power of her purity that there cannot be a single man, however brutal, who will not breathe an atmosphere of holiness in her presence. Similarly, every husband must look upon all women, except his own wife, in the light of his own mother or daughter or sister. That man, again, who wants to be a teacher of religion must look upon every woman as his mother, and always behave towards her as such.

³⁴www.gitawalkthrough.com/Adobe/Article%20Hug%20this%20book.pdf; accessed on April 28, 2010

³⁵www.gitawalkthrough.com/Adobe/Article%20Hug%20this%20book.pdf; accessed on April 28, 2010

³⁶Karma Yoga, also known as Buddhi Yoga (discipline of action) is based on the teachings of the *Bhagavad Gita*. Of the four paths to realisation, Karma Yoga is the science of achieving perfection in action. It is intrinsic to many derivative types of yoga. Refer http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karma_Yoga; accessed August 10, 2010

³⁷http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Complete_Works_of_Swami_Vivekananda/Volume_1/Karma-Yoga/What_is_Duty%3F; accessed on April 28, 2010

The position of the mother is the highest in the world, as it is the one place in which to learn and exercise the greatest unselfishness. The love of god is the only love that is higher than a mother's love; all others are lower. It is the duty of the mother to think of her children first and then of herself. But, instead of that, if the parents are always thinking of themselves first, the result is that the relation between parents and children becomes the same as that between birds and their offspring which, as soon as they are fledged, do not recognise any parents. Blessed, indeed, is the man who is able to look upon woman as the representative of the motherhood of God. Blessed, indeed, is the woman to whom man represents the fatherhood of God. Blessed are the children who look upon their parents as Divinity manifested on earth.

The only way to rise is by doing the duty next to us, and thus gathering strength go on until we reach the highest state. A young Sannyâsin went to a forest; there he meditated, worshipped, and practiced Yoga for a long time. After years of hard work and practice, he was one day sitting under a tree, when some dry leaves fell upon his head. He looked up and saw a crow and a crane fighting on the top of the tree, which made him very angry. He said, 'What! Dare you throw these dry leaves upon my head!' As with these words he angrily glanced at them, a flash of fire went out of his head — such was the Yogi's power — and burnt the birds to ashes. He was very glad, almost overjoyed at this development of power — he could burn the crow and the crane by a look. After a time he had to go to the town to beg his bread. He went, stood at a door, and said, 'Mother, give me food.' A voice came from inside the house, 'Wait a little, my son.' The young man thought, 'You wretched woman, how dare you make me wait! You do not know my power yet.' While he was thinking thus the voice came again: 'Boy, don't be thinking too much of yourself. Here is neither crow nor crane.' He was astonished; still he had to wait. At last the woman came, and he fell at her feet and said, 'Mother, how did you know that?' She said, 'My boy, I do not know your Yoga or your practices. I am a common everyday woman. I made you wait because my husband is ill, and I was nursing him. All my life I have struggled to do my duty. When I was unmarried, I did my duty to my parents; now that I am married, I do my duty to my husband; that is all the Yoga I practice. But by doing my duty I have become illumined; thus I could read your thoughts and know what you had done in the forest. If you want to know something higher than this, go to the market of such and such a town where you will find a Vyâdha (The lowest class of people in India who used to live as hunters and butchers.) who will tell you something that you will be very glad to learn.' The Sannyasin thought, 'Why should I go to that town and to a Vyadha?' But after what he had seen, his mind opened a little, so he went. When he came near the town, he found the market and there saw, at a distance, a big fat Vyadha cutting meat with big knives, talking and bargaining with different people. The young man said, 'Lord help me! Is this the man from whom I am going to learn? He is the incarnation of a demon, if he is anything.' In the meantime this man looked up and said, 'O Swami, did that lady send you here? Take a seat until I have done my business.' The Sannyasin thought, 'What comes to me here?' He took his seat; the man went on with his work, and after he had finished he took his money and said to the Sannyasin, 'Come sir, come to my home.' On reaching home the Vyadha gave him a seat, saying, 'Wait here,' and went into the house. He then washed his old father and mother, fed them, and did all he could to please them, after which he came to the Sannyasin and said, 'Now, sir, you have come here to see me; what can I do for you?' The Sannyasin asked him a few questions about soul and about god, and the Vyadha gave him a lecture which forms a part of the *Mahâbhârata*, called 'Vyâdha-Gîtâ'. It contains one of the highest flights of the Vedanta. When the Vyadha finished his teaching, the Sannyasin felt astonished. He said, 'Why are you in that body? With such knowledge as yours why are you in a Vyadha's body, and doing such filthy, ugly work?' 'My son,' replied the Vyadha, 'no duty is ugly, no duty is impure. My birth placed me in these circumstances and environments. In my boyhood I learnt the trade; I am unattached, and I try to do my duty well. I try to do my duty as a householder, and I try to do all I can to make my father and mother happy. I neither know your Yoga, nor have I become a Sannyasin, nor did I go out of the world into a forest; nevertheless, all that you have heard and seen has come to me through the unattached doing of the duty which belongs to my position.'

There is a sage in India, a great yogi, one of the most wonderful men I have ever seen in my life. He is a peculiar man, he will not teach any one; if you ask him a question he will not answer. It is too much for him to take up the position of a teacher, he will not do it. If you ask a question, and wait for some days, in the course of conversation he will bring up the subject, and wonderful light will be thrown on it. He told me once the secret of work, 'Let the end and the means be joined into one.' When you are doing any work, do not think of anything beyond. Do it as worship, as the highest worship, and devote your whole life to it for the time being. Thus, in the story, the Vyadha and the woman did their duty with cheerfulness and whole-heartedness; and the result was that they became illumined, clearly showing that the right performance of the duties of any station in life, without attachment to results, leads us to the highest realisation of the perfection of the soul.

THE INDIAN ETHOS AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

A focus on ‘duties first, rights later’ can contribute to a strong foundation in corporate governance, through the idea of ‘trusteeship’. It can be considered as a socio-economic philosophy that looks forward to an egalitarian society. Trusteeship can be thus explained in the words of Mahatma Gandhi, ‘Supposing I have come by a fair amount of wealth – either by way of legacy, or by means of trade and industry – I must know that all that wealth does not belong to me; what belongs to me is the right to an honourable livelihood, no better than that enjoyed by millions of others. The rest of my wealth belongs to the community and must be used for the welfare of the community.’³⁸ In the concept of trusteeship, the leaders/managers consider themselves to be the owners, not in their own right, but as owners representing the stakeholders.

Hues of similarity to this concept can be found in *Arthashastra*, where it says, ‘The king (leader) shall consider as good, not what pleases himself but what pleases his subjects (followers)’ and ‘The king (leader) is a paid servant and enjoys the resources of the state together with the people.’³⁹ The concept of trusteeship is also similar to the ‘servant leadership’ practice in leadership, where leaders are often seen as humble stewards of their organisation’s resources and achieve results for their organisations by prioritising their attention towards the needs of their colleagues and those they serve. ‘It is perfectly possible for an individual to adopt this way of life without having to wait for others to do so. And if one individual can observe a certain code of conduct, it follows that even a group of individuals can do likewise. It is necessary for me to emphasise the fact that no one need wait for anyone else in order to adopt a right course,’ said Gandhi (refer Footnote #38). Mahatma Gandhi demonstrated the ethos of trusteeship through personal example, a fact that became increasingly significant in the current times – when there is a hue and cry about CEO (top management) salaries hitting the roof.

Gandhi also said, ‘Now let us consider how equal distribution can be brought about through non-violence. The first step towards it for him who has made this ideal part of his being is to bring about the necessary changes in his personal life. He would reduce his wants to a minimum, bearing in mind the poverty of India. His earnings would be free of dishonesty. The desire for speculation would be renounced. His habitation would be in keeping with his new mode of life. There would be self-restraint exercised in every sphere of life’ (refer Footnote #16). Gandhi’s trusteeship system is consistent with the idealism of the *Ishopanishad* that enunciated that worldly objects can be truly enjoyed only when the enjoyer develops dispassion and detachment – *tena tyektena bhunjita*.

Trusteeship can also be better understood through a conversation that occurred between Swami Vivekananda and John Rockefeller, the American industrialist who set up the Rockefeller foundation. A related excerpt from the speech given by R Gopalakrishnan, executive director, Tata Sons at IIM Bangalore, on Gandhi Jayanti:⁴⁰

‘In the late 1800s, Swami Vivekananda went to Chicago to attend the Parliament of Religions. He became an ardent and outspoken advocate of human values. One of the people he met in

³⁸*The Mind Of Mahatma Gandhi*, RK Prabhu and UR Rao, Navajivan Mudranalaya, 1945

³⁹http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Servant_leadership; accessed on April 28, 2010

⁴⁰Tata Group, www.tata.com/media/Speeches/inside.aspx?artid=Ixir+D8crmY; accessed on March 11, 2010, Used with permission.

Chicago was John D Rockefeller, who had made a great fortune in the booming oil business at the time. Rockefeller was introduced to the Swami by a friend. Madame Emma Calve, a French lady disciple narrated this episode to Madame Drinette Verdier, who has written about their meeting in her diary. That is my source.

Rockefeller probably came for a lark, meaning that he wasn't really interested in meeting Swami Vivekananda; he had been told that a saffron-clad monk was electrifying the people of Chicago, and it is possible that he went out of curiosity. Swamiji didn't even look up from his desk when Rockefeller entered. He continued to do his work. After a while, he looked up at Rockefeller, who was not really used to being treated like a commoner. Rockefeller took a seat and conversation ensued.

It became apparent to Swamiji that Rockefeller had lots of wealth and Swamiji posed him a question, 'If you have that much more money than other people, do you think that much smarter than other people?' Rockefeller replied, "Of course." If he wasn't a hundred times smarter, he wouldn't have had hundred times the money, would he?

Swamiji left him with the thought that he may not be one hundred times smarter, he may be just three times smarter. If he had made a hundred times more money by being three times smarter, then perhaps he was merely an instrument through which this money has to go back to somebody else. "Why don't you think about it? And why don't you consider leaving some of your money for other people?"

This sounded absolutely ridiculous to Rockefeller, and he departed with the polite statement that he had worked really hard to make his money, and he had absolutely no intention of leaving it to other people. But curiously, three weeks later, he came back to see Swami Vivekananda, this time of his own accord. He threw on his table a piece of paper, by which he endowed a certain sum of money – I forget how much it was, but it was small by Rockefeller's standards – for some noble purpose. He asked the Swami, "Are you happy now that I have done this?" Swamiji responded, "Why should I be happy? You have to ask yourself whether you have left enough out of the total wealth that you have?"

It took another 15 years after this episode, and Rockefeller set up the Rockefeller Foundation in 1913, which has gone on to do an enormous amount of good work in society over the last several decades. The story illustrates the point of trusteeship. When you have earned a lot of money, whose money is it? Did that money come to you entirely because of yourself or is it possible that you are merely an instrument through which you should channelise back to society? It is a very interesting question to ponder. I narrate this story, because the element of trusteeship comes out so clearly in the conversation between Swami Vivekananda and John D Rockefeller.'

JRD Tata is one of the business leaders who have been influenced by the trusteeship concept of Mahatma Gandhi. It is interesting to note that another doyen from the Tata Group, Jamsetji Tata, set up the JN Tata Endowment Trust in 1892, much before the Rockefeller Foundation, the Andrew Carnegie Trust, the Ford Foundation, and the Lord Leverhulme Trust came into existence. The roles played by Jamsetji Tata and JRD Tata have resulted in the creation and sustenance of corporate citizenship and are responsible for the practice of values among the Tata Group. It is no co-incidence that among the 13 top-rated socially responsible companies (ranked by Karmayog.org) for 2009,

four belonged to the Tata group. More significantly, almost two-thirds of the shares of Tata Sons, the promoter company and the major shareholder for the Tata Group of companies, are held by charitable companies.

THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION AND 'UNITY IN DIVERSITY'

In a research article, 'The Constitution of India: Symbol of Unity in Diversity', MP Singh and S Deva state: 'In their long history, people of India have learnt to respect diversity and to live with it. They have kept their doors open for people and ideas from any part of the world. They have not fossilised any religious or other dogmas or isms. Nor have they imposed them on others.' The article goes on to indicate that it is the value and spirit of humanity among Indians that gave the Constitution of India whatever success it has achieved.⁴¹ Addressing the Parliament of World Religions held at Chicago, in 1893, Swami Vivekananda said, 'The present convention, which is one of the most august assemblies ever held, is in itself a vindication, a declaration to the world of the wonderful doctrine preached in the Gita: 'Whosoever comes to Me, through whatsoever form, I reach him; all men are struggling through paths which in the end lead to me.' Sectarianism, bigotry, and its horrible descendant, fanaticism, have long possessed this beautiful earth. They have filled the earth with violence, drenched it often with human blood, destroyed civilization, and sent entire nations into despair. Had it not been for these horrible demons, human society would be far more advanced than it is now.'⁴² Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism originated in this country. India also welcomed other religions like Zoroastrianism and Judaism, when they were persecuted in other regions of the world. Christianity came to India before it flourished in Europe.

India is home to about 7.6 percent of all mammalian, 12.6 percent avian, 6.2 percent reptilian, and 6.0 percent flowering plant species of the world.⁴³ It is the land where everything is worshipped - rats, trees, monkeys, cows, eagles, snakes, peacocks and more. Most Indians themselves find it intriguing to understand this culture. Bullocks and BMWs travel on the same Indian roads; Indian cuisine is said to be one of the richest in the world. Interestingly, although perceived to be Chinese dishes in India, Vegetable Manchurian and Chilli Paneer (among many other recipes) were not created in China but in India! Games as diverse as chess, snakes-and-ladders, ludo and kabaddi originated in India. Dr Fred Alan Wolf, author of *Taking the Quantum Leap: The New Physics for Nonscientists*, says, 'India is truly a mystery containing all that is the worthiest, most spiritual, and intellectual in humankind and the worst aspects of humankind one could ever hope to find including total lack of concern for others, extreme material poverty, and spiritual bankruptcy and fraud. In other words, India is the world with everything revealed both of the highest form and lowest denominator. I love India. I hate India. I cannot ever go to India without returning with strong feelings about it. My latter writings would not be the same without my frequent stays in India and the influences that this country has had on my thoughts and feelings. If India did not exist, we would create it just as it is perfect in its imperfection.'⁴⁴ India has been enigma to many people. They wonder how the

⁴¹http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=897021; accessed on July 3, 2010

⁴²http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Complete_Works_of_Swami_Vivekananda/Volume_1/Addresses_at_The_Parliament_of_Religions/Response_to_Welcome

⁴³<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/India>

⁴⁴As told to one of the authors

world's second most populous country, with more than a billion people comprising a multilingual and multiethnic society, can exist together.

Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev says, 'Confusion is a boon. If you made a conclusion, it is death'.⁴⁵ One of the foundations of Indian philosophy is that human beings are all sparks of the divine. This concept forms the foundation on which values and ethics are built, and based on which laws, rules and regulations are created. 'Unity in diversity' is that knowledge, which celebrates the oneness underlying groups of people differentiated by barriers that are physical and psychological. This awareness results in respect and cooperation among people who are otherwise restricted to structures like race, religion, caste, gender, language, region, economic status, etc. Seers have experienced and laymen believed that behind the diverse names and forms, there is the universal life. The endeavour was to look behind the veil of forms. Sri Sathya Sai Baba says,⁴⁶

'Religions are many, but goal is one,
Jewels are many, but gold is one,
Stars are many, but sky is one
Cows are many, but milk is one,
Beings are many, but breath is one,
Nations are many, but earth is one,
Flowers are many, but worship is one.'



If you are a poet, you will see clearly that there is a cloud floating in this sheet of paper. Without a cloud, there will be no rain; without rain, the trees cannot grow; and without trees, we cannot make paper. The cloud is essential for the paper to exist. If the cloud is not here, the sheet of paper cannot be here either....

If we look into this sheet of paper even more deeply, we can see the sunshine in it. If the sunshine is not there, the forest cannot grow. In fact, nothing can grow. Even we cannot grow without sunshine. And so, we know that the sunshine is also in this sheet of paper.... And if we continue to look, we can see the logger who cut the tree and brought it to the mill to be transformed into paper. And we see the wheat. We know the logger cannot exist without his daily bread, and therefore the wheat that became his bread is also in this sheet of paper. And the logger's father and mother are in it too. When we look in this way, we see that without all of these things, this sheet of paper cannot exist.

Looking even more deeply, we can see we are in it too. This is not difficult to see, because when we look at a sheet of paper, the sheet of paper is part of our perception. Your mind is in here and mine is also. So we can say that everything is in here with this sheet of paper. You cannot point out one thing that is not her—time, space, the earth, the rain, the minerals in the soil, the sunshine, the cloud, the river, the heat. Everything co-exists with this sheet of paper...

That is why I think the word inter-be should be in the dictionary. "To be" is to inter-be. You cannot just be by yourself alone. You have to inter-be with every other thing. This sheet of paper is, because everything else is. Suppose we try to return one of the elements to its source. Suppose we return the sunshine to the sun. Do you think that this sheet of paper will be possible? No, without sunshine nothing can be. And if we return the logger to his mother, then we have no sheet of paper either. The fact is that this sheet of paper is made up only of "non-paper elements." And if we return these non-paper elements to their sources, then there can be no paper at all. Without "non-paper elements," like mind, logger, sunshine and so on, there will be no paper. As thin as this sheet of paper is, it contains everything in the universe in it.

Source: Reprinted from *The Sun My Heart: From Mindfulness to Insight Contemplation* (1988, 2010) by Thich Nhat Hanh with permission of Parallax Press, Berkeley, California.

⁴⁵www.channels.com/episodes/show/4196402/Times-Now-Spirituality-for-Everyone-with-Sadhguru; accessed on July 3, 2010

⁴⁶www.eaisai.com/baba/docs/d000716.html; accessed on July 3, 2010



'Behind the scene' role played by hundreds of beings who contribute to the food that we have daily.

A Photo-essay on the Interconnectivity Among Beings

When we know and experience the nurturing role played by other entities in our moment to moment existence, a feeling of devotional service enters to our daily duties. The collage on this page illustrates the interconnectivity among various living and non-living beings. It also indicates how millions of beings are involved in various activities, much before the food is brought to us in an edible form. Furthermore, this picture shows how various beings contribute to this process by participating well in their duties, without expecting results from this participation.

Albert Einstein said, 'A hundred times every day I remind myself that my inner and outer life are based on the labors of other men, living and dead, and that I must exert myself in order to give in the same measure as I have received and am still receiving...'

Key Concepts

1. Worship of trees is a custom across the world. This is done as a mark of respect for the life-giving quality of the tree and the fertility of the earth. A tree marks the sacred centre.
2. Numerous temples in India are associated with the five elements of space, ether, wind, air, fire, water and earth. Each deity is associated with certain trees.
3. The philosophy of this land has considered natural environment to be an intimate part of us. Deepak Chopra says,

'That tree is your lungs. If it didn't breathe, you wouldn't breathe. And if you didn't breathe, it wouldn't breathe. It is inseparable. The earth is your body. The rivers and waters of our planet are your circulation. Pollute them, you'll pollute your circulation. The air is your breath. The energies of the universe are your emotions. The information states of the universe are your thoughts. There is no difference between an electromagnetic synaptic storm in your brain and an electromagnetic synaptic storm in the sky. There is no inside, there is no outside. There is a single reality that is differentiating into the observer and the observed, the perceiver and the perceived, the subjective reality and the objective reality.'

4. 'Freedom of' is the freedom of our senses, impulses, tendencies, etc. 'Freedom from' stands for freedom from the retarding tendencies. One should not be a servant to the senses, nor succumb to whims and fancies of one's own emotion and passion. One should be the master of the senses.
5. The leadership message in *Bhagavad Gita* is relevant to modern day managers. The *karma yoga*, as preached by Lord Krishna, talks of performing one's own *dharma* without worrying about consequences. A top manager or CEO should also be a *karma yogi* – focussed on efficiency and decision-making without any stress about the outcome,
6. The concept of trusteeship is similar to the practice of 'servant leadership'. In that, the leader of an organisation is a humble steward of the organisation's resources and achieves results for the organisation by prioritising attention towards the needs of colleagues and those whom the leader serves.

Key Words

Puranas,
Yaksha,
Hira Ratan Manek,
Tirtha,
Freedom of,
Freedom from,
Namasmarana,

Gita Rahasya,
Stress
management,
Bhagavad Gita,
Anger
management,

Lord Krishna,
Karma yogi,
Gita Yoga,
Vyâdha,
Trusteeship,
Servant leadership

Classroom Exercise

- Plant two tree saplings and inspire a friend or a relative to plant another tree sapling. You need to care for and, nurture these saplings for at least two years. You can select saplings of trees native to your region.
- Develop a vision, mission statement and code of conduct for your life.

Introspective Exercise

1. How would it be for you to have someone with the qualities of Krishna as your guide?
2. How would it be for you to have someone with the qualities of Krishna as your boss?
3. How would it be if you were to embody the qualities that Krishna stood for?
4. How would it be for India and the world if more and more people develop the qualities of Krishna?
5. The following is a spiritual progress instrument adapted from an exercise designed by Dr Jack Hawley, author of *Reawakening the Spirit at Work: The Power of Dharmic Management*: 'Proceed unhurriedly with high receptivity. Notice your awareness shift as you proceed. Do not seek to learn the material, but to become it — to actually be the consciousness that permeates these teachings.' (The original instrument and other articles are available for download at www.gitawalkthrough.com).

How Illumined am I?

Self-inquiry–Self-assessment

Consider the list of the qualities of the 'illuminated one' to be both a life goal list and life assignment checklist. Take it seriously but not grimly. As you read each item, do the following:

- On a scale of 1 to 9 rate yourself (see sample scale shown here) alongside each of the 21 items based on the extent you practice that in your life at this time.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Never		Seldom		Sometimes		Frequently		Always

- Mark ** for any 'impossibility' (qualities that, to you, now seem unattainable).
- Date this sheet and revisit it later to check your progress. (You will be pleasantly surprised.)

'The truly enlightened human, the "illuminated one" can be identified by certain qualities. He or she...

- _____ abandons all selfish desires, cravings, and torments of the heart
- _____ is satisfied with the true self within (*atma*)
- _____ wants nothing outside of the True Self
- _____ knows that real bliss is found only within
- _____ is unperturbed by sorrow and adversity
- _____ does not thirst for pleasures

- _____ is free of the three traits that most tarnish the mind: greed, fear, anger
- _____ is detached from worldly objects of desire
- _____ neither rejoices nor gets depressed when faced with good or bad fortune
- _____ is poised in wisdom above worldly turmoil
- _____ deftly withdraws the senses from attractions of the world (just as the turtle pulls in its limbs to protect itself)
- _____ keeps the mind ever intent on achieving the goal of life, which is union with divinity
- _____ gets in the habit of substituting divine thoughts for bad thoughts and sense attractions
- _____ stays free of either attachment or aversion to sense attractions
- _____ is tranquil of heart
- _____ is absorbed in the peace and wisdom of the true self within (*atma*)
- _____ knows that serenity is the point where all sorrow ends!
- _____ uses the mind's powers to restrain the senses and steady the mind
- _____ is totally still, never disturbed, despite the constant flow of desires and attachments
- _____ is free of ego (the sense of 'I' and 'mine')
- _____ lives life devoid of cravings; forgets desire.

...Once you attain this fixed, still state, you will never fall back into delusion. You will, eventually, achieve the goal of life, which is to merge into me, divinity.'

Review Questions

1. In the context of Indian ethos, write an essay on the theme of 'Man, society, nature and god.'
2. Differentiate between 'Freedom of' and 'Freedom from'. Give specific examples from the life of an average student that best illustrate 'Freedom of' and 'Freedom from'. How can you help fellow-students move away from 'Freedom of' to 'Freedom from'?
3. Explain the Marshmallow experiment.
4. 'Both, the biological organism and what we call the 'environment' are differentiated patterns of behavior of a single reality...': How does Deepak Chopra explain this statement?
5. Name the trees associated with each of the five Nakshatras of your choice.

Choose the Correct Answer

1. Lord Dattatreya is associated with the tree called:
 - (a) Bargad
 - (b) Gular
 - (c) Pipal
 - (d) Bel
2. Which is not amongst the five temples that represent the five elements of space, sky, ether, wind, air, fire, water and earth:
 - (a) Arunachalesvara
 - (b) Jambukeshwara
 - (c) Ekambareshwara
 - (d) Brahadeeshwara
3. Hira Ratan Manek, the man known for living only on a water and solar diet was inspired by the teachings of:
 - (a) Sri Satya Sai Baba
 - (b) Gautama Budha
 - (c) Bhagavan Mahavira
 - (d) Swami Vivekananda
4. Lord Krishna was called the *Bhartha* of 16,000 women because:
 - (a) He saved them from a demon
 - (b) He took the responsibility to protect them
 - (c) He married all of them
 - (d) He gave away his wealth to these women
5. Who among the following is known to practice sustainable farming practices?
 - (a) Balaram
 - (b) Duryodhana
 - (c) Drona
 - (d) Bheeshma
6. Who said, 'God lives in his creation. Caring for the environment and nature is the best form of worship...'?
 - (a) Sri Sri Ravi Shankar
 - (b) Mata Amritanandamayi
 - (c) Prophet Muhammed
 - (d) Zoraster
7. Who said, 'It is *swaraj* when we learn to rule ourselves. It is, therefore, in the palm of our hands. But such *Swaraj* has to be experienced, by each one for himself. One drowning man will never save another'?
 - (a) Subhash Chandra Bose
 - (b) Lala Lajpat Rai
 - (c) Mahatma Gandhi
 - (d) Vinobha Bhave

8. Which leadership philosophy put forth by Rober Greenleaf is similar to the concept of trusteeship propounded by Mahatma Gandhi?
 - (a) Servant leadership
 - (b) Humanistic leadership
 - (c) Transactional leadership
 - (d) *Laissez Faire* leadership
9. '...if you want to remain at the erotic level, you can choose to stay outside the temple. If you want to go to the sanctum inside the temple, then you have to give up eroticism and raise your eyes toward God.' Ashoke Maitra commented thus, while speaking about _____ temples in India.
 - (a) Kashi
 - (b) Kedarnath
 - (c) Kanyakumari
 - (d) Khajuraho
10. What does *Vidyavinaya sampanna* mean?
 - (a) One who is wise regards all men as equal and does not discriminate people as learned, ignorant, untouchable, etc.
 - (b) One who is educated and is humble, wants to become rich
 - (c) One who is learnt and is humble, becomes rich in material wealth
 - (d) One who has the knowledge of the scriptures soon becomes rich

Answers: (1) Gular; (2) Brahadeeshwara; (3) Bhagavan Mahavira; (4) He took the responsibility to protect them; (5) Balaram; (6) Sri Sri Ravi Shankar; (7) Mahatma Gandhi; (8) Servant Leadership; (9) Khajuraho; and (10) One who is wise regards all men as equal and do not discriminate people as learned, ignorant, untouchable, etc.

State whether True or False

1. Bal Gangadhar Tilak, transformed the sufferings within a jail to make way for a conducive atmosphere where he authored '*Gita Rahasya*, a commentary on *Bhagavad Gita*.
2. On Krishna's advice, the sacrificial puja to Indra was started.
3. Lord Shiva is depicted as Dakshinamurthy, sitting in silence under *Ashwath Vriksha* (another name for the banyan tree).
4. Spending time in nature is one of the ways to relieve stress.
5. JN Tata Endowment Trust was started before the Rockefeller Foundation, Andrew Carnegie Trust, Ford Foundation and Lord Leverhulme Trust came into existence.

Answers: (1) True; (2) False; (3) True; (4) True; and (5) True

Recommended Reading

- *The Art of Man Making*, Swami Chinmayananda, Central Chinmaya Mission Trust, 1978
- *Spirituality in Management: Means or End?*, SK Chakraborty, Debangshu Chakraborty, Oxford University Press, 2008
- *Man Management: A Values-Based Management Perspective*, Sri Satya Sai Students and Staff Welfare Society, Prasanthi Nilayam, 2009

Recommended Website

- www.bigpicture.tv/?id=3214 (A video featuring Deepak Chopra and his perspective on the incorrect usage of the word 'environment')
- www.aravind.org/ivisiongoogle.htm (A video about Dr V and Aravind Eye Care System)

Case Studies

Spirituality and Human Values at Work

1. APJ Abdul Kalam: The Launch of Agni
2. Annalakshmi Foods: Manifesting Attributes of Loving, Serving and Giving
3. Project GreenHands
4. Catholic Health Initiatives
5. Providence Health Care
6. Sounds True
7. St Joseph Health System
8. Van Ede and Partners
9. Abdul Kareem: A Seed Sent from Heaven
10. Sri Sathya Sai University – A Value-based System of Education
11. The Enterprising Life of Isaac Tigrett

1. APJ Abdul Kalam

The Launch of Agni

Presented here is an excerpt from *Wings of Fire*¹, the autobiography of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, the former president of India:

‘The Agni team was comprised more than 500 scientists. Many organisations were networked to undertake this huge effort of launching Agni. The Agni mission had two basic orientations – work and workers. Each member was dependent on the others to accomplish his target. Contradiction and confusion are the two things most likely to occur in such situations. Different leaders accommodate concern for workers while getting work done, in their own personal ways. Some shed all concern for workers in order to get results. They use people merely as instruments to reach goals. Some give less importance to the work, and make an effort to gain the warmth and approval of people working with them. But what this team achieved was the highest possible integration in terms of both the quality of work and human relationships.

Involvement, participation and commitment were the key words to functioning. Each team member appeared to be performing by choice. The launch of Agni was the common stake not only for our scientists, but for their families too. VR Nagaraj was the leader of the electrical integration team. Dedicated technologist that he is, Nagaraj would forget basic requirements like food and sleep while on the integration gig. His brother-in-law passed away while he was at ITR. His family kept this information from Nagaraj so that there would be no interruption in his work towards the launch of Agni.

The Agni launch had been scheduled for 20 April 1989. This was going to be an unprecedented exercise. Unlike space launch vehicles, a missile launch involves wide-ranging safety hazards. Two radars, three telemetry stations, one tele-command station and four electro-optical tracking instruments to monitor the missile trajectory had been deployed. In addition, the telemetry station at Car Nicobar (ISTRAC) and the SHAR radars were also commissioned to track the vehicle. Dynamic surveillance was employed to cover the electrical power that flows from the missile batteries within the vehicle and to control system pressures. Should any deviation be noticed either in voltage or in pressure, the specially designed automatic checkout system would signal ‘Hold’. The flight operations would then be sequenced only if the defect was rectified. The countdown for the launch started at T–36 hours. The countdown from T–7.5 minutes was to be computer controlled.

¹*Wings of Fire: An Autobiography of APJ Abdul Kalam*, Arun Tiwari, Universities Press (India) Private Limited, 1999. The material from this book is reproduced here by arrangement with the publisher.

All activities preparatory to the launch went according to schedule. We had decided to move the people living in nearby villages to safety at the time of the launch. This attracted media attention, and led to much controversy. By the time 20 April 1989 arrived, the whole nation was watching us. Foreign pressure was exerted through diplomatic channels to abort the flight trial, but the Indian Government stood behind us like a rock and staved off any distraction to our work. We were at T-14.1 seconds when the computer signaled 'Hold', indicating that one of the instruments was functioning erratically. This was immediately rectified. Meanwhile, the down-range station asked for a 'Hold'. In another few seconds, multiple Holds were necessitated, resulting in irreversible internal power consumption. We had to abort the launch. The missile had to be opened up to replace the on-board power supplies. A weeping Nagaraj, by now informed about the tragedy in his family, met me and promised that he would be back within three days. The profiles of these courageous people will never be written about in any history book, but it is such silent people on whose hard work generations thrive and nations progress. Sending Nagaraj off, I met my team members who were in a state of shock and sorrow. I shared my SLV-3 experience with them. 'I lost my launch vehicle in the sea but recovered successfully. Your missile is in front of you. In fact you have lost nothing but a few weeks of rework.' This shook them out of their immobility and the entire team went back to retrieve the subsystems and recharge them.

The press was up in arms, and fielded various interpretations of the postponement of the flight to suit the fancies of their readership. Cartoonist Sudhir Dar sketched a shopkeeper returning a product to the salesman saying that like Agni it would not take off. Another cartoonist showed one Agni scientist explaining that the launch was postponed because the press button did not make contact. *The Hindustan Times* showed a leader consoling press reporters, 'There's no need for any alarm ... it's a purely peaceful, non-violent missile'.

After a detailed analysis conducted virtually around the clock for the next ten days, our scientists had the missile ready for launch on 1 May 1989. But, again, during the automatic computer checkout period at T-10 seconds, a Hold signal was indicated. A closer inspection showed that one of the control components, S1-TVC was not working according to the mission requirements. The launch had to be postponed yet again. Now, such things are very common in rocketry and quite often happen in other countries too. But the expectant nation was in no mood to appreciate our difficulties. *The Hindu* carried a cartoon showing a villager counting some currency notes and commenting to another, 'Yes, it's the compensation for moving away from my hut near the test site – a few more postponements and I can build a house of my own...'. Another cartoonist designated Agni as 'IDBM – Intermittently Delayed Ballistic Missile.' Amul's cartoon suggested that what Agni needed to do was use their butter as fuel!

I took some time off, leaving my team at ITR to talk to the DRDL- RCI community. The entire DRDL-RCI community assembled after working hours on 8 May 1989. I addressed the gathering of more than 2,000 persons, 'Very rarely is a laboratory or an R&D establishment given an opportunity to be the first in the country to develop a system such as Agni. A great opportunity has been given to us. Naturally major opportunities are accompanied by equally major challenges. We should not give up and we should not allow the problem to defeat us. The country doesn't deserve anything less than success from us. Let us aim for success.' I had

almost completed my address, when I found myself telling my people, 'I promise you, we will be back after successfully launching Agni before the end of this month.' Detailed analysis of the component failure during the second attempt led to the refurbishment of the control system. This task was entrusted to a DRDO-ISRO team. The team carried out the rectification of the first stage control system at the Liquid Propellant System Complex (LPSC) of ISRO and completed the task in record time with tremendous concentration and will-power. It was nothing short of amazing how hundreds of scientists and staff worked continuously and completed the system readiness with acceptance tests in just 10 days. The aircraft took off from Trivandrum with the rectified control systems and landed close to ITR on the eleventh day. But now it was the turn of hostile weather conditions to impede us. A cyclone threat was looming large. All the work centres were connected through satellite communication and HF links. Meteorological data started flowing in at 10 minute intervals.

Finally, the launch was scheduled for 22 May 1989. The previous night, Dr Arunachalam, General KN Singh and I were walking together with the defence minister KC Pant, who had come to ITR to witness the launch. It was a full-moon night, it was high tide and the waves crashed and roared, as if singing of His glory and power. Would we succeed with the Agni launch tomorrow? This question was foremost in all our minds, but none of us was willing to break the spell cast by the beautiful moonlit night. Breaking a long silence, the defence minister finally asked me, 'Kalam! What would you like me to do to celebrate the Agni success tomorrow?' It was a simple question, to which I could not think of an answer immediately. What did I want? What was it that I did not have? What could make me happier? And then I found the answer. 'We need 100,000 saplings to plant at RCI,' I said. His face lit up with a friendly glow. 'You are buying the blessings of mother earth for Agni,' defence minister KC Pant quipped. 'We will succeed tomorrow,' he predicted.

The next day Agni took off at 0710 hrs. It was a perfect launch. The missile followed a textbook trajectory. All flight parameters were met. It was like waking up to a beautiful morning from a nightmarish sleep. We had reached the launch pad after five years of continuous work at multiple work centres. We had lived through the ordeal of a series of snags in the last five weeks. We had survived pressure from everywhere to stop the whole thing. But we did it at last! It was one of the greatest moments of my life. A mere 600 seconds of elegant flight washed off our entire fatigue in an instant. What a wonderful culmination of our years of labour. I wrote in my diary that night:

*Do not look at Agni
as an entity directed upward
to deter the ominous
or exhibit your might.
It is fire
in the heart of an Indian.
Do not even give it
the form of a missile
as it clings to the*

*burning pride of this nation
and thus is bright.*

Review Questions

1. What are the various values that inspired the members of the Agni team to put in their best efforts towards the Agni project?
2. What could have helped APJ Abdul Kalam live through the uncertainty, especially during times of media pressure and the repeated postponement of missile launch?

2. Annalakshmi Foods: Manifesting Attributes of Loving, Serving and Giving¹

'...Purity of food brings in purity of mind.

That power which connects the body and the mind is present in the food that we take. Various kinds of food have varying effects on the mind.

There are certain kinds of food that make the mind and the body very strong and steady.

So it is absolutely essential that we should take pure and Sattvic food...'²

~ Swami Sivananda Saraswati, Master of Swami Shantananda Saraswati,³
who inspired the Annalakshmi Movement

Annalakshmi Foods Pvt. Ltd. (Annalakshmi), a chain of restaurants operating in India, had drawn its name from *Annalakshmi*, the goddess of plenty or abundance (in the Hindu mythology, *annam* means food and *Lakshmi* is the goddess of prosperity). The chain of restaurants was known for running a food production and service operation, as a service to the society. In addition, Annalakshmi restaurants also existed in Australia (Perth), Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur) and Singapore.

Annalakshmi had four restaurants in Coimbatore, which had carved a niche for themselves owing to word-of-mouth publicity and alignment with noble causes. This helped them continue their operations despite challenges like rising inflation through the past year (starting mid-2007) as well as competition. The brotherhood among the members of Annalakshmi helped them work towards the vision of offering more of their services to the public.

***'Athithi Devo Bhava'* – The Operational Guideline**

The restaurant chain, inspired by Swami Shantananda Saraswati, began operations in Malaysia in 1984 and in 1989 at Coimbatore. By July 2008, it had four units in Coimbatore itself – each located

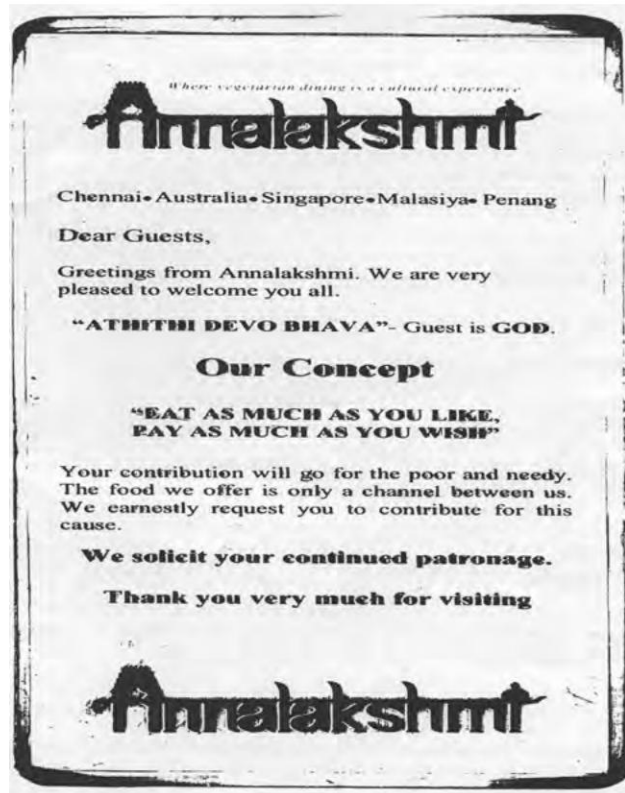
¹This case is prepared by Dr Nandagopal (director, PSG Institute of Management, Coimbatore) and Ajith Sankar R N (lecturer, PSG Institute of Management, Coimbatore) as the basis for class discussion rather than to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of an administrative situation. Copyright for the case exists with the authors. This case study may be copied/reproduced/distributed in any form/format, provided the contents of the case are not altered.

²www.dlshq.org/download/brahmacharya.htm; accessed on July 1, 2008

³http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swami_Shantananda; accessed on July 1, 2008

at Race Course, Mettupalayam Road (Mettupalayam), Sai Baba Colony and Vadavalli. The Sai Baba Colony unit had 20 covers, while other units had approximately 60 covers. The units operated Tuesday through Sunday. The Race Course restaurant offered its lunch services between 12–3 PM while dinner was served between 6.45–9.45 PM. Other units in Coimbatore also followed the same timings.

Exhibit CS2.1 *The Annalakshmi introduction and invitation card*



Driven by the motive to serve, the short-term profit motives of the Annalakshmi organisation did not affect its culture. The offering of food went beyond satiating bodily hunger. ‘When there is harmony, selflessness, joy and cheer in the kitchen devoid of anger, hatred and worries, the food thus prepared and served has the power of reaching the very depths and nourishing the entire being, rather than superficial satiation of body hunger. Such food makes our body – light, mind-calm and intelligence – dynamic’, read the online introduction⁴ of the Annalakshmi Singapore website.

The philosophy at the Mettupalayam unit stated: ‘Eat to your heart’s content, Pay what your heart feels’ (refer Exhibit CS2.1 and CS2.2 for introductory cards provided to dinner guests). In other

⁴www.annalakshmi.com.sg/index_files/EatAsYouWant.htm; accessed on July 1, 2008

Exhibit CS2.2 A card introducing the guiding philosophy at Annalakshmi***Experience The Joy of Giving . . .*****“Eat As You Like : Pay As You Feel”**

The joy of giving and sharing cannot be articulated that easily, it only has to be experienced. Giving for a good cause can make our society a better place to live in as it helps to provide opportunities to those who do not have access to them. This in turn raises the standard of living for the society and for us as well.

There is a special joy in giving. And yet, never think of it as “Charity”, just a helping hand that you are fortunate enough to be able to extend a lending arm.

“A candle loses nothing by lighting another candle”

We often say, “I would give, but only to the deserving”.

The trees in orchards say not so, nor the flocks in you pasture. They give that they may live, for to withhold is to perish.

Real giving lies not in what is given and known, but what is given but “NOT KNOWN”.

There is surely joy in acquiring things. But there is greater joy in giving. TRY ONCE. You do not have to give up everything, make one small token attempt today - And see the difference.

The clouds occupy a higher position because they give out everything until they reduced to nothing. The oceans occupy the lower levels because they accept everything.

Annalakshmi

We support the artistic and charitable activities of Shivanjali Trust. Donations to Shivanjali Trust are exempted under Sec.80G of the Income Tax Act, 1961.

words, customers could decide what to pay for the food which they had been offered. 'But, won't they get cheated?' asked a mother who had heard of this concept for the first time.

Furthermore, this unit served pre-decided items for lunch. And, while the dishes were not elaborate, the food offered was unlimited. On weekdays, about 150–200 people were served at lunchtime (12–3 PM) and 100 people at dinnertime (7–9.15 PM). The number was a little higher during the

weekends. This unit adopted self-service as the mode of operation during lunch and dinner. Other units offered a la carte services (mainly Indian cuisine delicacies) and *Thali*.⁵ Besides, the Race Course unit also served coffee and snacks 24 hours a day. And, since Annalakshmi also offered outdoor catering service on various occasions, this particular unit had a separate banquet hall for seminars, exhibitions, family get-togethers and other occasions. Other units used their restaurant space for banquets. On such days, regular services were not provided. Annalakshmi also generated revenues through the retail sale of pickles, snacks, squashes and some fried food items, displayed near the entrance. The restaurant also sold food coupons through Coimbatore.com.⁶

A substantial number of operations – food production and service, housekeeping and other ancillary activities like transportation and interior design – were driven by volunteers, for whom Annalakshmi provided an opportunity to offer their services. The volunteers, from all walks of life, were offered pick-up and drop facility, in addition to food. Some of these volunteers felt that their experience had made them sensitive towards people who prepared and served food at restaurants.⁷ Jayalakshmi, a volunteer, says, ‘No one complains even if the spices are occasionally not right; they realise the thought behind the restaurant. I am very happy and feel content that I cook for such wonderful people.’⁸ This attitude of volunteers sharing their time for a broader cause ensured that the organisation did not require a formal hierarchical structure. There was a three-member board that looked into the overall operations at Annalakshmi. And, though volunteer did most of the work, Annalakshmi also availed the services of paid employees.

While there was no specific yardstick to assess the quality of food, Annalakshmi followed practices such as avoiding artificial flavourings to the maximum extent possible, not using silver foil for storing and packaging food items, and providing purified drinking water. Based on customer suggestions, Annalakshmi even changed its cutlery from EPNS⁹ to stainless steel. The unused food at Annalakshmi restaurants was served to orphanages and the leftover food was given to organisations/people who reared animals (like goats and pigs).

Deep-rooted Customer Loyalty

Annalakshmi had a loyal and regular set of clients. According to Prabhu, the operations’ executive at the Race Course unit of Annalakshmi, most dinner guests remembered to exchange pleasantries with him. ‘75–80 percent of the customers who visit us are regular customers,’ said Prabhu. How the service at Annalakshmi won the hearts of its customers, is the stuff of many a story. Prabhu recalls a particular one when an elderly gentleman, who came into Annalakshmi late in the night, had been unable to find appropriate food elsewhere. At Annalakshmi he was offered Pepper *Rasam*¹⁰; both the *Rasam* and the service were soothing to his body and mind. Not only was he a regular visitor to the restaurant ever since, he also donated Rs.25,000 for the functioning of the Trust. Other customers also echoes the same positive sentiments. Anand Subramanian, a faculty at a leading manage-

⁵An Indian meal with a selection of vegetables, rice, dal, sweet, etc., usually served in small bowls on a plate/tray.

⁶A web portal that provides information related to Coimbatore

⁷<http://anewsha.blogspot.com/2007/05/serves-you-right.html>; accessed on July 1, 2008

⁸*The Hindu*, www.hindu.com/thehindu/mp/2003/02/17/stories/2003021701520300.htm; accessed on July 1, 2008

⁹Electro-plated nickel silver, used as a cheaper substitute to silver, is considered to cause toxicity when in contact with acidic food or beverages.

¹⁰A soup popular in the southern part of India.

ment institute in Coimbatore, considered Annalakshmi to be ‘the’ favourite in his list of eateries: ‘Ethnic look, nice food and music and great service by volunteers make Annalakshmi my top choice. Vegetarians would love to go this place. Another group that will get attracted to Annalakshmi is the health-conscious customers.’ Anand frequented this outlet about four times a month.

More evidence of goodwill was evident in the customer reviews on websites like MouthShut.com¹¹ (refer Exhibit CS2.3 for guest comments about Annalakshmi restaurants operating worldwide). Initially, visitors found it difficult to accept the Annalakshmi concept and suspected it to be a marketing gimmick. However, this skepticism soon turned to a feeling of acknowledgement among people; restaurants witnessed customers returning to avail of their services. One newspaper article¹² cited a customer as saying: ‘I came in with cynicism. But after reading their brochure, I found it hard to control my tears. This is such a noble gesture. One finds mental peace while eating here, even if it is only a morsel.’ It is this kind of customer loyalty that keeps Prabhu optimistic even in the face of increasing competition, ‘There is a talk of the Taj Group of Hotels opening an outlet near one of our locations. We can look at it in two ways; I look at it as an opportunity. There are many people who prefer to eat at an exclusively vegetarian restaurant.’

Exhibit CS2.3 *Guest comments about Annalakshmi restaurant(s)*

‘I’ve been there before about 3 months back...have to agree with u that the food and service is really good... plus the atmosphere...and i love their concept of pay as much as u want but it doesn’t seem to work in msia...on that day itself i saw ppl pay only rm2 to rm5 after eating a huge meal...sigh...my friends have mentioned that he saw some just paid rm1!!’

Source: www.alwayswow.com/archive/2005/05/lunch_at_annala.html#comments

‘It’s not often that one goes to a restaurant and is asked, ‘How much would you like to pay, sir?’ That’s exactly what I was asked here today. Annalakshmi is an Indian vegetarian restaurant that has no prices; as they say, ‘eat what you want and give as you feel,’ and the money goes to The Temple of Fine Arts to support art and charity. ‘

Source: <http://eatbma.blogspot.com/2006/03/annalakshmi-dosa-deli-at-biopolis.html> ; accessed on July 1, 2008

‘At the reception, to our surprise, a very warm and friendly formally dressed gentleman informed us that our table was ready, even before we could introduce ourselves. Myself and my sister really couldn’t control our laughter ‘cause we both thought that we might have been the only people made a reservation for dinner at this new hotel. The Gentleman (eyeing our frenzied giggling) gave us both a blank yet a drolly look. After very reverently seating us at our table, the gentleman informed my dad in a very respectful tone (a sarcastic tone for us???) that all others who had reserved tables had already arrived and we were the only set of people pending arrival and that was the reason he could easily identify us. Should I elaborate on his subsequent expression towards me & my sister before he turned around to leave?’

Source: commitment accessed on July 1, 2008

(Contd)

¹¹An India focused website offering information and customer reviews related to consumer products and services. Substantial amount of content in this site is user generated.

¹²*The Hindu*, www.hindu.com/thehindu/mp/2003/02/17/stories/2003021701520300.htm; accessed on July 1, 2008

(Contd)

'We were visiting Perth last October; being Indians Annalakshmi naturally caught our attention. We felt very happy being there amidst friendly people especially the locals enjoy in Indian cuisine and also the hospitality of the devoted people giving the restaurant all the help and support needed.'

Source: www.news.com.au/perthnow/story/0,21598,21519940-5005384,00.html; accessed on July 1, 2008

'The food at Annalakshmi is remarkably like home food. A novelty at this restaurant is that the food is all served by volunteers who are all highly educated. The proceeds go to charity. The fruit juices are really good here. But when you look at the bill, you do wonder what made you come here and spend all that money for some food which looks and tastes just like the food at home.'

Source: <http://yellowpages.sulekha.com/chennai/food-dining/restaurant/south-indian/anna-salai/annalakshmi-restaurants-private-limited.htm>, Accessed on July 1, 2008; accessed on July 1, 2008

The four units of Annalakshmi were spread across the city (refer Exhibit CS2.4 for locations in Coimbatore). While the Saibaba Colony was one of the posh residential areas of Coimbatore, the Annalakshmi restaurant at Race Course had prime space visible from the main road – it was at close proximity to companies and corporate houses, cinema halls and game zones, clubs and educational institutions, as well as the main railway station. Foreigners who came to Coimbatore visited Annalakshmi to partake of traditional cuisine and culture.

The Family Support in Annalakshmi's Role as a Wealth Distributor

Annalakshmi restaurants were decorated with paintings and crafts from *Lavanya*, that wing of *Shivanjali* Trust (the umbrella body for all activities conducted by the followers of Swami Shantananda Saraswathi) which promoted visual arts. A visitor to Annalakshmi could choose to purchase any of those displays; new paintings and crafts were brought in its place. While there was no specific time-period to revamp the interiors, Prabhu pointed out that, while some paintings in the restaurant would change as frequently as four times a month, some others had not been changed during the past six months.

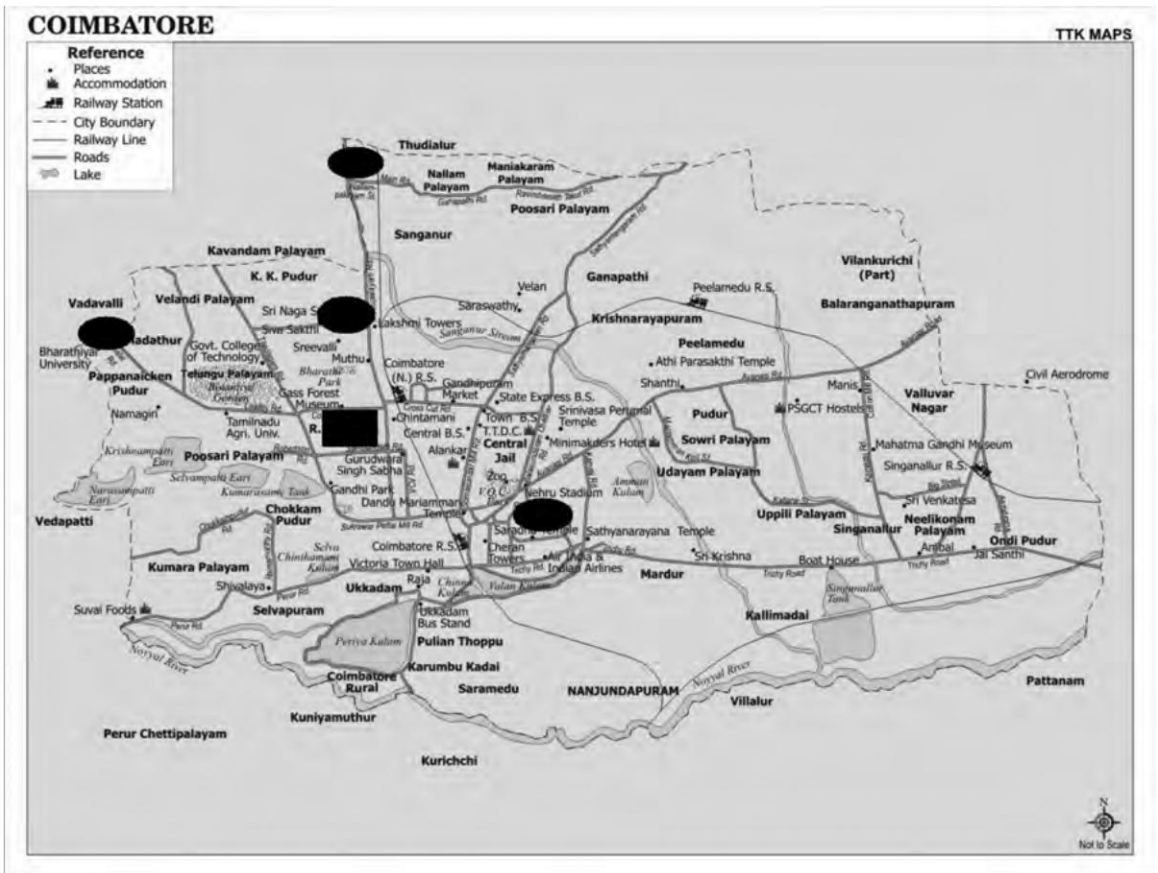
The surplus generated by Annalakshmi Restaurants was used to support causes related to fine arts and visual arts, and healthcare. Temple of Fine Arts promoted the performing arts while *Lavanya* promoted the visual arts. People from Temple of Fine Arts performed at banquet halls of Annalakshmi restaurants. Such performances attracted people to Annalakshmi. The Fine Arts school was run on the principle of 'Art just for the love of it'. At the school, no sincere student was turned away based on monetary considerations. Like Annalakshmi, other members of the *Shivanjali* Trust also offered their services on a 'Pay as much as you wish' basis during certain occasions like music and dance programmes.^{13 14}

About 200 women were provided employment at *Shiva Shakti*, which also provided training in handicraft skills. Some of the products thus manufactured included hand embroidered linen and decorative hangings, ethnic garments and pickles, spice powders and snacks. Located at Coimbatore, products from *Shiva Shakti* were merchandised through *Lavanya* Art Galleries and Annalakshmi. *Lavanya's* mission was 'To give hope and encouragement to the humble artisans whose lives need

¹³The Hindu, www.hindu.com/mp/2007/09/03/stories/2007090350770100.htm; accessed on July 1, 2008

¹⁴The Hindu, www.hindu.com/mp/2007/06/23/stories/2007062350670400.htm; accessed on July 1, 2008

Exhibit CS2.4 *The map of Coimbatore city, indicating locations of Annalakshmi and Pushti restaurants*



(Black ovals represent the location of Annalakshmi units; Black rectangles indicate the locations of Pushti units)

Source: Adapted from <http://maps.newkerala.com/Coimbatore-City-Map.jpg>; accessed on July 1, 2008

support in order that ancient traditions can flourish'.¹⁵ *Shivanjali* Trust also operated the *Sivananda* Clinic, a charitable hospital at Vadavalli, where medical care was offered free of cost to the poor. The trust also supported the education of some students.

While offering its banquet services, Annalakshmi offered discounts to organisations with a ‘not for profit’ motive. It also provided food services, free of cost, to many artists who visited Coimbatore for arts-related functions conducted by organisations like Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.¹⁶ Such

¹⁵www.shivanjali.in/Others1.htm; accessed on July 1, 2008

¹⁶An educational trust founded in 1938 by Dr KM Munshi.

endeavours on the part of Annalakshmi also supported the objective of Temple of Fine Arts which tried to make art accessible to general public.

The Power of Rituals

Devotees of Swami Shantananda met every Sunday to chant prayers. Based on the teachings of the Swami, these prayer sessions gave the members a common purpose and identity and thus held the group together. The sessions offered spiritual support to the sick and the needy. According to Prabhu, these prayers constituted 'the essence' of Annalakshmi. Many participants at these functions took active part in the activities of Shivanjali Trust, and thereby of Annalakshmi. The rituals also helped those already associated with the cause to offer greater commitment. Jeevanlal, who had been overseeing the Mettupalayam unit for many years, was also an investor in the equity markets, and provided investment guidance to public. He had been designing a technical analysis¹⁷ software coded Sri Chakra¹⁸ and had planned to donate the profits from the project to the causes of the Trust.

Initially, some of those who were visitors at the restaurant, later became volunteers at the outlet. Annalakshmi prompted them to join an endeavour higher than themselves, as exemplified in the case of Visakha, a volunteer: 'I had come here once or twice before I started serving. Though we want to help people, we invariably don't know how to go about it. I now roll out *chapattis* at the restaurant. Making *rotis* is very easy for me since I have been doing it since childhood,' said this Gujarati lady.¹⁹ In the Annalakshmi epic, there were stories of people coming to review the food and the restaurant and then volunteering to chop vegetables there.²⁰

The Challenges

However, not everything had been rosy at Annalakshmi. The Mettupalayam Road unit in particular was running at a loss; earlier the Hyderabad unit had shut down due to a number of reasons. India had been witnessing record inflation rates in recent times,²¹ and the hotel and restaurant industry had been much affected due to rising commodity prices. The annual inflation rate, based on Wholesale Price Index (WPI), for the week ended June 21 touched a 13 year high of 11.63 percent²² (refer Exhibit CS2.5 depicts rising inflation in India over the past two years). With increased spending, customers were feeling the pinch to spend on leisure. However, compared to the peer group, the organisation did not incur substantial expenses on the labour front.²³ The primary cost component in the final food prices was due to raw material, which directly impacted the surplus. At the Mettupalayam unit, the revenues fell short of expenditure by approximately 25 percent.

Prabhu also mentioned that the loss at Thudiyalur unit had been subsidised by the surplus made at other Annalakshmi units (like the Race Course unit). He maintained his equipoise while saying, 'People used to tell me that we would close down in months. We did not. We are continuing to run

¹⁷A school of thought that tries to forecast the direction of security prices based on historical price behaviour and its applications.

¹⁸Sri Chakra is a tantric representation of the masculine and feminine principles.

¹⁹*The Hindu*, www.hindu.com/thehindu/mp/2003/02/17/stories/2003021701520300.htm; accessed on July 1, 2008

²⁰*SF Weekly*, www.sfweekly.com/2005-04-06/news/the-karmic-kitchen; accessed on July 1, 2008

²¹Inflation rate, based on the Wholesale Price Index, is currently at a 13 year high.

²²https://customers.reuters.com/d/graphics/IN_WPI040708.gif; accessed on July 1, 2008

²³In Coimbatore, the labour costs in restaurants came to approximately 30 percent of the cost of the food paid by customers. This is a ballpark figure and varied depending on a number of factors.

Exhibit CS2.5 Annual inflation rate (WPI) – Weekly figures

Source: India Ministry of Commerce and Industry

Source: <http://indiaeconomywatch.blogspot.com/>; accessed on July 1, 2008

our operations.’ Annalakshmi team was able to partially offset the price increase in food items due to the raw material contributions made by its well-wishers. There were instances of people gifting their farm produce to Annalakshmi, especially the first produce of a given season. This helped Annalakshmi, as retail purchase of the same produce would have had high cost. Some people also offered them rice, groceries and water. ‘Food cost at Annalakshmi is a little on the higher side,’ agreed Anand, ‘But I don’t mind paying a little extra here.’

The Thudiyalur unit had been slowly moving towards breaking-even. Also, as Annalakshmi did not spend money on advertising, the organisation was able to generate considerable savings. Anand was one of those customers who learnt about Annalakshmi through word-of-mouth communication. ‘I visited Annalakshmi prodded by my sister and brother-in-law. Now I frequent that restaurant, more than them. And I make it a point to recommend this restaurant to many of my friends.’ The other restaurant Anand frequented was Pushti,²⁴ located at RS Puram in Coimbatore (refer Exhibit CS2.4). ‘Pushti is known for food items like *Navadhanya Dosa*,²⁵’ said Anand.

The Future Plans

With change in eating pattern, the general belief²⁶ was that the number of people eating out would increase. Annalakshmi had no immediate plans to increase its retail outlets. While its primary objective was to stabilise operations at its outlets, it was also looking to expand its services to corporate

²⁴Pushti, a restaurant run under the aegis of Isha Foundation, is a two-year old not for profit venture that relies on word of mouth marketing

²⁵Dosa made out of nine grains

²⁶The Hindu, www.hindu.com/2008/06/16/stories/2008061659100400.htm; accessed on July 1, 2008

houses, as part of its catering service. There was also the 'Meals on Wheels' programme, at conceptual stage, aimed at offering good food at subsidised rates to college students. Annalakshmi also planned to enter into a tie-up with TTK group²⁷ to market food items like *Dosa Mavu*²⁸ and *Idli Mavu*.²⁹

As for the investments needed for the expansion plans, Prabhu believed those would come through. He spoke about an anonymous person, who had invited Annalakshmi to spread its wings to Bangalore. This anonymous person had also offered all the space and infrastructural support to open a restaurant there.

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13. Brochures of the Shivanjali Trust

Review Questions

- According to this case study, Annalakshmi faced certain challenges. Assume that you've been given the responsibility of starting a restaurant chain that follows the principle of 'Athithi Devo Bhava' (meaning, 'Guest is God') in letter and spirit, and incorporate the Annalakshmi principle of 'Eat to your heart's content, Pay what your heart feels'. Which would be the three important challenges that you could face while operating the restaurants, and how would you plan to meet those challenges?

²⁷A family owned business conglomerate.

²⁸Batter from which *Dosa*, a south Indian delicacy is prepared.

²⁹Batter from which *Idli*, a rice cake popular in south India.

3. Project GreenHands¹

‘Trees and humans are in an intimate relationship.

What they exhale, we inhale, what we exhale, they inhale.

This is a constant relationship that nobody can afford to break or live without.’²

~ Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev

Project GreenHands (Greenhands) was considered to be a grassroots ecological initiative that created green consciousness among the populace of Tamilnadu (TN), a state in south India. This initiative planned to promote sustainable living, by planting 114 million (11.4 crore) saplings by 2016. Through three days in the month of October 2006, 256,289 people volunteered to plant 852,587 saplings in 6284 locations across 27 districts in TN, and with this initiative, GreenHands made an entry into the *Guinness World Records* (refer Annexure I). In 2008, Greenhands planted 2.1 million saplings. By the end of 2008, Greenhands had planted 7.1 million saplings, on a cumulative basis.

Greenhands worked under the aegis of Isha Foundation³ (Isha), a non-governmental organisation that worked with a mission towards the joy and wellbeing of the individual and society. The success of the project had been attributed to the inspiration of Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev (Sadhguru), partnerships with corporate organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community involvement and the commitment of the volunteers associated with the project. Implementation of the project had been an inspiration to many. As per a comment on the Greenhands website, ‘Project GreenHands is great inspiration to the younger generation. It is great service to the humanity. The overwhelming dedication of the volunteers is to be greatly appreciated. We can surely create a greener earth.’ In

¹The case was authored by Dr R Nandagopal (director, PSG Institute of Management, Coimbatore) and Ajith Sankar RN (lecturer, PSG Institute of Management, Coimbatore). The authors would like to thank Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev for giving permission to write this case. The authors also appreciate the cooperation of the Project Greenhands team for sharing their opinions and data related to the project. Authors hold the copyright to the case study. You may reproduce/distribute this case study in any form/format, provided the contents of the case are not altered, and due credits are provided to the authors, the institution they are affiliated to, and the publisher.

²From www.projectgreenhands.org/

³www.ishafoundation.com

2010,⁴ the government of India (GoI) awarded Greenhands with the *Indira Gandhi Paryavaran Puraskar*, the highest award given by GoI to individuals and organisations that have made significant and measurable contributions in the field of environment protection and improvement.

Evolution of Greenhands

Greenhands had its root in the Vanashree Eco Project, which had been started to conserve the Velliangiri Hills, where the Isha Yoga Centre was located. Sadhguru wanted to rejuvenate the greenery on the hills. Isha Foundation had also been planting saplings there and in other areas of the western ghats. Sapling plantation was also part of its Action for Rural Rejuvenation project. In addition, Isha volunteers used to sow lacs of seeds in the hills near the Isha centre. The formal initiation of Greenhands began in 2004.

It was in December 2004 that TN, along with other states of India, witnessed major devastation in the coastal regions due to the tsunami in the Indian Ocean.⁵ The lore is that Isha volunteers, who were rehabilitating the affected people, observed that coastal areas that had enough tree cover were less damaged as compared to those areas that had less tree cover. Soon, the volunteers started using trees to connect with people affected by grief and tragedy. Saplings were presented in white cloths accompanied by roses, to grief-struck families which then planted those saplings in memory of their loved ones. Thus, more than 1000 saplings were planted. Once the project met its objective, volunteers idealised to scale it up. 'Prodded by the project director, we then kept a plantation target of 5000 saplings. While the earlier plantation happened within residential areas, these saplings were planted within residential compounds,' said Anand, a plant biologist and full-time volunteer at Greenhands, who had been coordinating with the plantation activities since its very start. On December 25, 2005, Greenhands planted 5000 saplings in the seashores of the tsunami affected villages of Periyakuppam, Pettodai, Aiyampettai, Nayakarpettai, Thamananpettai and Nanjalingampettai in the Cuddalore district (the district collector, Gagan Dheem Singh Bedi was the chief guest). In addition, Greenhands also planted 5000 saplings on roadsides, 5000 at villages and 10,000 saplings on lands belonging to the panchayats.

'Isha Foundation wanted to do it large-scale. When we shared our stories of sapling plantation with other members of Isha, they chipped in. Swami Prabodha said that he would mobilise resources to plant one lakh trees. Similar commitments were received from more people. 'We learnt that Sadhguru wanted to speak to the chief minister of TN about this endeavour,' conveyed Anand. Greenhands soon came of age. In 2006, the project entered the *Guinness World Book of Records*. September 23 marked the beginning of the 2007 planting season at Chennai, capital of TN. In the same year, Greenhands decided to showcase some of its endeavours, and thus started focused plantation zones in seven districts. The plantation zones had been functioning with the support of corporate organisations like Suzlon and Yves Rocher. In November 2008, the TN forest department and Greenhands planted 25,000 saplings at the 22,000 reconstructed houses in TN, as part of the Tsunami Rehabilitation project.

⁴For the year 2008

⁵The Indian Ocean Tsunami, which occurred on December 26, 2004 caused approximately 225,000 deaths in eleven countries, inundating coastal area with waves as high as 30 meters or 100 feet.

Scope of the Problem and Design Considerations to the Response

‘When I travelled around TN, I realised that the landscape was changing so rapidly that it would turn into a desert much before the projection of 2025. I saw thousands of palm trees with their crowns having fallen off. Palm trees can survive even in a desert but in TN they were losing their crowns because of the exorbitant exploitation of ground water. In Coimbatore city, about 15 years ago, one had to just dig 125–150 feet to find water for a well, and now one had to go 1400–1500 feet down to find water. Earlier the rain water was scarce, now it was in excess and so the degeneration was happening rapidly. Also, due to global warming, the southern peninsula was witnessing excessive levels of rainfall... without vegetation, excessive rain can accelerate the desertification process because the top soil runs off.’⁶

~ Sadhguru

The world has been witnessing serious environmental degradation. The Living Planet Report 2008⁷ released by World Wide Fund for Nature, The Zoological Society of London and the Global Footprint Network stated that, by mid 2030, we would require one more planet to live on, if we were to continue with our conventional lifestyle and consumption parameters. Carbon emissions are on the rise and the glacier are melting (refer Annexure II and III). A 2005 report by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of UN estimated that the total forest area in the world had been decreasing at about 13 million hectares per year.⁸ Like many other parts of the world, TN was also facing problems related to environmental balance.

India had also been witnessing a spate of farmer suicides since 1990s. While agriculture and allied sectors (forestry, fishing, logging, etc.) contributed only 16.6 percent of GDP in 2007, it employed 60 percent of the total workforce in India. Almost two-thirds of the population of TN was dependant on agriculture for their livelihood. Farmers were bearing the brunt of soil degradation, drop in water table, vagaries in temperature and rainfall, lowering productivity from the soil due to increased use of fertilizers and increasing resistance shown by pests to pesticides.

Speaking about conceptual underpinnings about the project, Ethirajulu, the concept designer for Greenhands said, ‘We have become an energy intensive civilisation. On keen observation, we can find that what we eat is not food, but fossil fuels. The food that we eat has become poisonous, the air that we breathe is getting poisoned, and it is the same with everything that we intake. By simple, logical deduction we can conclude that man and the world has to go extinct. Man is the problem. I was into the design of structural systems. For me, a solution is built into the problem itself. If man is the problem, then man is the solution. Man’s extinction is one solution. The only other solution that exists is that man has to do something about the troubles he has created for himself.’ When Greenhands assessed the spread of forest-cover in TN, it was only 17.5 percent, based on the data available with the forest department, while the national and global benchmark was 33 percent.

The Greenhands team then assessed the number of much trees that were to be planted in order to increase the green-cover in TN by another 10 percent. Thus, they arrived at 114 million (11.4 crore). The belief was that the remaining 5–6 percent would be carried out by the self-prop-

⁶www.kavitachhibber.com/main/main.jsp?id=sadhguru-Dec2007; accessed on July 1, 2009

⁷The report can be downloaded at www.panda.org/about_our_earth/all_publications/living_planet_report/footprint/

⁸<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deforestation>; accessed on July 1, 2009

agation capability of trees. In an interview, Sadhguru said, 'Actual statistics and practical logistics may come in the way, but the rationale is very simple - with the right kind of focus and motivation, the gap between what is needed and what is possible could be very small'. Greenhands believed that if every individual of TN can raise two saplings, which would bring no major financial burden on the individual or the state,⁹ and the target of 114 million could be surpassed. 'Each and everyone in the Isha Yoga classes feels as if we are the parent of the entire world and that the divine manifests in each and everything surrounding us,' remarked Boris Bhim A (Bhim), a part-time volunteer with Greenhands. Citing the role of Greenhands, Bhim continued, 'I could feel that I am responsible for everything happening around me.'

Engaging Volunteers

'We wanted to make it a people's event. The project needed to be owned by volunteers. Opportunities were provided to all' said Anand. Some of the ways through which Greenhands mobilised people was by providing them with opportunities to:

- create awareness about the initiative (engaging the community through events, presentations, meetings and stalls, putting up posters, talking to family, friends and corporations);
- be part of the planting process (seed sourcing, creation of nurseries, distribution and planting of saplings); and
- support the project by offering resources (donations, fundraising, sponsorship, partnership, offering material resources for supporting the project, creation of social responsibility initiatives among corporate etc.).

Greenhands created a designation known as 'Project Greenhands Ambassador', and the ambassador's primary responsibility was to promote the project through awareness creation and resource mobilisation. Ambassadors worked to attract endorsements from VIPs and popular personalities and find media outlets to spread messages about the project. One of the attributes that attracted volunteers to Greenhands was the genuineness associated with the project. 'There is no cooking up of figures here – internally or externally. I cannot work in an organisation which cooks up stories,' endorses Anand.

Processes Involved

Awareness Creation

Spreading awareness about environmental degradation was the initial step that Greenhands had to take on. It communicated that trees were an essential part of our lives and were not an entity distinct from us. The relationship with trees was to be enhanced in order to enhance one's own sense of wellbeing. Through the years, Greenhands had been undertaking massive campaigns with the objective of taking the message across all strata of population. The part-time volunteers focused primarily on their own localities and conducted presentations, processions, video shows, games and talent competitions for students, and nature awareness tours and hill cleaning initiatives. Sapling distribution was done free of cost in order to generate and attract interest towards Greenhands. Volunteer meetings were organised to share information and learning.

⁹The estimated population of Tamilnadu, as of March 2008, was 6.64 crore (66.4 million).

In cities, awareness was created through multiple media channels like newspapers, advertisement on SUN network television channels, posters, banners, hoardings and fund-raising concerts. Greenhands also used Isha music CDs, Sadhguru's programmes on radio and TV channels (e.g. Hello FM, isha.nowpos.com, NDTV) and Isha events (e.g. annual Mahashivarathri festival in March) to create awareness about the project (refer Annexure IV, V and VI for campaign related details).

In villages, volunteers campaigned door-to-door, public announcements and meetings. Greenhands had worked in association with the Isha Agro Movement (IAM), an initiative under Action for Rural Rejuvenation. IAM was launched by Isha to address the concerns facing the farming community in India, especially in the context of farmer suicides that was happening in India. This movement combined agro-forestry with organic farming practices. In addition, IAM also provided education programmes. Greenhands volunteers stayed with the villagers and met farmers. They also worked in co-ordination with organisations that were in the field trying to help the farmers. Brochures were distributed in more than 3200 villages. Isha's social outreach programmes came in handy. Isha *Gramotsavam* (village festival), an event for people belonging to 3200 villages in the state of TN was used to promote Greenhands. The festival consisted of sports and games activities ('Rural Olympics'), rural food festival that offered more than 250 culinary preparations, rural cultural show that exhibited native art forms and handicrafts, a musical programme and a Satsang with Sadhguru. Events like Agri-fest 2007 and 'Rural Olympics' promoted interest at the grassroots level.

Awareness meetings in villages were given much importance. In the meetings with villagers, Greenhands communicated the importance of trees. Ethirajulu said, 'The basic energy for sustenance of life on this planet comes from the sun. The energy transfer happens because of the existence of plants and trees. By destroying trees, we destroy our source of food. The kind of food we take in is very important – it is like medicine. It can nourish us or it can kill us. There is self-healing capacity in us, and in the nature. I am a diabetic patient since the age of 30. For the past 25 years, I have not taken any medicines. This self-healing capability is not communicated to the humanity, probably because there is no scope to make money in human wellbeing.' Awareness meetings were an ongoing process and Greenhands believed that they had resulted in almost 1.5 million people being aware of the project. Other methods adopted by Greenhands included:

<i>Tools used</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Reach</i>
Participation in exhibition and conferences held in India and foreign countries	7	8,00,000
Public functions, Green festivals	100	1 million
Isha Yoga programmes	474	33,000
Photo exhibitions	3	15,000
Concerts – Sounds of Isha	5	7000
Agri-fest	1	5000

Decision-makers, like politicians and bureaucrats, were introduced to the project through involvement in the inaugural and closing ceremonies of planting and distribution of saplings. They were also given individual presentations about the project. While most of these activities were conducted within TN, there were a few activities that were conducted at an international level. Greenhands

participated in the 2007 'Be the Change' conference at London, which resulted in Greenhands receiving invitation to speak about the project at academic institutions and Indian community gatherings, in the UK and USA.

Nurture and Development

We cannot go about saying that our land and region are backward; we can make it greener. We have seen this change happening in other parts of the world; we have to work with the hope of changing the contour of our land too.

There are trees which can withstand drought, and ISHA has chosen the saplings considering the climate, rainfall and soil fertility of the region.¹⁰

~ P Chidambaram,

Union Cabinet Minister for Home Affairs, Government of India

'While on our visits, we saw people – be it tribals or people from other sections of the society – performing a number of rituals to bring in rain. Destroying nature and then praying will would do no good. It was in this context that the idea of starting a nursery came about. Our nurseries started very small. We used to put 10 seeds in 10 packets daily. This initiative was more of a personal interest. It was in 2004 that nursery activities started picking up momentum,' said Swami Nagaroopu (Swami), nursery co-coordinator, Greenhands.

Greenhands had to nurture and develop the saplings along with the awareness campaigns. The first step was sourcing healthy seeds. The selection of saplings was based primarily to two aspects: (1) Quality and speed of growth; and (2) Commercial value for the tree/products from the tree. For rural areas, seeds of fence trees, fruit trees, fodder trees and timber trees were nurtured. For urban areas, avenue trees and medicinal trees were nurtured. Seeds of pioneer trees were nurtured for land development. (refer Annexure VII for the list of trees whose saplings were grown in the nurseries of Greenhands).

Greenhands developed hundreds of nurseries – through the sourcing of healthy seeds, creation of seed pockets and beds, distribution to planting zones – with the help of partner organisations. Nurseries were classified under four types: regional nurseries, corporate nurseries, nurseries maintained by educational institutions, and centralised nurseries. Centralised nurseries were fully managed by Greenhands. While all types of saplings were grown in centralised nurseries, the number of saplings nurtured in the first three types of nurseries was limited. The corporate nurseries were established in 2007 and centralised nurseries in 2008.

Volunteers were trained to create nurseries. Greenhands' first nursery came up at Isha Foundation Centre at Velliangiri Hills, near Coimbatore. The nurseries were small, with a capacity of producing 1000–10,000 saplings. In February 2006, the first nursery outside Velliangiri Hills was begun. In 2007, Greenhands started nurseries that could produce 50,000 saplings. In the same year, it produced 40 lac saplings (4 million). In 2008, it was 21 lac (2.1 million) saplings, and, in 2009, Greenhands had planned to produce 25 lac (2.5 million) saplings.

During the collection of seeds, the health and maturity of mother tree was taken into consideration. Seeds from those trees that were young or old were avoided. 70 percent of the seeds were

¹⁰From the document, 'Isha Outreach 2008 – A review'.

collected during April, May, and June – the months before the rainy season. Volunteers and self-help groups collected 40 percent of the seeds for the avenue and fodder trees. The rest of the seeds were purchased. ‘In the initial phases of the project, we did not have any contacts or money. A substantial amount of effort came from the volunteers, and their mobilisation was an important aspect. I was talking too much during this period,’ laughs Swami. Once the seeds were collected, they were brought together to an area where they were cleaned, selected, packaged and sent to appropriate nurseries.

The idea was to develop a nursery close to a planting zone in order to limit transportation as it not only entails costs but also the risk of damage to the saplings. Greenhands carried out a loading technique through which 8–10 layers of saplings were transported, with a maximum capacity of 10,000 to 12,000 saplings. An additional 10 percent saplings were carried as a buffer in each truck, in order to account for any damage to the sapling or any possible replanting need. The transportation was done a minimum of 10 days prior to the planting day, in order to account for a seasoning period.

Planting times varied. For jackfruit, it was necessary to plant within two days from the time of seed collection, while it was two months for oil seeds. In order to ensure the healthy existence of the seed, especially for those with a short time span, they were soaked in hot/cold water, or were soaked in *panchakviam*.¹¹ Some of the seeds were taken through anaerobic pre-germination before they were sowed in the motherbed.¹² Development of the sapling included processes like preparing and cleaning the land, settling the motherbed, creating mist chambers,¹³ germinating seeds, preparing planting pockets, transplanting germinated seeds, nurturing in shade for two weeks with daily watering, exposing to sunlight to stimulate growth and watering on alternate-days, rearranging to curb root growth, weeding (three weeks after transportation and once in the next two months), and the final transporting and planting. ‘Growing a sapling is like growing a child. Experiencing everything as one is spirituality,’ voiced Swami.

Sapling Distribution and Planting

*Of all economic activity that happens in a nation, agriculture is the most fundamental and also of paramount importance. A nation that neglects its farmers is bound to dislocate its basic life sustaining infrastructure.*¹⁴

~ Sadhguru

Greenhands had been following two models of planting. In the first model, saplings were distributed to third parties, who did the planting. In this model, planting was carried out throughout the year. The responsibility of nurturing and monitoring the planted saplings was given to individuals/groups who took the onus of planting the saplings. Awareness generation was the key in the success of this model. ‘Individuals and concerned groups had been approaching Greenhands as the preferred destination for saplings,’ said Anand. 1,434,382 saplings were nurtured through this model.

The second model followed by Greenhands was the agro-forestry model. These were funded projects. Explaining this model, Ethirajulu said, ‘Soil is the basic entity that we have to protect. It

¹¹An organic manure made up of cow dung, cow urine, sugar, milk and tender coconut.

¹²The place where seeds are grown. The motherbed is made from a mixture of river sand, red soil and cow dung.

¹³Chambers with temperature and humidity control facilities.

¹⁴From the Project Greenhands website; www.projectgreenhands.org; accessed on July 1, 2009

takes thousands of years to create top soil. Trees play a major role in the creation of top soil; plant trees to protect top soil. That was the origin of Project Greenhands. If soil has to be protected, it has to be done at the farmers' land. That was the beginning of agro-forestry model. Our belief is that trees can be a solution to everything. It gives back to man the connection to life that that he lost. This project is an attempt to make that connection.' The agro-forestry model was started in 2007. 'Farming is like gambling now. Farmers are concerned and insecure. Initially they had concerns that planting trees at their fields would reduce them of their income generation and the productivity of the land will go off, though the reality is otherwise. In order to alleviate farmers out of their concerns, we ask the farmers to grow the trees in the boundary. As the trees mature – it can be a fruit tree or a timber tree – it is like insurance. This campaign started working. This formed the basis of our agro-forestry model. We are now very clear on where trees should be planted and not planted,' mentioned Anand. In 2008, under the agro-forestry model, Greenhands planted 688,743 saplings.

From 2009 onwards, Greenhands had planned to start a systematic training programme on agro-farming for farmers. This training, comprising modules on organic/natural farming, would be delivered by experts to volunteers, who would then deliver the same to the farmers.

Baseline surveys and need assessment surveys were carried out before the planting. Greenhands distributed the saplings to those who were committed to the project. Presence of local dignitaries and popular personalities attracted attention to the project and provided awareness to people about the objective of Greenhands. These meetings were also used to encourage people to be part of this project. Planting zones were designated in areas of local support. In recent times, majority of the planting was done in these zones. The opportunity to plant the saplings were given to the volunteers of the rural community. This helped Greenhands in generating enough support and commitment in those areas.

Farmlands, schools, residential areas, water catchments, wastelands and roadsides were chosen as focus areas. Farmlands were usually protected from invasion of cattle. Saplings of fruit trees, fodder trees, fuel trees and timber were planted on the farmlands. Preference was given to plant the saplings on the farmlands of those farmers who showed commitment e.g. by supplying compost, sand and vermin-compost. Tropical dry evergreen plants, which were native to TN and also drought-resistant, were used on school grounds. 'Live seed banks'¹⁵ were also created in these schools. This helped in the conservation of many a tree species. School children gave care to these plants. In addition to saplings, pitting materials were also supplied to schools by Greenhands. For residential areas, Greenhands only provided saplings; local residents did the pitting and planting. It was the onus of those who planted the fruit and medicinal saplings, to prepare protective gear for the same. Greenhands paid self-help groups to plant saplings in water catchments and wastelands. Tropical dry evergreen forest species and water-tolerant species were used in the water catchments and wastelands respectively. All resources – saplings, pitting material, and protective gear – were provided by Greenhands. Saplings of avenue trees were planted at the roadsides by the local community, with saplings, pitting material and protective gear provided by Greenhands (refer Annexure VIII for the tree planting procedure criteria and methodology followed while pitting and planting).

¹⁵Live seed banks are growing trees. They act as sources of seeds during seed collection.

Speaking about roadside plantation, A Murugesan, a Greenhands volunteer who worked with the Erode¹⁶-based KGM Software, said, 'It is very difficult to find place to plant trees.'

Certain planting zones were marked as Green Villages. It was intended that these villages should have a minimum 33 percent of its geographical area under green cover. The whole population in the area was involved as part of this project and approximately 60,000 saplings were planted in these zones, under the guidance of a team constituting four members. These villages served the purpose of acting as a model for the rest of the district. Permanent hoardings were put up in these villages. Greenhands had planned to create one green village in each district of TN. As of July 2009, 10 villages were selected to be made into Green Villages. The distribution of 60,000 saplings was as follows:

<i>Plantation areas</i>	<i>Fruit trees</i>	<i>Timber trees</i>	<i>Fodder trees</i>	<i>Fuel trees</i>	<i>Medicinal trees</i>	<i>Shade and flower trees</i>
Farmlands	14085	14085	15650	7825	3130	
School grounds						200
Residential areas	2500					
Water catchments						875
Wastelands						875
Roadsides						985

Post-Plantation Care Post-plantation care for the saplings included watering, giving organic manure, pruning, replanting, and protecting the sapling from grazing animals. While self-help groups were paid to plant saplings in some areas, the sapling planters were responsible for ensuring post-plantation care in other areas like farmlands, schools, residential areas, etc.

Community Involvement

In the Indian culture there are temples for trees, people worship trees; it's a very common practice. It is not a question of a custom.

It came from a certain experience and understanding. It is a certain depth of experience and understanding — you understand that whatever nurtures your life is worth worshipping.¹⁷

~ Sadhguru

It was realised that the success of the project depended on strong partnerships. The project focused on developing partnerships by energising community, whether they were farmers, school-going children, businessmen, academicians, parents, etc. (refer Annexure IX for details about public participation in the 2006 mass plantation drive). K Karunanidhi, P Chidambaram, A Raja, Subbulakshmi Jagadeesan, and Kanimozhi were some of the politicians who participated in the event. Bureaucrats and retired government officials were also present at Greenhands events. Community involvement thus became the essence of the project.

¹⁶Headquarters of Erode district in the state of Tamilnadu, India.

¹⁷www.organicgreenandnatural.com/2009/04/08/project-greenhands-%E2%80%93-compensating-the-earth/; accessed on July 1, 2009

Greenhands' volunteers visited villages and spoke to the farmers, assessing the interest of the people there. They showed documentaries to the villagers and initiated discussions among and with them. When the volunteers felt that there was sufficient commitment among the villagers who owned the lands, only were they initiated onto the next level – integrating trees along with the prevailing crops. At the district level, a regional office was set up and this hub was used to share resources during the project period. 'The uniqueness of this project is that we are involving large number of people, common people, in planting trees. The volunteers – they are all joining because of Sadhguru. He is the heart of the project. He is like a super-hero for us. I cannot move a finger without him,' said Swami Nagarupa.

Business Organisations Greenhands contacted business organisations and engaged them in making environmental care a part of their CSR initiative. Some of the companies that partnered Greenhands include TTI-LIG Ltd., Henkel India Ltd., Indian Overseas Bank, and Yves Rocher. TTK-LIG, a Chennai-based company, created a nursery of 100,000 saplings. All the employees from its production sites of the company were involved in this process; they went around the areas surrounding their production units, and invited general public, companies and other organisations like schools to plant the nurtured saplings. Henkel India supported Greenhands by sponsoring 100,000 saplings, which were distributed near its factory. Indian Overseas Bank aided awareness creation by sponsoring banners, brochures and hoardings. Yves Rocher, a French company engaged in botanical cosmetics, not only sponsored 900,000 saplings but also encouraged their customers to be part of Greenhands. This was part of their pledge to plant one million trees around the world. Jacques Rocher, president of the Yves Rocher Foundation, stated in his blog, 'Out of this ecological initiative grew a human project. In fact, the people of Tamil Nadu are planting directly onto their parcels of land the trees that are most useful to them. They are planting fruit trees to meet an emergency food shortage and trees that reclaim the soil as a medium-term initiative. They are also planting construction wood to meet long-term goals.' Employees of Yves Rocher visited the villages in Gobichettipalayam Taluk where the saplings were planted. In addition, companies like Ananda Vikatan, Apollo Hospitals, Ashok Leyland, Bharat Petroleum, Cavinkare, Covanta Energy, GB Industry, GMR Power Corporation, ICICI Lombard, Jayabharatham Furnitures, Orchid Chemicals & Pharma, PPN Power, Raminium Builders, Sakthi Sugars, Salem Steel plant, SRF Gummidipoondi, State Bank of India, Suguna Chickens, Take Solutions, Tube Investments, and Vis-teons – all helped Greenhands.

Educational Institutions and NGOs In 2007, almost 15 percent saplings were planted in association with schools and colleges. Approximately 300,000 students, from the National Cadet Corps (NCC) and National Service Scheme (NSS), participated by generating awareness through public rallies and being part of plantation initiatives. Greenhands also welcomed students, both Indian and overseas, to undertake internship in office activities or field work. The National Institute of Technology (NIT) Trichy, was an example of educational institutes supporting Greenhands. In 2006, NIT had contributed to the Guinness record tree plantation campaign with 4000 trees. With the help of school-going children and self-help groups (SHGs), NIT established a nursery nurtured 100,000 saplings that were planted in villages around the campus. There were other academic institutions that participated in the campaign. In Coimbatore, the Greenhands project was supported by Young Indians of the Confederation of Indian Industry. As part of the World Environment Day 2008 (June 5), more than 500 saplings were planted

at various schools at Coimbatore, as a joint initiative of Greenhands and CII Young Indians. The participants included Chandra Matriculation School, PSG Sarvajana School, G Ramasamy Naidu School, K Rangasamy Naidu School, GRD CPF School and KG School. In October 2008, under the banner of Greenhands, 20,000 students from 95 colleges planted 100,000 saplings in 250 villages in an hour's time, in association with Bharathidasan University and Premier Lions Club of Trichy.

Greenhands availed the already established goodwill of Isha to spread awareness about its green initiative. In order to develop win-win partnerships with other NGOs, the project offered them an array of activities that provided a source of employment and income generation. This helped the NGOs to achieve their objectives as well. For Greenhands, the NGOs helped in taking the environmental initiative to large and diverse groups of people and also provided the needed manpower to implement various projects.

Eranda Foundation, based in the UK, sponsored 65,000 saplings that were planted in 19 villages which were below poverty-line. Integrated Rural Development Center (IRDC), a local NGO and the representatives of Eranda Foundation in TN, provided networking alliances in these villages around Gandharvakottai Taluk. Another NGO that helped Greenhands was Center for Low External Input Sustainable Agriculture (LEISA), whose mission was to promote organic farming. Greenhands partnered with LEISA to raise, nurture and plant 400,000 saplings, in a plantation zone at Pudukottai district of TN. Under a buy-back programme, LEISA self-help groups planted 175,000 saplings on the farmlands of the self-help group members. The rest of the saplings are expected to be planted in a gradual phase. Greenhands provided the seeds and technical and monitoring support to these self-help groups under LEISA. *Tamilaga Iyarkai Uzavar Iyakkam* (Tamilnadu Organic Farmers Movement), founded by Dr Nammazvaar,¹⁸ another organisation that Greenhands partnered, helped in promoting organic farming to farmers. Dr Nammazvaar visited many villages to promote awareness about Greenhands. In association with OAZONE, an NGO engaged in rural development through water management projects, Greenhands provided employment opportunities to women by developing a 100,000 sapling nursery. Other organisations Greenhands partnered with include National Agriculturist Awareness Movement (NAAM),¹⁹ The Rotary Club,²⁰ The Lions Club,²¹ The Indian Red Cross²² and Joint Action for Sustainable Livelihood (JASuL).²³ Through the members of NAAM, 20,000 saplings were planted, in 2007.

Resource Mobilisation

Bhim, who had done the Isha Yoga programme, felt that raising funds had been one of the difficult tasks. When Greenhands started preparing for the Guinness World Record endeavour, there was no

¹⁸An agricultural scientist known for his experience in organic farming and agro-forestry

¹⁹An India based national organization working towards new farming methodologies

²⁰Rotary Clubs are located across the globe and its purpose is to bring together business and professional leaders to provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations, and help build goodwill and peace in the world

²¹Founded in the US, Lions Club motto is 'We Serve'. The organisation focuses on activities related to sight conservation, hearing and speech conservation, diabetes awareness, youth outreach, international relations, environmental issues, and other programs that support the local communities where Lions live

²²A voluntary organisation, which is part of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent organisation. The Indian Red Cross engage in providing health and care to vulnerable people and communities

²³JASuL, based at Madurai, is a forum of several NGOs across Tamilnadu was created with the aim to preserve natural water sources

money in the Greenhands' bank account. There was no assured funding for the project. The initial support came from Isha Foundation. Greenhands spent approximately Rs.40 to nurture a sapling, planting it and monitoring it for one year. Planting 114 million trees required substantial funding support.

Approximate running costs for project Greenhands in 2008 (INR)

Nursery	46,00,000
Plantation	1,73,00,000
Environmental Awareness	79,00,000
Total	2,98,00,000

'There is no assured funding. The theme of donor organisations varies every year. There is always the risk. We want to increase our focus on individual donors through web-based fundraising,' said K Sekar, project director of Isha's Social Outreach programmes. Greenhands provided several contribution options to donors, some of which were: (1) Establish a Nursery – This included training people at the nurseries, growing the saplings from the seed and distribution of the same. Rs.20 (\$ 0.50) was charged per sapling, and minimum contribution requested was Rs.400. (2) Agro-forestry – This including planting trees on farm lands. Rs.40 (\$1) was charged per sapling, and minimum contribution requested was Rs.800. (3) Planting Fruit Trees in Villages and Residential Areas – The minimum contribution was Rs.1600 (\$ 40). (4) Running awareness workshops – Contribution required was Rs.10,000 (\$ 250). (5) Green Rural Schools and Colleges – this scheme intended to provide shade and improve air quality. 200 saplings were planted as part of this scheme. The minimum contribution towards this option was Rs.16,000 (\$ 400). From 2007 onwards, there was a gradual improvement in the availability of funds. Greenhands also brought out its 'Gift of Trees' scheme (one could gift/donate trees in the name of another person). Greenhands delivered a gift certificate to the donor or to the person in whose name the gifting was carried out. In an interview to *Blue Planet Green Living*, Sadhguru mentioned the need for cash as a limiting factor in the expansion of the project. Swami echoed a similar sentiment, 'Monetary support is necessary for the project. People are appreciative about the project. They now need to come forward and support the project.'

Project Monitoring

Greenhands had an advisory board that included experts in forestry, organic farming, tree plantation and related fields. They provided guidance to Greenhands at all levels of project implementation. Greenhands maintained comprehensive records – starting from the collection of seeds, establishment of nurseries and development of planting areas. Prior to the plantation, it conducted surveys to understand the environmental, social and economic status of the region, as well as soil and water quality tests. Based on these studies, recommendations were made regarding the type of actions to be undertaken. Greenhands registered the names of land-owners who showed commitment to the cause, they were also asked to make a formal commitment to plant and maintain trees (refer Annexure X for a copy of the commitment letter that a farmer has to sign). Furthermore, Greenhands maintained a database of sapling distribution and planting, with the help of which follow-up and replanting requirements were met. For better monitoring, Greenhands also maintained necessary sup-

port systems including regular communication with regional offices (refer Annexure XI for details about plantation coordinating centers in TN). It was decided that a quarterly report would be released by the Greenhands' team for projects that were funded by corporate organisation. In addition, the Greenhands website would be continuously updated (www.projectgreendhands.org) with outcomes and statistics, and the organisation would bring out an annual report. The following were the result areas and indicators used by Greenhands:

<i>Result areas</i>	<i>Indicators</i>
Nursery	Quantity of saplings, species of saplings and survival rates
Planting	Number of trees planted, species, location
Green cover	Geographical information system (at the implementation stage)
Maintenance	Surveys on sapling survival and growth
Volunteer participation	Registration numbers
Skill acquisition	Evaluation tests at the end of training period
Public mobilisation	Number of events, participation numbers in events

Greenhands expected a number of challenges to the project, and these risks were classified under the following segments:

<i>Risk</i>	<i>Rising up to the challenge</i>
Natural calamities	To undertake surveys after the calamity. This would be followed by re-planting of saplings.
Non cooperation of villagers	Selection of villages that were having a harmonious relationship with other activities of Isha Foundation. Obtaining official consent from authorities and village heads in advance.
Financial risk	Application for third party funding.
Nurturing of saplings	Usage of quality seeds, training to people, regular maintenance of saplings and nurseries.

In some situations, documentation was difficult. 'There are times when the usage of templates may not be effective. Volunteers come and go. There is also the necessity to ensure that information systems are aligned to local needs. Many grassroots level workers may not be having the system skills and basic English language skills. Due to the same, documentation was difficult during the initial stages of the project,' explained Maheshwari, who coordinated with activities related to information systems. 'Greenhands have strong reporting systems. We should now strengthen the evaluation based on the data we collect – project analysis, impact analysis, etc.' continued Maheshwari. She also observed that the human aspect also had to be taken into consideration. Many volunteers had the inclination to be part of core activities and considered documentation related aspects as secondary. Swami echoed a similar sentiment: 'Collecting data from the field volunteers is a difficult thing. The activity is done as a service and people do not want to keep a count on that. Even during the Guinness World Record initiative, we produced 11 lac saplings, but we did not have documentation for it. We made a representation to the Guinness World Records for only 8.5 lac because we had records for only 8.5 lac sapling plantation.'

Greenhands believe that it had been able to convert 65–70 percent of the saplings it had planted into trees. ‘Technically, it is not an easy job to assess the conversion figures. We did some random sampling. Based on the data we collected, we got technical inputs from a forest officer and from those inputs, we arrived at this figure. We would like the conversion rate to move up to 75 percent,’ said Anand. To improve the conversion rate, Greenhands had been assessing the reasons on the variance in conversion rate at different regions. It found that conversion rate had been high in regions like Pudukkottai (as much as 80 percent) while it is much lower in areas like Trichy (approximately 40 percent). Greenhands had decided that in regions like Trichy it would plant saplings only in watershed areas. Similar tailor-made solutions were evolved for all districts of TN.

People Dynamics

The project started with the effort of a few people, and Greenhands did not have any formal departments. As work scaled up, there were two departments – nursery raising and plantation. ‘...Now we have other departments like MIS, accounts and fundraising. However, we need to balance our work. If I get too involved in fundraising or plantation, then the work at nursery gets affected,’ conveyed Swami (refer Annexure XII for an illustration indicating the organisation structure at Greenhands). In July 2009, Greenhands had 36 employees in total, with 26 focusing on the plantation activities and 10 focusing on nursery development. Support staff in the functions of MIS, HR, accounts, etc. was common for Greenhands and other social outreach programs of Isha. ‘Inmates’ of full-time volunteers affiliated to the philosophy of Isha, numbered 13 (8 and 5 in plantation and nursery segment respectively).

‘The intensity and dedication with which people work here is unique. People will implement whatever goals Sadhguru sets, whatever be the constraint. If we look at the Guinness Record endeavour, it was a handful of people who drove the whole initiative,’ said Maheshwari. Anand recollected that he had slept for only 4 hours a day during those months. ‘Here, we do not compare one person with the other. If they are giving their best, that is enough for me,’ said Sekar. ‘Here, people are working towards for something higher, which may not be visible from the outside. We are here for spiritual growth. I left a comfortable job and came to Isha. I wish to be with Sadhguru, and that’s why I am here. He has provided a platform to be with him,’ he added. Sekar considered his role to be that of providing the volunteers with the basic needs like food and shelter and an activity platform where the volunteers can give their best.

Greenhands had found it challenging to get full-time volunteers who work exclusively on this project. ‘We’ve been building the base in the past 2–3 years. Isha has a number of social projects; we need to give importance and encourage all,’ opined Swami.

Transformatory Nature

What has been most encouraging is the enthusiasm with which people have responded. Even a labourer earning daily wages to survive is willing to forgo one day’s work to help plant saplings.

~ Sadhguru

Greenhands had undergone major changes with its approaches to plantation. In the earlier days of the project, it did not focus much on the type of trees that were provided to the villagers. Post