

THE SPARK OF LIFE

(Bhakhdi Jeevan Chingiari)

By

Gurbakhash Singh 'Preetlari'

Translated By

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Translator's Introduction

Philosopher-litterateur Gurbakhash Singh 'Preetlari' (1895 - 1977) was easily to Punjabi prose what Nobel laureate Rabindra Nath Tagore was to Bengali poetry. If he did not appear on the world literary map it was simply because he did not choose to translate any of his works into English, contrary to what Rabindra Nath Tagore did with his Nobel prize winning work *Gitanjali*. Perhaps that was not the done thing then and Tagore's *Gitanjali* was an exception.

Those were the times when one felt proud to write in his/her mother tongue. No body imagined then that the world some day would become a global village, with English more or less its 'village-tongue'. But now it seems wherever there is any thing to be read by people with profit that needs to be written or translated into English. And when it comes to profit, Gurbakhash Singh's works would perhaps stand side by side with the all times greats of the likes of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Dale Carnegie and Norman Vincent Peale of this genre. What better proof of this than that my own son, who could not read the Punjabi language fluently having studied in English schools throughout, is reading this translated work with awe, wondering there were such great philosopho-literary figures as Gurbakhash Singh in Punjab in the not so distant past. In fact, the idea to translate Gurbakhash Singh's works into English first came to my mind simply to enable my sons to read his works.

Gurbakhash Singh 'Preetlari' not only coined new words freely, but used the existing ones in such a crisp and creative way of his own that it is generally thought that his works cannot be translated into any other language much less English. Add to this the fact that he not merely wrote but poured his soul out on paper, the reader can have an idea of the challenge I had to face in bringing forth this work. I have no doubt that if I had not known Gurbakhash Singh personally, had not lived near, around and reading him for many years, had not been inspired by him in many ways, had not even been his 'disciple' in a way, this work would have been impossible. For then, nothing could have sustained the level of enthusiasm which is constantly required to do justice to such an inspired work. Now how far I have succeeded in this, I leave it to the reader's judgement.

Much of what Gurbakhash Singh 'Preetlari' wrote is true for all times to come. What is otherwise - a bit of bias in favour of socialism and against capitalism especially where references to some individual business houses or to a now non-existent country have been made, a weakness of the times I would say - has been left out of this translation. Of course, with due apologies to all his relatives, friends, well wishers and my fellow 'disciples'. Moreover, as his works in principle have universal appeal, his restricting it to any particular region or country wherever done has been mostly done away with by suitable amendments.

Lastly, like Gurbakhash Singh, I too am not an academician. I am a civil engineer and have more or less gone through similar life experiences, leaving the government job of an assistant engineer mid-way through being the closest among them. Could my translation, then, in that sense, be less of a soulful experience,

leave alone verbatim translation? I hope the reader would excuse these 'soulful'
liberties taken by me off and on.

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Chapter One

For Want of Happiness

Letters from the readers, inquiries from acquaintances and heart to heart talk with some friends and relatives all remind me of a friendly lady who one day called for me on finding her heart palpitating uncontrollably. Before my reaching there she had also taken medicine from a qualified doctor.

"Doctor has advised me complete bed-rest for eight days - absolutely nothing doing - but I'm afraid this way my condition will go from bad to worse," on seeing me she said with a sighing smile.

I took her arm into my hands to feel her pulse, rubbed her cold hands to give them warmth, removed some pearls of perspiration from her forehead and put a drooping curl of hair at its place.

Sending her daughter inside to bring water, she continued, "I am really not that unwell as the doctor says... it was just that my heart was feeling lonely for the last about two or three days...and today a little indigestion and it gave in."

"Absolutely," feeling her abdomen with my hand I said, "there is nothing wrong with you, only a little bit of lack of happiness."

And before I could add that till her husband returns from the borders I shall ask all the members of my family to take care of her happiness by coming to her more often, she straightened up in her bed forgetting all advice of the doctor and with her face betraying unmistakable signs of hunger for happiness said,

"Yes...what I'm really dying for is happiness...being shy by nature I do not mix up with people easily ...and sometimes the loneliness gets the better of me."

Most of the people I come to know through their letters, inquiries and heart-to-heart talk seem to be in the same boat as this friendly lady. All these people are generally well off in their respective spheres of life and have strong value systems. Yet in all their letters their overriding concern seems to be only with one subject, though explained in various ways: The Lack of Happiness.

"Life seems meaningless. Is suicide the only solution...?"

"Should I re-marry..."

"How to keep my husband happy? I wait all day long but when he comes home we cannot live together even for two minutes without quarrelling..."

"I find something amiss in home; can you give me some spiritual mantra to keep my spirits up...?"

"It seems all the people have conspired against me, will God ever do justice...?"

"It seems I am being punished for my past sins..."

"My wife is very narrow-minded...suspicious...bad tempered..."

"My husband is a beast..."

All dying of the same disease, which, in fact, is taking epidemic proportions all over our country: the worm of doubts, denials, unnecessary restrictions is eating into their very souls with the result that almost all the youth of our country is getting prematurely old for want of happiness.

With all the best wishes at my command, I put forth my formula for happiness, born out of my own life-experiences, knowing full well that it may seem out of reach for many in this world of scarce financial resources, while some others may find it a wishful thinking at the best and an outright tissue of lies at the worst. But I want to say with all humility that this is the result of my life-long experiments with happiness. If it removes a doubt of a brother here, lessens the fear of a sister there, or, in general, contributes in howsoever small a measure towards their happiness, I shall feel amply rewarded.

1. Happiness is the very blooming of the heart-lotus. Don't deny it. Try to achieve it with all the rightful means at your command. No God need be offered sacrifices for it.

2. Find and be good in any work or profession, with self-reliance being your guiding principal. Dependency on any body in any manner is the sure way to lose happiness.

3. Develop friendships, intimacies, relationships, and then cultivate them with patience. Save with all your might even those on the verge of breaking. Don't let easily go away the ones who once came close to you - not through fear or force but by making the relationship beneficial for them.

4. If your life-partnership has broken down mid-way through and there is nothing to keep you busy enough to save you from the impending loneliness, without caring for what the world will say, don't be afraid to take one more chance if you can find a willing partner. Only take care that your partner and your children do not become burdens on each other.

5. Free yourself of the fear of incurring wrath of God of the next world. It may be difficult to free oneself of the fear of incurring wrath of man, but God by His very name and nature must simply be beyond such wrath. If you can succeed in achieving happiness in this world through rightful means, you would better forget the next world.

6. God is not bound by singing of bhajans or psalms, nor need you inflict pains on yourself on His behalf. Pilgrimages, propitiations, prostrations, prayers, offerings of flowers are only the underhand means to save oneself from the demon of unhappiness. A happy life is fulfilling in itself, and can only be achieved by living in the company of good people with gusto.

7. For securing happiness know all the members of your family well. Try to know the secrets of their hearts, avoid touching the painful ones, nurse the pleasurable ones, shower praise, offer help, sit together, laugh, sing, dance, share worries, be tolerant, let not anybody feel low.

8. Normally any husband and wife who take care of each other's needs should live a happy and contented life. Still if there is a problem - and it persists despite all efforts - acknowledging each other's compulsions each should help the other to be on his/her own once again and find happiness somewhere else. If not life-long partners, let you at least not become life-long enemies. Never should you think of harming the one whom you once clasped so close to your heart. If needed, you should rather offer moral and monetary support. Happiness sown is one day happiness reaped.

9. Keep colourful intimacy with your neighbours - warm, full of friendship and bliss, in which there is wait, for which there is heartache. Backbiting one's neighbours is a sure way to kill happiness.

10. Invite friends to your homes, spend on them to your capacity, hospitality is the fountainhead of happiness. Similarly, go to them, sometimes plan eating out, walking, travelling together. Avoid finding faults, overbearing attitude, sharp tongue. Make it your second nature to welcome with open arms whoever comes to your doorstep.

11. Find happiness in small, simple daily gestures: telling somebody the way, inquiring about somebody's well-being, patting a young one, bowing to an old one, doing someone a small favour, doing for someone a small job, drawing a cartoon for a child, making a doll for a girl, moving a loving hand on the back of an animal, winking a welcome to an intruder cat or dog to your home.

12. Practise making your talk sweet, light, easy, harmonious. Selection of words should suit the occasion. Read good books, listen to good speakers. Vague, wayward, colourless words betray unhappiness. Sparkling, soothing, clear, crisp words are the hallmark of a star soul.

13. Husband, wife should not keep an eye on each other. Distrust mars love, trust makes it, keeps it warm. Jealousy is the sure way to kill love. A love secured in confinements is as good as dead. Love is that free bird which cannot live in a cage. Prove worthy of such love and help your life-partner be the same.

14. Do not criticise your children, nor say anything by way of order, nor belittle them by comparing with others. Rather praise them, encourage them,

inspire them, motivate them, cheer them whenever you can. Join in their work. Respect their friends. Never suggest gratitude.

15. Keeping in mind the requirements of justice, truth and well being dare whatever you have to do. Nobody has ever pleased the whole world. Do full justice to yourself as well as to the other party and forget the rest.

16. If you are a believer, take it as a means to an end, not something to be flaunted before the whole world. Belief without betrays the absence of belief within. If there is any other meaning of belief except that it shows one's oneness with the whole of mankind, the days of that belief are over now. Million churches, million temples, million mosques will not be able to sustain such a belief any longer.

17. No Pir, Prophet, Messiah, Guru, Godman has been able to envision better religion than honorable work, willingness to help and give happiness, and the desire to make the whole world happy and contented.

18. If you are doing your duty towards your family, friends, neighbours, community and country well, then you will also be able to say without fear with that happy Muslim, who, when once asked why he did not keep his beard or wear his pyjama above ankles according to Islamic injunctions, replied:

*Man panja dar panjai khuda daram,
man cheh parwah ki mustafa daram.*
(Khuda's hand is in my hand, whom do I
care when mustafa - Rusulallah - is my own.)

19. The golden rule of happiness is to somehow keep the spark of life burning bright. When the spark of life begins to weaken, the spirit begins to wane. When you find something dying inside, dust, cleanse, fine-tune life's spark-plug;

remove the burnt-out part, reposition and re-ignite life's lamp-flame to its brightening best - in short, re-evaluate and re-orient your life. Low, weak, labouring light is not even seen not to talk of its showing the way.

20. When low in spirits, take a bath, put on your best clothes, put shine in your eyes, and go share your life with a friend, neighbour, son, daughter, intimate and do not return until your life's spark is again at its sparkling best. Until there is spring again in your feet.

21. Eager to welcome morning after the night, night after the evening, hoping for the best of dreams, the loveliest of encounters, one should be raring to go for the next day's work. With no spasms in the soul to follow somebody else's footsteps.

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Chapter two

Higher Mental Horizons

Happiness cannot be borrowed. It is the fruit of the wise ways of living of a successful society. Peace, patience are not blessings from outside, but the maturing of the mind of a well-organised life. Keep your mind open to new ideas, to new hobbies for the whole of life. Create some interests beyond your regular job - gardening, stamp collecting, carpentry, painting, teaching, training tiny-tots. Read latest books, acquaint yourself with newer and newer subjects. Sometimes leaving your present surroundings go to the new ones, talk to new people, eat different, wear different, live different for a few days.

Keep a check on your thoughts. Don't let any single thought possess you. Do not be afraid to pick new habits - clinging to old ones is to be getting old. He is not old who keeps pace with the new. Time creates new horizons for each generation. If you want to live happily with many new generations, share the horizons of each generation with love and understanding, acquaint yourself well with them. Time is eternal change - each second old horizons give place to new ones. Whosoever refuses to acknowledge these new horizons refuses time's eternal law of change - he closes his heart/mind to the ever-changing game of "being/becoming". Every where, every second he will be seeing what he will like best to avoid.

Only he deserves happy long life who can welcome the ways of the changing world with understanding, acceptance and admiration. Only his eyes will remain true to the end who believes that the world is getting better by the day - eagerness to see the best will keep his eyes at their waiting best. Only his ears will remain alert to the last who wishes to listen to the life's latest symphonies. He, who finds the language of the new times unrecognisable and unpalatable, will soon go deaf. Whosoever is full of praise for others will find his tongue capable of speaking the best of words to the very last. He who does not speak to his sons, daughters, grandchildren except when to shame them for their new fads and fashions will soon turn tongue-less - or even worse - will soon find that there is nobody willing to listen to him. He will go on speaking, the hearers will simply turn away. Only he will be listened to who is happy on seeing others and wishes them well.

There is no need for anybody to mediate between man and his God. Man is alive; this is sufficient proof that his God is with him. He need not bother about anybody else's judgment. Everybody has his personal direct rapport with his God. How do you know - they may be having greater closeness with Him than you.

Those couples who say "dear", "darling" with every word do not necessarily sleep in each other's arms at night - too much outer "dear", "darling" sometimes betrays too much inner distrust. And those who hardly speak to each other in somebody else's presence, or have passed the time by saying just "you", "you"

often sacrifice their lives for each other when the time comes, without letting anybody know of it and as easily as the hatching of an egg.

He who wishes to live happily should make it a habit to look around. No scene should seem overwhelming, nothing should seem unrecognisable. What can be reasoned out has a place in life, what cannot be reasoned out is unacceptable. To know is to love. He who is looking at the same horizon for years has stopped living, his world has come to a standstill, and the arms of his clock of destiny have got stuck. If nothing jerk-starts him, then inner unhappiness will one day destroy his useless frame in the name of death.

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Chapter Three

Calm, Composed, Carefree

Calmness of mind is not a state bereft of any action. Many have the fallacious belief that sitting in samadhi in underground closets and caves can calm one's mind. Definitely not. Calmness of mind, quite different from the state of total absence of thoughts and actions, is the harmonisation of many thoughts and actions.

Human mind has many strings of thought and action, as has a deep-sound musical instrument of sounds and motions. It is a foolish recommendation that the strings of various thoughts and actions should be destroyed one by one so as to save oneself of the problem of harmonising them. All those faiths, all those philosophies teach untruth which recommend the negation of one's self and the complete annihilation of desires for achieving nirvana. Such calmness is an other name for death. The game of life demands a dynamic calmness.

Nature has brought together a countless number of ingredients of personality in the human mind. Mixing them together, experimenting with many permutations and combinations, and ultimately producing 'a beautiful, facile and forceful organisation' by strengthening rather than weakening them is the goal of Nature. Within the constraints of inheritance and what is given to you in the name of society and environment, developing a presentable and inspiring personality with the white and black shades of your desires, your feelings, your

sentiments, your natural tendencies, is the pinnacle of the art of living. Only this art can make you calm and composed, only this art can give you happiness. The whole tension in life is the warning of the absence of this art.

Unorganised life is an unhappy life. I see around me, read from letters, that the greatest problem of people is unhappiness. Their hearts often go into fits without reason, time seems to pass too slowly, mind remains depressed, dreams are frightening, and nothing seems to be going well. The reason for this is not that they are unfortunate, nor that they are being punished for their past karma - only ignorance of the ways of life.

First of all, we should accept ourselves fully. Whatever we are, our name, our height, our colour, our inheritance, our country, our environment - accept everything fully, wholeheartedly. Write it in your notebook that I accept all these, because these cannot be changed, nobody is there to listen to my complaints about these. The chessboard may be new or faded under the sun; pawns may be small, big, coloured, simple, smooth or rough; what matters is our game.

Don't worry what sort of things we have, our test is how best we use them. Many Kings and Nawabs, Lords and Dukes come into this world with the best of bodies and the greatest of riches, but only rare one gets mentioned as the maker of the history of the world, and even that rare one who gets mentioned, like Gautama the Buddha, comes out of the stranglehold of inheritances at the very outset of his life's journey.

We should begin our life by accepting all our plus and minus points. Then we should begin organising our whole personality around the values we cherish most. Within a very short time we shall find ourselves being pushed towards some great goal, and in harmony with some sensed overall scheme of things. We shall be developing a steady conduct.

Unsteady conduct cannot be relied upon, the currents of such a conduct are very wayward. Now kind, now unaccommodating, now sweet, now sour, now respectful, now disrespectful. These people are not really bad, often they ask for forgiveness after feeling sorry, saying, "now what do I do, my nature is such." They always hope that some godman someday will bless them with the calmness and steadfastness of mind with his spiritual powers.

But whosoever wishes to be calm, composed and care-free should leave false hope of achieving such a lofty state through some godman's blessings, or even through written or spoken so-called sacred words. No sacred word holds such a state. No prayer-house stocks this calmness of mind. Calmness of mind is not some negative state but a melody emanating from many different strings which closes the eyes and covers the ears with its lulling cadences.

Calm, composed life does not mean a life free from any problems, pains or sufferings. Problems will be there, pains and sufferings too - if not your own then those of others - but if people can read and write in an aeroplane flying at the speed of three hundred miles per hour, if they can sleep on earth revolving around the sun at the speed of many thousands of miles per second, then surely they can also remain calm and composed inspite of these problems and pains if

they can bring their lives to the same state of harmonious organisation. This is what I mean by dynamic, living calmness. Calmness bereft of any actions and desires is the calmness of the grave.

The whole Universe is in perpetual motion, nothing in it is standstill, or without revolution, but despite this the whole Universe is calm, is steady, is dependable. The learned of astrology can make almanacs of hundreds of past and future years, can predict the times of eclipses by calculating. Such steadfastness and dependability can make a man composed and carefree. He who is not carefree is not calm.

This freedom from care, from fears cannot come by chance or by good fortune. We can accumulate as much milk, ghee, and other health-strengthening things as we wish, but if we cannot digest them into our bodies they are useless for us. Daily people die despite the abundance of such things. The rooms of many rich people are filled with such things when they breathe their last in the care of doctors.

Whosoever is eager to be calm and composed should, making the most of what is given to him, organise all the ingredients of his personality most efficiently, neither caring for honours nor for blessings and mercies. This is not a small achievement and should not come easily, the effort must match the reward.

Know your mind, know the workings of mind, know all the potentialities of mind. Suppressing desires will not make you calm. Fulfilling them while remaining true to the laws of truth and justice is the whole game. One cannot enjoy the game of chess if one stealthily picks up his opponent's pawn or

changes the position of his pawn or recalls his movement. The whole enjoyment and benefit of practice of the game lie in checkmating the opponent with clever moves within the laws of playing chess.

Desires are the pawns of our chess of life, truth its board, and justice the moves of our pawns. No pawn can go alive beyond the board - it will have to die to go beyond, nor can any pawn kill beyond its move, only by winning and losing repeatedly within the laws can we learn to imagine thousands and millions of good moves. These make us fearless.

There is poverty, disease, ignorance, discord, discontent in our country. This is the atmosphere available to those born in India. It doesn't matter that the atmosphere is not good. Calmness does not depend solely on the available atmosphere, but also on how we react to it. Every problem overcome converts into happiness. A country having so many problems has so many chances of converting them into happiness. The chance to free one's country can be one of the richest sources of happiness. If the youth of that country avail that chance they can have the highest experiences of happiness. Youth cannot be satisfied with the peace of the grave. Youth grows through purposeful adventures. He is not young who is not excited at the prospect of an impending danger.

To be able to help one's countrymen in becoming prosperous, healthy and happy has a great charm and motivation for an individual life. Brothers are in discord, some do not eat with each other, others do not touch each other, still some others do not see each other; a chance to create a feeling of all-embracing

one humankind between them challenges the deepest commitments of a young heart.

Over one hundred crore kind, suffering, worshippers of non-violence, demoralised by the tyrannies of centuries of alien cultures - if ever this one fifth of humanity, leaving behind hopelessness and failure rises as one, and makes the conversion of its natural resources into power and prosperity as its life's goal instead of an illusory mukti or nirvana, the world will someday be thankful to them.

You are asking for calmness while confronted with very small inconveniences. Sometimes your heart sinks because one or the other of your desires is not fulfilled. Sometimes you are depressed because of jealousy: you are a good person, you are ashamed you have not succeeded despite hard work, you think your colleague has got promoted without any talent. These discouragements and dejections owe themselves to the fact that you have chosen a very narrow aim of your life. Success is not in things. Satisfaction is not in possessions. The whole fulfillment lies in becoming a part of some greater good, beyond you.

Every thing can be created, every situation can be improved, every peak can be climbed. The whole secret of success and satisfaction, of being calm, composed and carefree lies in continuous creating, improving and climbing. Only this truth is reliable, only this truth is eternal, and the flame of fair play of this truth is never extinguished, come what storms may.

Selfishness is a sign of immaturity. Age makes us outgrow it and see a common goal. Only a common goal can make us calm. The compassion of only the

whole world can make us free from pain and suffering, and can make us truly calm and composed.

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Chapter Four

Happy Twenty-four Hours

Writing about the lack of happiness, I had said that we should keep the spark of life burning bright so that we may be eager to welcome morning after the night, night after the evening, hoping for the best of dreams, the loveliest of encounters, and raring to go for the next day's work.

You will ask: how can this be done when instead of burning bright the spark of life of many seems to be constantly on the verge of burning out? Some people think that such smooth talk is only for writing - for showing off a writer's writing skills; for otherwise, life is full of suffering - as is written in our religious books - and every minute of it passed is something to be thankful for.

While claiming no moral high-ground - rather I feel happy when sometimes I find in me stirrings of some weaknesses common to my contemporaries - yet I am unable to insult my readers by writing something which I do not myself follow.

You ask me, how to keep the spark of life alive, burning bright? The answer to this question cannot be given without referring to my personal life. It is not good morals, yet sooner or later you are going to listen to my life-story from my own lips, for, I am seeing since long your growing curiosity to peep into the soul of someone who can dare talk of love and beauty in this holy country where any such talk is called shameful, who can dare call religion an illusion, the whole

Universe as God, God otherwise only a figment of man's imagination. Even at the risk of being called an atheist and an egoist, who can dare talk of freeing sex of its sinful connotations and raising it to the spiritual heights it deserves, of freeing women and children of the slavery of man-dominated world without fearing the label of a corrupt, useless rabble-rouser. Some of you have already written to me about it.

So I know you will not be overly annoyed with me for going through some of my personal details in advance here.

I am sure I do not let the spark of my life go weak for long. It does go weak sometimes no doubt, for it is in the very nature of things of life - some times life wants to rest a while, while at other times it wants to soar. So I take every low as a sign of a coming high.

I am happy that I have no obligation to be a Mahatma, and have not risen above enjoying small human pleasures. These small human pleasures keep the light of my life burning bright like small, dry pieces of straw we throw off and on into a fire.

While going to sleep I wait eagerly like children for the morning. And when I begin my day in the morning there are springs in my feet.

I wake up at six in the winter and at five in summer. Stretching myself to limits I again fall flat on the bed. Then relaxing all the parts of my body for a minute, I keep lying with my eyes closed for about ten minutes. And think out a tentative blue print for the coming day as to how best to fill it with happiness. Then opening my eyes I look at the stars. In winter they are visible from the

open window of my bedroom. They wink at me. And if there is still some ecstasy left of some dream of the previous night, transferring the darling of my dreams to the winking stars I bow to her and jump out of bed. Filling a glass of water from an earthen pot placed by the side of my bed, and finishing it in slow small sips, I go down to my looking glass, stretch before it once or twice before combing my hair, and then splash my eyes with water and go out for a morning walk.

I find it necessary to comb my hair early in the morning because uncombed hair present a very disagreeable sight, while it is advisable to keep one's head uncovered during exercise.

First I complete my two miles walk by counting the rounds. While walking I pay special attention to each part of my body from head to foot, two to three times, imagining at the same time what sort of feet, legs, belly, heart, hands, arms, lips, nose, eyes, forehead, hair and colour of skin I would like to have. Then my enthusiasm peaks and I move all the above parts individually with various exercises for about fifteen minutes.

If I am not late, I fill water with buckets from the hand-pump in both the bathrooms for the whole family, otherwise I bring two buckets only for myself.

My joys are becoming like children day by day, so much so that now my wife takes me - never mind the age - as her seventh child, and treats me just like them. She pokes fun at one or the other of my new obsessions once or twice daily: "God save you from your obsessions."

For the last two months I am mad after shining my shoes. When it begins to glisten like glass, I ask any child in secret - without letting my wife know..."Tell me the truth, Urmi, do you see your face in it or not?" Even such a small thing keeps my excitement for the morning at night - I am going to shine my shoes in the morning. When one day my friend said on seeing my shoe sparkling, "I have seen many a boot shining, but only you do full justice to your shoes!" it was like a painter's painting getting the first prize in an exhibition to me.

Sometimes I place my shoes in front of me in my room so that I may myself praise it enough.

Something new read, seen, keeps me excited for days on end.

Drinking water early in the morning saves one from indigestion - this kept me excited at night for many days: I am to drink water on getting up.

Once I read from somewhere that slapping one's naked body and rubbing it strongly with a dry towel after taking bath with cold water greatly helps one's circulation. Since then I try to take my bath before the guests wake up, lest they ask someone about the slapping in the bathroom. My wife complains that my towels do not last long these days, I am happy that she does not know the secret: the sound of rubbing my body with the towels does not reach her.

Cleansing one's gums and tongue with fingers is not less important than brushing one's teeth. For many days I remained excited with the idea of cleansing and strengthening my gums.

After taking my bath I sit naked before the looking glass, where sun's first rays greet me through a window of this room. You must have read about my special relation with sun in my stories. Moreover, I had come to know, that a woman of seventy looked forty and the people tried to discover the secret of her youth from what she ate, and the secret came out that she used to sit naked in the sun for twenty minutes daily. Since then I also sit naked in the sun and comb my hair. I even tie my turban before putting on other clothes - so as to keep my naked body before the sun for as long as I can.

Tying turban is one of my great pleasures. I may swallow my food in a hurry, but I cannot go to see anybody by loosely wrapping my turban around my head - without putting every fold of it to my entire satisfaction I feel weak in the mind. Sometimes I even cure myself of my tiredness by first putting off, unfolding and then re-tying my turban after washing my hands and face.

Though I have only three sets of clothes to wear for most of the year, I put them on with great love and care - while passing by, my wife often needles me: "Look at his coquetry."

After getting ready I ask for milk, I feel very hungry, but take only one glass of milk. Though my wife tells anybody who is around, "Don't just take it as a glass of milk, it is more than arranging a party - this much hot, this much sugar, in that glass, on that table, with that table-cloth, today with honey, today with jaggery, today with ten almonds, today with four dates, today raisin, today groundnut." Now-a-days, she says, I am obsessed with honey.

After taking milk, I come to my study room, at about half past eight. Latrine, bathroom, make-up room and study room are four very lovely parts of home for me. In these I spend many happy moments of my life. The readers should not look askance at the inclusion of latrine in this four-some. I wash the latrine many times daily myself, and then when I sit in it in the morning I feel very happy. Nobody can call me from here, nor I am obliged to respond to anybody. It is like a castle to me. I pass more time here than others, I come early so that I can sit here as long as I wish.

I never hurry sitting here. Closing my eyes with my hands I concentrate fully on my intestines. I feel increasing movement in them, feel my insides getting cleansed. If I think of something else then, this obstructs the cleansing process. While coming out I move my hand on my belly, it feels smaller and light, I am very pleased.

In my study room, I place my papers very carefully under paperweights, look at all the other things in the room for about five minutes, and set any misplaced thing right. Sitting at my writing table I am eager to write my daily 'resolution-book'. For a minute I close my eyes with my hands, then opening them very serenely I go through the last day's page, and fill the present day's one.

By this time my writing pen is ready to burst forth. In the first quarter of the day I always do my writing.

People come to see me. Previously I could not hide my impatience with the visitors. But now I have promised myself that the visitor, literate or illiterate, commoner or somebody special, would be my master of the time. This has

greatly benefited me: the visitor is happy and impressed and my enthusiasm is increased.

At one-thirty I am called for lunch. After lunch the whole house goes silent for an hour.

Sometimes, if the elder children are at home during the holidays, we play cards. The loser has to catch the others with his/her eyes covered with a band. On hearing noise my wife comes on the scene and rebukes us, especially me: "Leave alone teaching the children, you yourself join them in mischief-making...see, I will throw your cards into the well today." We know she is not as much against cards par se as against some games - Rummy, Sweep, Bhabo, Bizique - which she herself does not know how to play. She knows only one game called 'Screw', if we play that she even sits with us to play after one or two requests. We all have decided how to handle her when she is angry: The children say, "Mata ji - we are playing only 'Screw' - today you must play with us!"

This is a very simple game. First all the four cards of sixes are placed on the ground one after the other, and then the other cards are placed on them. If you can keep any card of six restricted without leaving your turn, then the others' cards are stopped. When my wife has restricted a card of six her face presents a real spectacle. When the person sitting next to her finds no way to move his card, she laughs out: "Who is this thief who does not let go the six of the suit of heart?" We all begin laughing with her, and the youngest Rano will blurt out, "Mata ji, may I tell who is this thief?" And Mata ji laughs with such abandon that the cards fall off from her hands.

After one or two rounds she recalls some work to be done. Going, she allows us to play some more rounds. And we begin to play Sweep instead of Screw.

After resting for an hour at midday, I splash my eyes with water many times. I have come to know that this greatly helps eyes' muscles. Then I re-tie my turban as in the morning and get ready for work by three-thirty.

Till seven in the evening I think of nothing else except work. Completing my work, in a clean and well-kept room, though tires my body yet refreshes my mind. There is much reading material around me - newspapers, magazines, newly published books. I try to go through all of them, yet a lot remains unread. Remaining of some material unread is not as painful for me as having shortage of reading material.

My wife's writ runs in all the rooms of our home, but when it comes to my study room I am the master: "I am writing - we shall discuss this thing some other time." Even my dry, harsh words do not annoy her. She watches my mood before coming in, and often goes without entering. I am greatly respected in this room, but I am happy that outside it, she does not treat me differently from her children. In older age that husband should feel himself fortunate who is able to get the same treatment from his wife as her children.

Last month, I brought a "wonder book" for children. Electrical sub-stations, merry-go-rounds, circuses, aeroplanes were to be made by cutting and pasting various pieces from it. Uma, our daughter, and I equally enjoyed it, so much so that for three days we remained lost to the outside world. Even at night we

could not stop talking about our newly made electrical sub-station, that is, till we were chided into silence. Whenever my wife would come to see me, I would be busy making toys with Uma, forgetting even my meals. Whoever came to visit our home during this period will be brought to us by my wife and told with uncontrollable laughter: "Now see, how he is mad after making toys."

But, only mad know the enjoyment of such madness. It was one hour past noon and still we were not ready, having no heart to leave our work. Finally there was strict order to come to have something to eat. We decided to say we have no hunger.

Though the excuse worked well for the time being, by three we felt dying of hunger. We planned a rescue act with the help of younger children Pali and Ghulo - they brought biscuits for us from the kitchen stealthily.

How this situation keeps our flame of happiness burning bright may be known by the following example. One day we all decided that we shall not disobey any of Mata ji's orders for fifteen days, nor shall we show annoyance at her anger, hoping that this way she will stop getting angry altogether. Our third daughter Rano said, "I shall definitely not join with you in this scheme." We asked, "Why?" "If Mata ji stopped getting angry altogether, my life shall become a bore - at least half of the laughter of our home is thanks to Mata ji's unique way of getting angry."

We were all convinced of what Rano said.

In the evening I go for a long walk - often alone. After which sometimes I go to the club, sometimes sit in the lawn with my wife. Sometimes we go to visit somebody's home, sometimes somebody comes to visit ours.

After this I go to sleep on the roof. I sleep inside the room for two or three months in a year only. For the rest of the year I sleep on the roof, directly under the stars. I like the stars very much. The sky is not something limitless for me. I know many stars by their names. I watch them and make inquiries about them.

Almost daily before sleeping I make an idea of distances between various stars. After watching Venus for many nights and early mornings I came to know that the seemingly two stars, one rising early in the evening and the other found on the other side early in the morning are, in fact, one and the same Venus.

Dark night to me is even more interesting than the bright one.

One day a thought came to my mind that almost all the people in the past used to put antimony in their eyes. Their eyes remained healthy. I had never put antimony in my eyes as far as I knew. I thought it must be thanks to the needle for putting antimony - the insides of the eyes undergo no exercise, the daily rubbing by the needle must be helping the eyes by making up for this. I have made a beautiful, cool needle a part of my bedside things. The mere joy of rubbing it daily into my eyes sometimes increases my attraction for my bed.

In the bed I lie relaxed in an upright position for about ten minutes, opening my eyes off and on in between - and again closing by filling them with stars. I have become convinced that until the goodwill of all does not become a natural way with me I cannot realise my goal of having a smooth and well-balanced life,

the perseverance for which is making my years livable. So, while going to sleep my mind is full of forgiveness, humility and generosity. To keep this state even during the day I hand it over to my subconscious mind, then turn on my side and feel free of the day's duties.

I have a lot of dreams - most of them beautiful. I write them down - and often share with you through my writings.

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Chapter Five
Some Clarifications

When the last essay was published in 'Preetlari', two very interesting and thought-provoking points were raised regarding my recommendations to keep the spark of life burning bright.

One: "We thought your relation with your wife is normal and natural, but from your essay we get a hint it is somewhat un-natural. You have said, that now you are satisfied by being taken just as one of your children."

My critic's indication is towards the relationship between Mahatma Gandhi and his wife Kasturba Bai.

Critic's first opinion is correct, his second opinion is a misunderstanding.

Mahatma Gandhi had compared some of his mistakes with Himalayan blunders. I am of the firm view that none of the mistakes he had mentioned was a Himalayan blunder; some of them were rather wise actions, which became mistakes only by calling them as such. But his one mistake was even greater than a Himalayan blunder, though he went on believing it as his virtue.

That was, his relationship of a celibate with his wife even at young age.

Only psychologists can have an idea of the harm this blunder has done to India and to the whole world. Even greater harm was that the ever-present inner

struggle of this unnecessary vow did not allow that easiness and balance to develop in the great soul of Gandhi Ji which is the hallmark of a naturally perfected creation. A great green tree, in full flourish, loaded with green leaves, with well-entrenched roots, strong stem, giving shelter to all friend and foe, some lost in sweet-nothings, some in scheming, some in scratching leaves, some in breaking branches, some in pushing swings for their sweet-hearts, some in making nests, the storms break, clouds burst, lightening strikes, hailstones hit, the great tree is standing resolutely, with open arms, with generous heart, calm and accepting, understanding and indulgent.

Mahatma Ji has presented a marvellous example in human life, and history will remember him for centuries to come - but only one, unique and rare, standing steady on a stretched rope with unparalleled skill and practice, showing miraculous achievements and getting hailed at every step. His unusual fasts, his deep silences, his beyond all expectations initiatives, his equally unimaginable retreats, his snow-white purity, and surrounding him a host of Bapu-bewitched women, all having many emotional complications. Making charkha (spinning wheel) and langoti (loincloth) the kings in the atomic age, and propagating the philosophy of poverty from the palaces of the rich and the famous.

But the miraculous can only be worshipped, emulated are the normal, the natural. Coarse cotton cloth, spinning wheels, loin clothes, public fasts, public prayers, public silences and public celibacy, all are the unparalleled feats on the stretched rope. Which ended with the Mahatma. Not Mahatmas but men can teach how to walk on earth.

Were Gandhi Ji not a Mahatma, he would have been a very beautiful man whom one would have liked to enjoy hugging neck to neck rather than hailing with raised necks.

Mahatma Ji was a mountain not a plain ground; was a lighthouse not candlelight; was a sea not a lake.

My essay was for the lovers of candlelights and lakes who live on plain ground. I am in favour of the natural relationships. Some husbands love their wives like daughters. Many readers may not know that mother-son, father-daughter are the basic sex relationships. Baby-son's first beloved is his mother and baby-daughter's first lover is her father. Once we asked this question from an American professor in an American university. Many young American couples call each other "Mama, Papa". One Muslim student from India was astonished to hear this and told that according to his religion if one says "Ma" to his wife three times, even if in a dream, their marriage is broken. American professor wondered how mere words could be considered stronger than emotional bonds. He told that every woman has something of a mother or a sister in her, and accordingly they show it off in their relationships with their husbands. The whole domestic life is the expansion of these two basic relationships. He said that he himself liked to call his wife "Mama".

Second criticism: "You do everything well because you have everything in life. Your Bungalow is beautiful, your income is bountiful, you are not to attend to anybody, your children are intelligent; but you have not given a thought to the real question. The question was whether those hapless ones can also keep

the spark of their lives burning bright who work in the factories, go early in the mornings and return late in the evenings; who have no milk in the morning, no fruit in the evening; who have only a dark, dingy room in the name of a home. Should they eat or should they educate their children?"

"You please say something about those unfortunate young men also who are in service at sixty/seventy rupees per month, who want to rebel but cannot because of their responsibilities towards their mothers, children. Don't they also have desires, dreams?"

This question is from some sister full of compassion for the suffering humanity.

But this question was not the subject matter of the essay under discussion. The subject matter of that essay was how to keep the spark of life burning bright within one's means.

I have nowhere in that essay mentioned of that happiness which could be achieved through excess of money. That essay only contained recommendations for a happy long life through simple habits in a new way.

Those I again repeat because those are invaluable.

"To get up early in the morning, to make a tentative blue print in the mind to fill the coming day with happiness, to look up at stars, to comb hair before going to see anybody, to drink a glass of water early in the morning to keep away indigestion, to send positive thoughts to and exercise every part of the body, to fill water in the bath rooms, to clean one's shoes oneself, to aid the blood circulation by giving slaps at the back, to rub the body with towel strongly, to sit

naked in the sun for some time daily, to exercise gums with finger, to tie turban properly, and to put on one's clothes with great love and care - never minding whether one has two suits or three; to take a simple breakfast - if not milk, let *lassi* and last day's *chapati* do the job as well; to clean the latrine oneself, and to think only of latrine while sitting on it - mothers do not allow anybody to talk to her child sitting for latrine, the child forgets about the latrine; to keep one's room spick and span, irrespective of whether this room is an office or a cotton comber's closet; to spend some time writing one's ideas and getting inspiration from them; to attend to the visitors with patience; to take one's meals - whether of one course or of two or with onions only - in time; to try to take meals with others - with friends, colleagues, wife, children; to rest for half an hour in the after noon - if half an hour is not possible let fifteen minutes do, good drivers on long tours stop their engines for two/three minutes for putting water after every three/four hours; to keep complete silence in the home for at least half an hour daily; every member of the home should have a room or a corner in a room exclusively for him/her self; to sit with wife, play with children, mix up with colleagues; to have something to eat in the evening - not necessarily raisins but radish, carrots, sugar canes, turnip any thing should do. If one cannot arrange radishes or carrots let even their leaves do for them. To sleep in the open as far as possible, to message one's eyes with antimony-needle, to hope for the best of dreams and to fill your eyes with stars before going to sleep."

Though my bungalow is spacious and my income is sufficient, these are not the sole sources of my happiness. Rather I have made them in these difficult

times with complete honesty for the very pursuit of my goal of happiness. An orphan child having no relative, no godfather, who could study in his ninth and tenth class only by getting his fees remitted, who began his carrier after passing his tenth standard at a monthly pay of only ten rupees, who studied in the engineering college at Rurkee by selling his wife's ornaments and through stipends, who worked at carrying off the ash from the fireplaces of the rich American housewives, who cleaned utensils and window panes of the rich for educating himself and his two brothers up to M.A.. This young man, weighed down by the responsibilities of one widowed mother and two widowed grandmothers, could save himself from freezing in the freezing selfishness of this twentieth century world by using only the natural resources of happiness with enthusiasm, by generating the sparks of life colliding just the empty corners of his heart, and flaming them further with the fuel of only his dreams.

My income is looking after six children, besides helping some needy ones like me in my youth days.

My personal expenditure is not more than thirty rupees, and my habits can easily allow me to make do even with half of this amount.

If I am being able to keep the spark of life burning bright, it is not with the help of the exploding stuff of money, only with the small, invaluable joys of the usual stuff of straw - now by accepting co-worker's proposals, now by rejecting politely; now by forgiving, now by asking for forgiveness; now by praising, now by getting praised; now by refusing to eat for somebody's sake, now by eating on full stomach; now by pressing somebody with hands, now by

getting pressed; now by taking the loved ones into arms and stars into eyes; now by sharing emotions with flowers. Putting my two weak feet firmly on the solidity of the wonderful earth I have never had enough of life - though there is also an intriguing tickling in the heart for the completeness of death.

No corner of the world, where people of any kind live, is without such riches of the heart.

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Chapter Six

If The Other Plays Spoilsport

Regarding the essays under discussion, three sisters have sent an other kind of question. The questions are different, but their kind is the same. The question is very genuine and interesting.

These sisters say that they have no doubt the spark of life can be kept burning bright under the circumstances enumerated by me in my previous two essays, and they accept my recommendations as valuable, but they have told about three other circumstances regarding which I have given no hint in these essays.

They say that the happiness of a home depends upon two partners. If one partner is always bent upon extinguishing the spark or has the like effect, then how to save the spark from getting extinguished?

One sister's problem is like this:

"I love my husband - I have never thought of anybody else except him. I have tried my best to make him happy. I have also never shied away from admitting my weaknesses. I am also ready to bow before him in any way. Accepting all his orders are also not a problem with me. I am also not uneducated. But he becomes uneasy the moment he sees me. He himself remains very unhappy, he is not in love with anybody else outside, but I don't know why he has not accepted any of my sacrifices - neither love, nor service, nor tears. My confidence in myself and others is getting eroded day by day - I had got a very

high education but something from within me is dying now, and I have begun looking somewhat idiotic. Nothing interests me. How can I carve out some place in the world?"

The second sister's difficulties are:

"My husband has not been able to win my love from the very first day of our marriage. I tried my best that if not love let me at least go on giving him respect. For two/four years I somewhat succeeded in this, but he does many things in such a way that it has become difficult for me even to respect him. Though I have given birth to a baby still I think I am as yet a virgin. With the passage of years living together is becoming increasingly difficult. His bodily contact has begun giving pain to me. In this situation though there is everything in the home, nothing interests me. I used to be thought of as a good, intelligent girl, but now my memory is becoming weak and my face is showing signs of age even in my youth. How should I re-kindle my dying flame?"

Third sister's problem is different from these two:

"I respect my husband, but could not love him. He loves me, and also respects me. He does so much for me that I am getting buried under the weight of obligations daily. If he were not doing all this and could get some enjoyment from outside, could become even disloyal to me, I could have carried on with him, because sex is absolutely not my hunger. I have had enough love, but getting loved was also not my hunger, my soul is dying to love. I could live with a disloyal husband without getting annoyed, because I have my own life of dreams. But this thing is disturbing me that my husband is giving me something

that I do not deserve. I request him also that he should not do me so much favour, he should create friendships outside. I invite many friends home, so that he may like someone. I pray, he does me some injustice so that the burden of his favours is somewhat taken off me. I have also asked him to marry again - I shall pass my days with the memory of his name. His favours that I cannot reciprocate under this set-up are getting unbearable for me. If he gets happiness from somewhere else, then I shall take it I have compensated him somehow.

But he says this is not the done thing. He is not ready to leave me on his own and I can also never find happiness anywhere by making him suffer. Loyalty and morality are forcing our two very good souls to play disloyal to life. Tell us both what to do?"

I agree that there was no recommendation regarding these three circumstances in my first two essays. In a home in which the emotional balance is so tilted, even life-flames will remain on the verge of dying out not to talk of life-sparks.

Leave alone tilting, even minor imbalances in the emotional realm put the whole life under great stress.

Whosoever is eager to live fully, emotional balance is his first need. No recognition, no religion, no wealth can make up for the emotional imbalance. Nor can one benefit from ignoring it. Without setting it right all our calculations will go awry. First settle this.

The circumstances of the first sister are very difficult. Sacrifice, service and supplications cannot remove the indifference from the heart of her husband towards her - these rather strength it. As the self-respect is getting eroded with supplications, the circumstances are going from bad to worse. So far as I understand, the reasons for the indifference will be found in the past life of the husband. It is also not his fault, he seems to me to be helpless - he is powerless before his emotional make-up.

Your marriage seems to be a mismatch.

You will not be able to correct the situation by living with your husband. You remain separate for some time - even a year is not a long time. Do not complain during this separation, nor say anything about your husband. If he ever asks about something, reply with welcome words - but let there be absolutely no mention of love in these words. Never be the first to write letter yourself.

During this separation you live at such a place where you can enhance your self-esteem - nobody is there to criticise you, rather all are sympathetic and helpful. You join some club, and taking up tennis or badminton or some other skillful game gain mastery over it. Also, find some other such work where you can have respect from people surrounding you. Open a class for needy widows, or for the children of servants and other poor people, teach them yourself, spend on them from your pocket. You have said in a part of your letter that money is no problem with you, spend some portion of this money as said above.

Forget your husband for some time - neither recall his good words nor bad. Learn some craft adequately, not for the sake of craft, only for enhancing your self-approval. Continuous criticism has drained your fuel of self-approval.

And if there arises no need for you in your husband within a year or a little more, understand that your marriage was absolutely ill-matched. Then leaving behind all care for rites and rituals, for what-the-people-will-say, get ready to play the game of life once more.

The circumstances of the second sister are not that difficult, because from her letter it is clear that her husband has also no respect for her. This couple is living together only to avoid social shame. There is no emotional entanglement. The difficulty for the first sister is that she is so attached to her husband that despite disrespect she is dependent upon his happiness. But there is no such problem for this sister. To advise that she should carry on somehow is to refuse advice. From the experience of the emotional world I have, this couple can never be a source of happiness for each other. They should also separate for the sake of their child. Both will grow old very soon. Even if there is no thought for marrying again, it would be better for both to lead independent and self-supporting lives. The woman should not take alimony from her husband. She should work independently, and create a new world around her. Social shame is a false monster, it has no bite, no blow. To play loyal to life is the thing.

The situation of the third sister is no doubt critical, but not as hopeless as those of the first two. This sister seems to be emotionally very sensitive. The

moral values of the first two are very inflexible, but she is eager to love. She did not find the chance because of her husband playing the overwhelming lover. There can be a very helpful experiment in this situation. Change all your surroundings. The wife should be given full freedom to live the way she likes. She should be able even to have the money for her needs without asking. She may see anybody she wants, invite anybody, go to anybody. For some time the husband should leave her free except to ask for his basic needs - should even stop burdening her with cares. He should take it that up to this time he has not been able to win the heart of his wife and he is not ready to accept it without winning it. Body and everything else his wife has already given him, and does not ask to be given back. But the husband is eager to win her heart, so he should try the game once more freely. Many husbands have finally won this game, and if it is lost, isn't it already?

Many souls, who know that they are sitting on the best flower but cannot find peace until they have flown to see all around, finally come to their own flower. But their wings go on fluttering until they have tired them flying.

Only those enjoy company who win their partner daily. They do not shy away from challenge. They create fresh inspiration for each challenge. They respect the wisdom of their partner, are not satisfied with the friendly acquiescence, do not take the certificate of marriage as the eternal passport to their partner's heart, and do not shy away from getting the visa to it again and again.

There is self-surrendering in love no doubt, but there is the highest of self-respect as well. Only a self-respecting lover can stand by his victory of a

woman's heart at the cost of even the whole world. He neither takes for granted nor hides this victory, he is ready to win it again and again throughout his life, and if perchance loses it, does not weep or complain.

If the husband of this sister values her company so much, he need try to win it again in the open. I am sure he will not lose, for the weight of chance is in his favour.

This is the most precious couple of the three. What they lack is that they have inherited love through marriage not won it, and without winning it they are not satisfied accepting it. They will have to decide the tie in the open.

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Chapter Seven

Successful Husband-Wife

The problem with many couples is that despite loving each other they could not understand each other. They get annoyed very soon, and spoil days of enjoyment and nights of hopes and promises over trifles.

They say that they have tried all means but fail to hit the target. Some condemn lack of education, some others lack of beauty, still some others lack of income and ill fate as the culprits.

But such wayward hitting can only be as efficacious as the potions taken from an almirah full of such potions without first testing them.

Human heart is a very delicate machine. If its parts are not saved from unnecessary friction they very soon begin to give noises from over-wear. This machine requires food, rest, care and above all, the skill to handle it. Without balanced handling its parts begin to develop tension.

The two-in-one world of husband-wife is such a world with which no one-in-one world stands in comparison. There is as much difference between the three-in-one world of man, woman and children and the one-in-one world of either man or woman alone, as between a one-coloured picture and a three-coloured picture. One colour may be the best, brightest and purest but it cannot reach the gentleness and richness of the undulations of the three colours. Moreover, if any one colour gets smudged on the three-coloured picture out of

the way it spoils the whole picture, while the same does not happen that easily with the one-coloured picture.

So, whosoever has chosen the life of partnership should get all his things in order. His each step needs to be careful, for it is a world of great promises. No impatient, wayward, artless man or woman should enter this world. Every careless step will upset something of it, trample something of it, and become the cause of shame.

Beauty and high education can be helpful, but hampering as well. These are not the musts for success in this world.

Those eager to succeed can hope for cent-percent success, provided they aim their target keeping in mind the laws of human nature. The bottom line is that the mutual respect between the two partners is intact. Where there has arisen no respect for each other, or is somehow lost, the partners will have to play the game somewhere else.

But where the mutual respect is as yet intact, despite the differences that may hurt again and again, I give them some hints for better adjustment.

To be a successful husband one needs to fulfil three basic requirements: good health, power commensurate with profession and good behaviour. After fulfilling these basic requirements one should acquire the following behavioural pluses.

1. Wear clean and well-tailored clothes. This is not to say that one should be obsessed with clothes - obsession of any kind reduces one's respect in the eyes' of

one's wife. The wife should not have the feeling that her husband puts on make-up, uses scents and looks into the looking glass again and again.

2. To be able to fix minor problems in the home - stopping rain water dripping through the windows, plugging leakage from the roof, being handy to bring essentials from the bazaar, opening jammed door/window bolts, cleaning lamps etc, having knowledge of the machines being used in the home, restoring the electric fuse, doing something in the garden or in the spares store in the holidays by putting on work-clothes and forgetting for a while the routine official work - enhances one's respect in the eyes' of one's wife.

3. Sometimes to go to wife's kitchen and look at her things with such wonder as if they were an electric sub-station on the Niagara fall: how she converts the dry flour and water into paranthas, how she puts mouth-watering taste into the vegetable of poison-like tasting bitter gourds. To look at her knives, spoons and tongs with respect, and admire the roundness of the chapati getting rolled on the rolling disc etc do not let the gears of her heart get jammed.

The husband who has never visited the 'factory' (kitchen) of his wife and relished in her presence her sauces, pickles, cakes and dishes has not found the royal road to a wife's heart.

4. The reputation of chastity, holiness and gentleness is a dangerous thing in a husband. A wife can give herself up more happily to a common son of the soil - who can sometimes even become harsh, misbehave, make fun of her. He who is too punctual in sleeping, waking, bathing, fasting, be there rains or storms, mournings or parties may become a Mahatma but not a good husband.

Small, simple, almost unselfish lies are also as essential for the construction of a home-life as some percentage of brickbats with bricks for the construction of a home.

The husband should be able to play whatever game is to be played, should not think playing cards as a sin, should have an idea of the good dishes, a personal opinion of the scenic beauties, should not snore loudly, should not talk of office things once in home. While talking to his wife he should not cock his ears for outside voices, should not praise other women in her presence. He should display signs of rich living within the means of his income, whenever goes out with his wife should have some change in his pocket.

In brief, the man should be practical, helpful and lover-husband. Some men are lover-husbands but not helpful, some are both of these but not good earners. Some are all else, but their lips have never given smiles like lovers, nor have their eyes thrown covert glances, nor yet have they lifted their wife by the waist ever.

5. Men, women do not expect their beauty to be admired only up to youth - every age has its beauty, and expects recognition. Many good couples look at each other even after the age of seventy in such a way so as to put the playfulness of youth into shame.

A car does not run on petrol only, the drops of soft, greasy lubricant keep every nut, bolt and piston running smoothly and save them from wear, tear and burning out. Without these lubricating drops the 'bearings' of many a costly car get burnt.

The car only stops without petrol - doesn't move - but without lubricating drops it catches fire, after which no petrol can move it. The above hints will act like lubricating drops for the successful running of a marriage.

These brief recommendations are for the husband. Beyond these the artists of homely life will find many more themselves. Indeed the homely life is the mother of all arts.

I also want to assure the wives that prior to the loss of mutual respect, the incongruities of every husband can be set right. The people are given lessons on this subject even now in many countries - there being courses of six months to a year. Just as deaf, dumb and blind can be taught to read and write, similarly almost every couple can be taught to live comfortably. Spells, charms do nothing, the success in homely life is a way, it has skill, it has expertise.

1. Allow complete freedom to your husband in his business, in his dealings. If his dealings are correct and his income is satisfactory let him handle them the way he wants. Avoid badgering him with unnecessary questions, don't make recommendations against his wishes, never burden him with your stubbornness. He shouldn't be pestered if he has to interact with some women for the efficient running of his business. If his behaviour in the home is all right, let it stand for 'everything outside is alright'. Let the buried remain buried.

2. Sexual-jealousy is natural in animals and raw people, but it is a useless distraction for a refined and intelligent person. If you ever find your husband showing interest in some other woman, don't take it as a sign of impending catastrophe, just take it as a warning to yourself. These outside interests, either of

man or of woman, to me are like the 'governors' of an engine: these increase/decrease the speed of life according to the need of the times.

Jealousy serves no purpose. It only tears open the stomach of the hen from which we wish to get the golden egg immediately. Never restrain your partner from such outside interest, and if the interest seems to be dangerous make efforts to tilt it the other way - towards yourself. This relationship of love is such that if it is not won daily it begins to go stale. The wife who wants to compete with the good nature and sweet talk of her competitor by getting annoyed with or blocking the way of her husband is playing the losing game.

3. When you find the balance of interest of your partner tilting towards someone else, add some counter-weight to your side. There are many kinds of counter-weights every man/woman can think of - kindness, compassion, cleanliness, sacrifice, service, gratitude, admiration, good food, special display of unselfishness - which can put the balance straight immediately.

Jealousy is the most useless of ways, and what to talk of setting straight, tilts the balance against you for the whole of life.

4. The home-chores should be done in such a way that the husband doesn't have to think about them. If possible, he should be freed the botheration of arranging even the gas and other minor kitchen useables. If he is on a very sensitive job, if he is very rich in sensitivities, the wife will greatly benefit if she takes over the whole responsibility of running the household. Arranging clothes for him, for herself and for the children, keeping household accounts should be done by her. She should always keep some three or four dishes/eatables in the

kitchen ready. The husband need not have to worry about some untimely guest. She should not let the kitchen useables finish at odd hours, should keep some spare beds for the odd guests, and should not hesitate to provide any household thing to the husband's guests. Attending to husband's friends from the heart will never fail to please him.

5. Never make the mistake of praising the power, position or proficiency of any other man in the presence of your husband.

6. Don't speak ill of anybody while going to sleep or just after waking up, nor say anything that may lead to an argument. Whatever you do during these two periods greatly affects the daily life. And if ever the mistake has been made, and the husband gets frustrated and does not come around even after feeling sorry, then let him sleep for the time being, and feel sorry for spoiling the night first thing in the morning. Two words and everything will be all right. Never take any dispute to the point of no return.

7. Handle children with all the wisdom at your command. Treat the servants with consideration. Teach them to keep clean, wear clean clothes. Give them due respect. Such small cares and considerations in a wife please many husbands in a magical way.

Reduce noise in the home. Keep your talk with the washerman, vegetable man, barber, beggar etc short - talk to the point and finish the deal quickly. Many husbands get very frustrated with long chats. A wife should know the limits of her husband's patience.

These recommendations can serve both the wife and the husband, but in the present social circumstances the wives need them more. These positive traits do not develop naturally in the women because of the narrow sphere of action of their lives. These traits will have to be acquired with understanding and training, till the time some better economic system creates equal opportunities for the development of man and woman both.

The things I have hinted above are concerned with the basic sensitivities of human beings. Though they show themselves in different couples in different ways. Recognise your problem from the common signs.

I cannot give words to every sign. But I want to assure that the spark of life can be kept burning bright in every situation and at every place.

Two characters in Charles Dickens 'A Tale of two Cities' produced sparks minutes before getting executed to the envy of the whole world.

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Chapter Eight

Successful Husband-Wife - 2

A learned sister asks:

"You say that the husband should sometimes go into the kitchen, but it is not necessary that all the educated wives should lead kitchen-centred lives:

'One wife is a teacher. She comes home, the husband also comes home, the tea is not ready. The servant has delayed it, the husband instead of asking the servant yells at the wife... The wife is not ready to accept it that she should take up the responsibility of preparing tea for the husband in time leaving her job before time.'

'One woman is a poet. No body knows when the mood to write will come over her. She would like to be free from the household responsibilities and strict rules of the husband. The husband cannot accept it. The life remains dull.'

'The progressive thinkers like you cannot deny that the women should take part in every sphere of life. The women who take part in different spheres of life would naturally have different tastes. Some would like to serve the society by writing, some by moving the hearts through poetry, still some others by the melody of music, by teaching etc. Will you expect all of them to keep the happiness of their husbands as their main aim - is it necessary for them to show their worth only in the kitchen to get the nod of praise from their husbands?'

'You say, the husband should not talk of office work at home. Wouldn't it be better for the mutual happiness of husband-wife to take interest in each other's work?'

'You recommend that the husband should be given full freedom in running his business - he may see whom he wishes, but are the husbands also ready to give the same freedom to their wives?'

'If the husband does some sensitive work the wife should minimise his worries - but what if the wife does the sensitive work? Will the husband then take the responsibilities on himself?'

'Your hints are for the women, because according to you the women's sphere of work is very narrow. Wouldn't it be better then to allow the women a broader sphere to work - how many husbands will allow that?''

But the essays to keep the spark of life burning bright are not being written from the point of view from which my sister has asked me the above questions.

The purpose of these essays is not to decide about the rights of men and women, but to be able to produce some comforting sparks from within the emotional make-ups of the couples, given the prevailing social and economic atmosphere.

The woman of the first example teaches in a school and comes home at the same time as the husband. The husband yells at her for not getting tea immediately. If I were to give my decision purely on the basis of the rights of men and women, I would have decided in favour of the woman. But this could not have helped the life's spark in any way. For those who value the spark of

life more than the settlement of the question of rights, I will say that, though both may work outside, only one should be the overall in-charge of the household. Nothing will come out of both scolding the servant, he should be answerable to only one of them. And only that one should be given suggestions, complained about and complimented.

In the home in which the man can look after the kitchen and household better, he may take charge, the woman may go for her guitar or book on return from school.

If the household can remain cheerful thanks to the love-full bliss of this arrangement, well and good. But if there seems something dying out daily, then the wife may try my recommendation of springing surprises on her husband by preparing some specially learned dishes and offering them to him now and then.

2. In the second example of the poetess-wife, if she can also enthrall her husband with her poem, then she need not worry about the household or of the kitchen. It would go on all right. But if there seems some deficiency, she may also look into the kitchen sometimes herself.

To say purely in terms of rights, no one can force the other to do his bidding. It is the right of the poetess-wife to write whenever she likes, and keep herself free of the household responsibilities - but then if she finds the spark of homely life dying out she will have to try some of my recommendations.

The woman is welcome to take part in every sphere of life. It will be blissful for both. She may write, she may sing, she may fly, she may do all the light and heavy jobs, gain respect, adorn offices. What better fortune for the mankind!

But if a woman cannot have her husband's admiration without putting some magic into her kitchen, then she would better not bother much about the rights and non-rights. There is no better state in life than mutual admiration between life-partners.

The husband may not talk of office once he is home - not for the sake of himself but for the sake of his wife. If the wife is happy listening to the talk of office, it is an other matter. If I were a wife I will like to utilise the home hours for recharging my tired heart of the days work with the sympathetic heart of my husband. Even now my wife works at a school for four hours daily. If she talks of school after coming home without prior appointment I forbid her.

My aim is not to keep each other out from the common interests, but only to abstain from milking each other dry even when there is nothing of interest. There is no ban on the mutual interaction that pleases both.

I have not recommended full freedom to the husband in his business dealings to do him a favour, but for the benefit of the business. If such a freedom is also the need of the wife, and the husband is reluctant to give it to her, the spark of life will definitely die. This spark of life is very freedom-loving something, it does not wait for the decision of a court, nor appeals in some higher court, it simply dies off, and that is all there is to it. And re-kindles if at all only on its own terms. Rights, justice, equality are no measurements on its scale.

The wife who does sensitive work is as much in need of care as the husband in the same situation is. But our aim is to keep the spark of life burning bright. Whatever keeps it burning bright is right, irrespective of what the others think of it, and whatever turns it dim is wrong, even though it may accord cent-percent with the rules of justice.

My sister asks how many parents and how many husbands give the woman the opportunities to expand her sphere of action?

Only a few! And none will be ready to give an inch on my recommendation.

But I am worshipper of the glowing spark of life. I do not want to let it die even in restrictive atmospheres. I am fighting for the lifting of restrictions of all kinds as well. Not with a view to sympathise with women, but from the knowledge that only in the full freedom of action the men and women can fulfil their destined roles.

But the inspiration for these essays did not come from intellectual reasoning, only from the desire to make living an art.

These essays have not been written to advocate for the equal rights. These have been written to suggest ways and means to balance these admittedly unequal rights to each other's advantage till the situation improves.

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Chapter Nine

Successful Husband-Wife - 3

More than one-third of the people who ask me questions are those couples who think that light has completely gone out of their household lives.

The husbands say that none of their expectations have been fulfilled - the home does not seem to be a home to them, there is nobody to sympathize with their interests. There is no respect and no attention for their major or minor wants. They find excuses to go away from home. Once away, the distance creates attraction for the home, but as soon as they come back they feel like running away again. Their homes have no personality, no soul. Nobody seems to have any right over other, only finding others' faults seems to assure one of his/her own being faultless. Despite firm resolves that they are going to do heart-to-heart talk today, the things go awry, and they seem to be left to sleep in the hell the whole night. There arise wishes sometimes of getting lost and sometimes even of committing suicide.

The wives write that they had begun their married life with great expectations. There was a great desire in them to serve the husband...they sacrificed everything... but husband's habits went on discouraging them with each passing day. He is happy outside...laughs with others, even looks kind. But as soon as he enters the home he begins to look frightening. Of late he has started drinking, has become careless towards children, does not speak to me as far as possible. My

mind always feels dejected, no work interests me any more...have begun to feel ashamed of even the children now. They do not look as lovely as before because of this.

There are some husband-wives who doubt each other's fidelity, have lost all hope of improvement, have even lost mutual good-wishes. They ask, how can they separate? Both desire separation; but both feel unable to take the step.

There are many economic and social causes of this common maladjustment, the direct result of which is that the woman's development is not equal to man's. The men are usually more educated and more travelled. The broadness of their world makes them broad-minded, so that they give more value to life than to laws and customs. Because of this they usually acquire higher mental awareness than women, and this inequality robs them of the possibility of mutual sympathy and support. The husband is only aware of his own unfulfilled expectations, he does not understand the limitations of women, which this man-worshipping society has imposed on them. Both go on leading an unsuccessful life.

Most complaints are from those husbands, who have received more promotions in the last few years than expected - because of war - and have had the experience of living with people of higher statuses. Just as these captains/majors find it difficult to live with their old salaries, similarly they find it difficult to live with their old, uneducated wives.

Besides these there are those who have made wrong choices, or are upset because of the one or both having wrong ways of living.

For those who have completely lost mutual respect and goodwill, it is their duty to get separated. Such couples increase society's unhappiness, and produce maladjusted children.

A lot of problems of the world are because of the fact that those couples had produced and brought up children who had not yet made good homes.

So far as unequal mental development is concerned, the present generation is helpless. Those people who dream of a lively and lovely world should come forward with all their courage to reject the practice of different educational and moral standards for men and women, and should allow their own children equal freedom to see, know and experience the world irrespective of their gender differences. For, it is a necessary for a completely fulfilling life to have men and women of almost equal daring and intelligence.

Those husbands who have become unsatisfied with their wives after having had the chance to live with the people of higher statuses, and some of whom have even remarried, should also not expect much. University degrees are not enough to keep the spark of life burning bright, nor wearing of the fashionable clothes. What is required is the inherent capability to put zest into life.

These people have come back after seeing the vast world. Instead of getting discouraged by comparing the cleverness of the French and English girls with their own unfortunate Indian wives, they should hope for the later a life like them.

A very poor looking Musulman one day came to see me at Preet Nagar. He was wonder struck with our very unpretentious looking town and the serving of food to him from the common kitchen by our women.

He asked me with great difficulty, "sir, my wife has seen nothing...I have not been able even to give her proper clothes...she weaves...cleans people's utensils...I remain mostly sick...she is always in my service...we live in a dingy little room...if you allow me, I may one day bring her to see Preet Nagar, so that she also sees heaven once in her life!"

Listening to him reminded me of my own life of some twenty-five years ago. My wife is also not educated. I used to see a very prosperous life in America in those days - often it came to my mind to earn enough money by working day and night so that I could ask her to come to America. I wrote to her. She replied that she is not educated, and will be an embarrassment to me everywhere - I should rather devote fully to my studies so as to complete it soon and come back.

A good man does not think of changing his wife after seeing a prettier face, rather thinks of uplifting her to better heights with his love and care.

Some years back, a London newspaper had conducted a poll to select the most happy man of London. And the man who was ultimately given the certificate of 'The Most Happy Man' was the one whose wife had been lying ill on the bed for the last about twenty years. He also had no issue. He used to prepare breakfast in the morning himself and eat it with his wife, then put beside her, her day's needs - a bottle of water, newspapers, magazines, books, wool, knitting needles - before going for his days' work, never forgetting to kiss her before leaving and smiling at her once more at the exit door.

On return he will run up the stairs to first of all go to his wife - wife's well combed hair and sign of thanks on face will fill his heart with bliss. Whistling, he

will go next to change his clothes. Then he will prepare tea that both of them will take, he narrating to her at the same time what he had seen the whole day. He will give minute details of anybody meeting him. Wife may be lying on the bed the whole day, but he will bring the whole outside world to her room.

Wife's increasing enthusiasm and thankfulness were the rewards of his life-long sacrifice.

This husband hardly went out except when to attend to a very important work.

The decision-makers' attention simply went to his domestic life - he romanced his wife so much and in so many ways that young men will surprise their wives by taking hints from him.

But some couples have really fallen prey to wrong choices.

They both are very good people individually, but cannot be so for each other. The society should devise new rules for them. So that instead of killing each other's enthusiasm for life they can bring enthusiasm into the lives of two other homes.

However, for those whose lives are getting listless only because they do not know the art of enthusiastic living, here are some hints.

The above example of 'The Most Happy Man' of London gives us hope that provided the mutual respect and sympathy are intact, one can give and take happiness from the woman of any capability. One only has to learn about the capability of one's partner, then never ask for more than this. Only try to get the maximum within its limits. To expect twenty kilos of milk from a cow which can give only eight is a sure way to kill happiness.

But the cow-owner who pushes his bucket under her udder without scratching her horns, without moving his loving hand on her back, without cajoling and stroking her teats first to bring down milk, and begins milking is surely not going to find even those eight kilos, and sometimes may even lose half of that further by a kick of her leg.

We should at least be wise enough to profit by first knowing the capabilities of our partners and then never expecting more from them.

There are many husbands who have never utilised even one tenth of the capabilities of their wives and yet needlessly feel victims of the deficiencies of their homes.

One can extract the spark of life from any partner provided mutual respect and sympathy is not yet lost. Caring for her feelings, appreciating even her odd wear-on, showing pleasure in relishing her dishes, giving some odd gift, keeping her honour in front of others, avoiding jealousy by being careful while talking of other women, never letting her down in front of others, showing respect for her family members, keeping her informed of one's work, sometimes giving the impression of a big heartedness - there are many such minor things with which one can completely win the heart of one's partner.

The love-stories of Heer-Ranjha, Laila-Majnu look good in books only. Not the raging fires of love but the glowing sparks of a *fuljhari* are needed to bring light to a home - those which do not burn but give only light.

The wives who are in need of rekindling the flames of their dying hearths should first of all shun the hope that their husbands should themselves give them

this heaven - the heaven that has been at the forefront of their dreams. No body brings this heaven to our heart's doors, each women has to go to it on her own feet.

The husband is happy by remaining out of home - perhaps the home does no longer look to him to be his sweet home. Go examine each corner of this home - perhaps it has no flowers in it, perhaps there is no melody in the voices emanating from it.

The husband sometimes eats out without informing - go examine the kitchen, give a look to the dinning table, recall your kitchen education. Perhaps it is long since you surprised the husband by preparing newer and newer pickles, perhaps your refrigerator remains mostly empty, perhaps you keep good crockery, good table-clothes, good spoons only for the special occasions, perhaps your children are very unkempt and undisciplined, perhaps there is much noise in the home, perhaps you yourself ignore getting properly dressed at the time of the dinner.

You remain at home all day. But the husband remains outside most of the day. For the time he is at home he wishes to see a well-kept home. The wife who makes it a point to give priority to husband's wishes during this time has found a sure mantra for happy home.

The laughter of your home is dying out day by day. Recall, when last a guest came to your home. Perhaps you did not show adequate respect to husband's guests. Perhaps you did not change their bed-sheets - you thought these have been used only once before, these are not yet unclean.

Perhaps you force the husband to listen to even those of your talks with which he has nothing to do - and sometimes when he is dead tired, he may like to talk to you on certain subjects, but you begin mouthing distant inanities.

Perhaps you waste his time even on those matters that he has left entirely to you.

The husband of a wife who keeps her refrigerator full according to their capacity and does minor household jobs himself will not want to remain out of his home even for a night.

Fondly prepared beds, lovingly prepared chapatis, smiling faces, lively dresses force him home through some invisible chord - if he can he will not see even the last show of a cinema.

Do not store your best things for guests or for special days - what better day than today? Let each day be a celebration, renew you home each day and renew yourself each day. The secret of keeping the spark of life burning bright lies in knowing the way to be new daily. Whatever the age, it does not absolve you of the responsibility of keeping new. The guarantee of the success of partnership does not lie in beauty or brains but in being new daily. New knowledge, new ideas, new ways, new acquaintances, new journeys, new yearnings, new programmes, new playfulness - even if you turn hundred - are always needed to keep the spark of life at its sparkling best.

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Chapter Ten

The Beautiful Life

What is a beautiful life?

In which there is no need to tell lies, every facet of which draws respect. Which, by taking day-to-day living to be the only reality instead of a mere dream, enhances one's ability to give help and happiness to others daily.

Wealth is not something worth owning for the sake of just owning. He has not found the secret of life who has spent his whole life merely in search of wealth, and today has no treasures in his old heart of some friendships, some loves, some cherished dreams, some experienced excitements.

There will be name-plates of varieties of beauty all along the way of a beautiful life. There will be mile-stones of compassion, of kindness, of friendships waiting on every crossing, which give meaning and colour to every step on the way.

Years pass on the way of a beautiful life as the scenes of an exciting film pass on the cinema screen. Each new moment gives a new twist to the story and brings forth new characters. Eyes no doubt feel tired, feet below also no doubt begin to go numb, but the emerging story of the beautiful picture thrills the heart and moistens the eyes in such a way that new interests, new scenes, new touches coupled with the old memories make a wondrous heaven out of even the evening of life. We get ready to leave the cinema of life when the times comes, but with

the memory of the total satisfaction of our body, mind and soul, that we had been to a wonderful cinema-house.

Nothing stagnates in a beautiful life, no fanaticism takes roots, no fate jolts it hither and thither, nothing seems inconsequential, nobody unwanted, no ill-will against anybody.

Divisions on the basis of region, religion, community, work get progressively obliterated. Youth and childhood seem equally lovely, none of them causes frustrations, none seems misled or gone astray. One longs to touch, to embrace, to kiss both. One may not be able to run with the youth, but one feels like removing hurdles from their way and see them fly.

Only he can find the way to such a life who has recognised the basic unity of all Nature, has got rid of the desire to possess things. His only remaining wish now is to evolve on the way to being from becoming. His interests increase rather than decrease with the advancing age and become clearer. He goes on liking more and more the arts, the music, the beauty, the simplicity, the cleanliness. He cannot become anybody's enemy, his heart and eyes simply get wonder-struck seeing the film of life and are profusely thankful.

Time-transcending composure is the miracle of such a life, and moksha, nirvana its religious name.

It does not depend upon riches, reputations, ranks, degrees or upon the blessings of any Deity. It is open to all, it is in the reach of all. He who can spend every minute of his life for it, and keeping this goal always in mind can

continuously correct himself, by analysing his every thought and every action,
will one day surely reach this paramount pinnacle.

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Chapter Eleven

Beautiful Body

The people who take 'life' to be other than matter - who think that body is a mere matter made alive by some soul or spirit entirely different from it - often ignore their bodies. With the result that many budding poets, philosophers, artists, and other thinkers have died at quite young ages.

But the present presumption is that matter is a transformed form of energy - that matter can be converted into energy and energy into matter. Atom bomb is an example of this transformation of matter into energy. Some time back a scientist has transformed energy into matter - he has made some basic building blocks of matter by converting the required amount of energy.

What it means for us here is that soul or spirit, which is only an other name for this very energy, is a special form of matter, and is ultimately indistinguishable from it.

The people who are interested in long and happy life would do well to consider their body to be a wonderful machine of this wonderful matter, and acquire knowledge for its proper upkeep. Experiments are being conducted to keep this machine in a youthful state for at least one hundred years, and it seems possible with proper nourishment.

Below I am giving some hints from my own experiences to keep the various parts of this machine in a fit condition.

Feet: Keep nails short and clean. Remove dirt from between the toes. Save heels from cracking. Putting your feet in a very hot and very cold water in turns for a minute each, once a week, helps body's blood circulation greatly, besides keeping feet healthy. Wearing tight or pinching shoes is to do great injustice to your feet and even to your whole health.

Legs: The legs are the pillars of a body. Massage and exercise keep them strong. Walking is also a very helpful exercise. Keeping the legs naked also strengthens them.

Joints: Besides exercises to keep every joint in motion, giving daily slaps on knees, elbows and armpits greatly benefits them. Joints' flexibility is maintained.

Belly: Keep it from getting overly obese. Besides proper exercise and nourishment, strong slaps be given to it daily while taking bath. It helps in dispersing the fat off it, and moreover, gives exercise to intestines.

Heart: Know the state and strength of your heart, then never work beyond its capacity. Open air and regular moderate exercise support it. Proper rest enhances its age. Rest completely twice or thrice daily - may be for ten minutes each only. If your work does not allow even this, rest at least on your chair for five minutes by putting your palms on your eyes. To sleep for at least fifteen minutes daily after midday after the age of fifty increases one's capacity to do difficult work.

Lungs: Chest and arm exercises, clean and open air, sunshine, avoidance of pollutants, sleeping in good ventilated rooms with uncovered faces, can keep these life-fans in good health.

Neck: Carrying load on one's head, doing *sees* asanas - standing on one's head for a few minutes - exercising the head on a relaxed neck. Workers and farmers who carry loads on their heads develop a great balance between their body and gait.

Blood Circulation: Rub-warm the body by dry hands from all over towards the heart, for about ten minutes daily before taking bath, and then pour water. This way even cold water does not seem too cold. To bath daily with cold water is a golden habit, this gives rest to nerves. He who gets angry easily, or is overly moody, will greatly benefit from this daily cold bath. If possible, bath once in a week or month with a very hot water, but then soon with cold water also - otherwise the pores in the skin get closed. The hot water is not for cleaning the body, but for giving kick to the blood, the muscles and the parts of skin. There is nothing to fear by putting cold water after hot. There is no harm even in having a cold bath after working up to profuse perspiration, rather the body gets tough.

Teeth: Clean teeth with common salt and soda, two times a week if you use *datan* - a small piece of twig of a tree - and daily if you use brush. There is no need of any manjan or toothpaste. Mix one part of salt with two parts of edible soda and put it in a bottle. Then whenever you want to use it, put a small amount of it on your finger and rub it strongly on teeth and gums, even on palate with your thumb. Then clean teeth and tongue with a good brush, after which the brush's hair be given a salt coating and kept for further use.

Salt is a very good thing. It absorbs moisture from where it is, and without moisture the germs of disease die. Clean eyes, nose, throat, teeth daily with salt water, and sometimes put salt even into your bathing water.

Eyes: Give exercise to eyes - by seeing far, seeing near, reading small print, reading large print, seeing up, seeing down, seeing oblique - in a word, by moving their muscles in all directions daily.

Close eyes with palms many times a day daily. Give splashes of cold water in the morning, at midday, and before going to sleep. Putting antimony (*surma*) with a good, clean needle before sleeping keeps the eyes healthy. Even moving the simple needle gives exercise to the eyes' muscles and keeps them strong. You will have to decide yourself as per your need about special antimonies. Common antimony is almost a cost-less commodity but its daily use keeps eyes healthy.

For diseases of the eyes consult a suitable doctor.

Hair: Hair have great part to play in a body's beauty and health. Only he really lives who lives down to his hair. Some people have all the other parts of their bodies very healthy, but their hair seem lifeless. Keep your hair lively, lovely, smooth and strong. Washing, rubbing and drying them daily keeps them lovely. Washing the head with a good soap after massaging it thoroughly with mustard or rape-seed oil can keep the hair clean for about a week - even the problem of dandruff is checked if it is not too old. Daily combing and brushing keeps hair clean and shining. Letting open air and sunshine on the head daily and massaging with dry fingers keeps them very fresh and healthy.

Taking a cold bath after a very hot bath keeps both head and hair very strong. It will give no problem if the cold water is not very cold and the hot water is not very hot.

Facial Complexion: Facial complexion is related to health. Massaging the face, giving it light slaps, and giving a steam-bath twice a week can improve the complexion and check wrinkles. Adequate use of fruits and vegetables also benefits it.

Steam-bath is not a difficult proposition. Only two or three kilograms of steaming water in a kettle is enough. Put the kettle on a stool or a bench, then put your head on the mouth of the kettle and cover the whole with a towel. All the pores of skin of the face will open within ten minutes, with profuse perspiration. Then wash the face with cold water and rub it strongly with a towel.

If you can give a steam-bath to the whole body, so much the better. You will feel light and happy. Steam-bath is very common in Iran, Turkey and Russia. Having a bath after massaging the hands and face with fresh milk gives a special freshness to the facial complexion.

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Chapter Twelve

Youth

Youth is not the name of a particular period in a life - it is a way of seeing things. How beautiful is the truth that "So long as you can find beauty, love, adventure, grandeur and strength in Nature and in man, so long you are young; so long as there is no wrinkle on your soul, no wrinkle on your body can make you old."

Bernard Shaw is above 90* but his words ring like young, his every word draws interest of the youth. He writes dramas even today which his contemporaries consider to be more youthful than those he wrote in his youth.

Why even the young look old in our country? Because they lack the will to take risks for the sake of happiness. They do not let their feelings take root, the do's and don'ts of life cloud their natural daring with cowardice.

Over-restricting religions, suffocating rites, rituals and customs at every step and the foreign yoke have disheartened and depressed our youth to the point of going benumb. Only a few retain childlike eagerness for the future, others lose their self-confidence, look towards heavens, and begin to worry rather about the next world. They find no strength in them to smile, to laugh, to wish, no dare to shun the wrong path and select the right.

We take life to be some unsolvable riddle, an opportunity to worship some care-free - *beparvah* - creator. Who is interested only in our worshipping him

□ Obviously the writer is writing these lines when Bernard Shaw was alive.

and nothing else. Eating, drinking, singing, laughing, desiring - everything seems to him to be a sin.

The old looks of our youth have their roots in this belief. The youth thrives on the messages of beauty, love, adventure, grandeur and strength. These messages may come from anywhere, from man or from God - but must be the messages of hope, of beauty, of love.

Hope, beauty and love are the only sources of that goodness because of which our present life can become a harmonious note in the sweet melody of the eternal flux of life.

Some very beautiful ideas regarding youth are being given below from a poem by Samuel Olman:

*Youth does not belong
to a particular period in life -
it is a state of mind;
a way with desires,
a peculiarity of perception,
a force of feelings,
an overtaking of cowardice by
a devil-may-care attitude,
a hunger for taking risks
for the sake of happiness.*

One does not grow old by years, but by giving up one's aims and aspirations. The years bring wrinkles only to the body, but giving up one's aims and aspirations brings wrinkles to the soul.

Worries, suspicions, fears, loss of self-confidence and loss of hope - these are the long years which overburden the skyward-bound soul and drag it towards the earth.

Whether one is seventeen or seventy years old, everyone has the love of the wonderful in his heart, a sweet ecstasy for the stars and the star-struck ideas, a fearlessness for what is to come, a childlike eagerness for the future, and an excitement for playing the game of life.

You are as young as you believe, and as old as you doubt; as young as your self-confidence, and as old as your fear; as young as your desires and as old as your dejection.

You are young as long as you are ready to receive the messages of beauty, love, adventure, grandeur and strength from earth, from man and from heavens.

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Chapter Thirteen

Beauty

Where beauty is thought to be evil* there neither life nor God nor religion is properly understood. To shy away from beauty and to think of it as evil is an indication of our being devoid of goodness, religion and God all three.

If goodness is God-in-action, then beauty is God-in-expression. Famous thinker Emerson says: "Never miss a chance to appreciate beauty. Beauty is God's stamp. Welcome it on every beautiful face, every beautiful sky, every beautiful flower, and thank God for this blissful gift.

The heart of animals craves only for food, but the heart of humans craves for beauty. Only food cannot satisfy that being in whose heart feelings have taken root. The life prior to the flowering of feelings is an animal-life, even if there be some animals in it with human features.

In the beginning there was only one raging, roaring and revolving primordial force. Billions of years of revolving cooled it down into atoms, which further joined to form the stars, the sun, the moon, the earth, plants and animals etc. The whole universe with all its shapes, sizes and colours came into being.

But all these shapes, sizes and colours were without a soul. When the feelings began to grow in the heart of man, the eye to behold beauty began to open, the universe stood transformed.

□ The writer's hint is towards those religious injunctions according to which beauty is to be shunned rather than courted or be entangled into, for otherwise, it will obstruct one's so-called spiritual advancement.

All the goodness, all the morals, all the philosophies are only the reflections of this eye-to-behold-beauty on beauty. This very 'eye' organised this scattered beauty in Nature into culture and gave it the name of God - a prime fountainhead from which then flowed the waters of love, of music, of peace, of bliss, of kindness, of tolerance and of sacrifice to enchant the human race.

The stars may be numerous and very shining; the seas may be shoreless and their blue waters full of unlimited variety of life; skies may be infinite and dazzling with stars; but nothing can measure up to the heavens of the human heart. Even the dreams of this heart surpass the expansiveness of the above reality.

Nothing more beautiful has been seen or thought of than the beautiful heart of the beautiful man. The beautiful heart which is eager to spread happiness and stop pain all around - which religion can surpass it?

Samadhis, propitiations, holy recitations are only the attempts to have a 'high' on this very heart's touch. Reaching this heart is reaching God. The search for reality is in fact the search for listening to the throbbing of this very heart in one's own being. The seeker of 'enlightenment' through samadhi by renouncing the whole world, is, in fact, also dying to have an experience of this very heart, which bestows happiness and banishes pain - the ecstasy in his eyes may be called godly, but the features of his love are always human.

All religious rites and rituals - lighting of lamps at holy places, recitations of holy books - all services to pirs, fakirs and Godmen are nothing but a desire to have an experience of the beauty of the human heart. Overwhelmed by the evils of life, the soul seeks to find solace by picturing and projecting beauty.

Coquettish Krishna, handsome Jesus, playful Adorner of the Plume, Guru Gobind - are the dream-loves of the love-forsaken souls. The lovelorn soul has never thought that like the proverbial deer, it is, in fact, tiring itself by running after the fragrance of her own navel.

There is no truth beyond his heart, no beauty beyond his eyes, no holy word, no music beyond his ears - none to listen to his prayers, to accept his sacrifices.

Life is not a puzzle, nor a prison, to seek moksha from which is our sole aim. No body can break or harm anything of this wonder-workshop of Nature - it is fullness omnipotent. No mistake of man can take anything away from it. Reservations, fears, cares are only the boundaries of man's own imagination. The heat of his sins cannot dry even a drop of water of the sea of life. His vows and offerings have little value before its limitless treasures. His sacrifices do not move the stopped hand of any god or goddesses. The sounds of his holy bells and conches, of his hymns and bhajans simply vanish meaninglessly on the face of the wonderful melody of the infinite expanse of the spiraling universe. Seeing which a poet says: "The more I grow in years, the more I come to believe that the best and the most wise course for us is to fix our gaze on the beauty of the universe as a whole, to the complete exclusion of the bits of ugliness here and there."

Beauty is not confined only to the attractive features. Every thing has a beautiful side to it. Like the energy lying latent in an atom, beauty is also lying latent in every thing. The beauty of breath-taking statues lies waiting in shapeless stones for the chisel of the artful sculptor. The fragrances of buds and buttons lie

waiting for the gardener's hoe even in the heart of the foulest-smelling heaps of rubbish.

In the blackness of the smoke, in the nothingness of the lowly clay, in the most discarded of the things of life, there lies entrapped beauty which can mesmerise the kings and queens.

Matter is Nature, beauty is God immanent. The spread of the golden hue of the setting sun on the evening clouds, the blushing of the leaves on the onset of spring, the sudden blossoming of the rose-buds, the silvery splashes of the snow white water-falls, dancing rivers and singing waters - these no doubt are the forms of matter, but their beauty is that message of God in them which goes on giving hints to man of the ultimate goal of life.

The aim of life is not to save oneself from some heavenly curse, nor to keep in good humour some super-being, some 'emperor of emperors', nor yet the wisdom to keep out of the reach of some impending doom, the least in having the art of spending small money with prudence.

Whatever the overall aim of life, the aim of human life is to build a golden Lanka of a happy, healthy and beautiful human civilisation by continuously discovering the gold of beauty in the vast expanses of the universe.

No one has been able to imagine a better religion or a greater aim than this. Most of the religions have not yet been able to come out of the quagmire of even magic - they are yet standing on the crutches of sorcery and miracles. And the secrets of those who have come out on the solid ground and developed to some

extent, are nothing more than the covering around beauty, like the covering of a kernel by a shell.

A beautiful heart has to be put in the features of a face to make it beautiful, and only a beautiful heart can make a beautiful mind. To have a beautiful heart, jealousy, enmity, lies, evil thoughts have to be removed from it as superfluous stone is required to be chiseled off a beautiful statue. Unnecessary protrusion of even a line would remain worrisome for the sculptor of 'Venus'.

The sky is dancing with the revolving of innumerable stars, the earth is giving birth to a new life every moment, new buds are continuously opening their eyes from the tender sides of plants, blue sea sometimes rises and sometimes drizzles down to the tune of golden rays of sun...Why?

Caught on the whirlpool of divine wheel, Nature is being churned to extract beauty. The goal of every movement is beauty: the rainbows, the songs of koels and kumris, the melodies of dancing rivers, the sweet-smelling forests, the sparkling crests of birds, the heart-printed feathers of peacocks, the leisurely-pacing carefree airs - all hold colours for the creation of the unspeakable beauty. The masterpiece of life - the beautiful man - is being created out of these wondrous colours.

All sciences, all arts, all heroics, all morals, all actions and all ecstasies are joining hands to reach this very goal. Personality is the foundation of the beautiful man, the creed which tries to kill it is sham, is needless torture. The means which try to belittle or enslave it are self-destructive.

The womb of whole Nature is heavy with the presence of the beautiful man, and all preparations are in wait for his birth. For his welcome homes are being beautified, streets are being swept, ponds and potholes are being filled. For his welcome diseases are being eliminated, hearts are being helped to blossom, eyes are being tickled to smile, deserts are being made to bustle with life and swamps are being changed to greenery.

When no one will remain hungry in the world, no one slave, no corner of it will look dirty, and there will be a beautiful home in place of every mud-dwelling; eating, drinking, wearing, speaking, laughing, playing all will form a part of the picture of beauty, when denying beauty will be taken as denying life itself, no rude word will be heard, no ugly scene will be seen - then the beautiful man will take his throne.

Pains will be there even then, hearts will ache even then, hope will play hide and seek with dejection even then, but these shadows will not be as dark as not to be beautifully used in the picture of beauty. The absence of light is dark night, but the shadows which come into being in the presence of light become slightly dark, rather entertaining silhouettes (which have outlines of the features of something but no deeper details).

Then this beautiful world will not be taken as an illusory dream, on the contrary no one will desire any outside heaven. Prayer for moksha will not arise even in a misled heart, nor humiliating prostration made for some next world. No body will play the fool by lighting sacrificial fires and sitting in samadhi on nails, lacs of people will not wander naked in the hope of an illusory heaven, nor rub ash on

their bodies, no body will wish to disappear in forests as a vanparasti leaving behind his small garden full of wonders.

Then virtues of kindness, of wishing for the good of all, of truthfulness, honesty, mercy, love will not be demanded in the name of the highest truth. The highest truth has not found these virtues in god's temples, mosques, gurdawaras. In these god's homes bullets have been fired, people beaten, stabbed, killed mercilessly, hate-filled declarations have been made, slogans coined.

Then in the name of the best understanding of beauty here on this earth, not only these virtues but many more will be brought into daily practice, because the lover of beauty cannot allow any kind of ugliness to mar it. Arrogance, ill-will, evil intent, injustice, torture, fanaticism, anger, all are marks of ugliness. A believer may let weakness overpower him sometime, but the beautiful man will never allow marks of ugliness appear on his self. The beautiful man can be born only in a beautiful country, beautiful community, beautiful culture, beautiful home, and as a result of beautiful deeds.

Earth and the sky are circling in wait for that beautiful man.

Chapter Fourteen

The Golden Circle of Divine Glow

A golden circle is shown around the heads of gurus, prophets, godmen in their pictures. It is thought that light-rays emanate from their divine features, which because of their being supernatural are shown in the golden circle.

In fact there is nothing supernatural about it. It is the radiation of happiness saturated in the heart, showing itself on the peaceful, sweet features. But because happiness in our disturbed world is rare and not easily achievable, we begin to take the completely happy faces as supernatural. The face which has no marks of restlessness on any of its features, has eyes sparkling with ceaseless compassion for all - his own, others, all - if we look at that face carefully, a light glow is seen.

In today's world even ordinary happiness is considered to be a virtue of prophets, avatars. But if the man will so wish, he can make it the virtue of the common man, of the whole world - not by recitations of holy books and worships - but only by increasing the means of happiness for all. Then this golden circle will be the glory of many faces. This circle is a sign of the understanding of this world and of the equality of its fellow travelers.

Often it is not found on the faces of known spiritual men even with effort, but glows quite apparently on the faces of many unknown workers.

Once I saw it on the face of a 'mehri' (a woman of backward caste) who used to roast grains. Happiness danced on her face like the popcorns she roasted. She

would keep an eye on every visitor's turn, share a few sweet words with each, her every moment bespoke of art. She and her furnace fitted as beautifully into the natural environment as running canals, watering wells, trees, sun playing hide and seek with clouds and rustling fields.

Or once I saw this glow on the face of a carpenter in Iran. Salt and pepper beard, shining face, embracing eyes, hands as if fountains of power! He was never in a hurry, one may sit by him for hours, his magical cutting hammer would cut a figure out of a log of wood with just a few strokes. A child came to him for making a *guli* - a small wooden block sharpened from both sides used for playing. The carpenter's wife sent him back saying that the master was busy in some important work. But the master himself went out and brought back the child, and made for him not only a *guli* but a *danda* - a rod of wood used for playing *guli-danda* - as well. Earned rest, sweet words, patience, jestful ways, uncomplaining nature, endless compassion, flawless health, happy eyes in awareness of it, complementing interests and shining hopes can create a golden circle around any face.

Only a handful can achieve all this in this poor, dependent and pain-filled world, but when the rule of the world will come into the hands of those who will not be satisfied with being merely patrons of compatriots, with merely calling "harijans" of those otherwise made "chuhras," who will not spend half the money of the world on keeping half of its population in slavery, then the faces of common people will be more beautiful than avatars - because this golden circle has no connection with being a believer - eyes are difficult to be taken away from the

faces of even some non-believers. This golden circle is made of the rays of inspiration and love born out of one's satisfaction with one's surroundings.



Chapter Fifteen

Keeping up Enthusiasm

Hours spent are not the measure of a work. A singing, whistling, willing labourer can do more work in three hours than a feet-dragging, unwilling one in eight.

Just on entering an office one can know which of its clerks and peons are working with enthusiasm and which ones by looking at the arms of the clock, by the way of their sitting and walking. The only difference between success and failure, enjoyment and boredom is the presence or lack of enthusiasm.

Only the art of keeping up enthusiasm is the key to success. Five-year plans, drafts and reports of development, celebrations of successes are efforts to keep up and increase enthusiasm.

Most of the people have no enjoyment in life, because most of the people have no plan for life. They do not live, just pass time. Most clerks pass lives going to office, making circles around holidays and waiting for the clock to strike four, which is why there is no "life" on their faces. To enjoy life it is necessary that we should have enthusiasm for our bodies, our clothes, partners, home, village or city, for our work, our office or factory, our community, our country and world. Our care for these would keep us in motivated and enthused state.

This is the difference between an avatar and a common man, that whereas the common man is tired of life, the avatar always remains full of enthusiasm and motivation because of his taking interest in the lives of all people. The difference

between the motivated and unmotivated features is the difference between a flowing and a frozen river. The reason for people's reverence for the avatars is because of their motivation-filled state.

He who has no motivation for his body will soon go ugly and old. Who has no motivation for his clothes will find that no clothe suits him well. Who has no motivation for his partners will not find a friend. He will not hesitate to back bite his partners. He who has no motivation for home, his home will soon resemble a dharmsala, a wayside inn - wherever needed a nail is driven, a line is drawn, a spit is thrown, a thing is placed, there is no planning, no flowers, no pictures. He who is not proud of his village or town, is least ashamed to say bad things about his village or town, that the people of his village are very bad, that nothing needed is available in his town. He who is not proud of his work and workplace, just makes both ends meet and does not give a thought for the betterment of his workplace. He who is not motivated for his country, his country becomes a slave. He who is not proud of his world, takes it as a dream and lives on the false hope of heavens. With the result that his world becomes a battleground and he loses his way in it.

Majority of the people complain that they feel homesick. They become followers of astrologers. They ask for advance from luck.

To feel homesick and the desire to know the future are warning signals that we have not been able to keep up our enthusiasm, we have lost the motivation to keep our lives enthused.

Each person can have his own ways to keep himself motivated, but each must know the goal - that the motivation for life's works should not go down beyond a certain level.

Motivation does not remain the same at all times, sometimes it jumps to overflowing, sometimes it stagnates and does not move even with a whip. But if it is stagnant it sinks the heart like the clotted blood.

For the selection of dear readers I humbly describe my means to keep myself motivated. With these means I have been able to keep my motivation alive for many years. Sometimes it does go cold, sometimes it does go on the verge of dying down, sometimes it does not come alive even with massages, but some how or the other I cajole this stubborn horse up.

There are three times in the whole day when I pump up my motivation to the maximum I can. At night when I am going to sleep, early in the morning when I get up and then when after taking my daily bath etc I am going to sit on my work-desk. If the day seems passing listlessly, then I wait, at night I will liven up my soul; if I fail to do this at night, then as soon as I get up I open my plan of life in the presence of stars and get inspiration from its goals set by me.

Sometimes a week or two go slow. Nothing I do helps. Then I wait for the end of the month. The first day of the new month is one of the mile stones of my life. On that day I analyse the previous month and make notes of what will motivate me in the new month.

Besides the new month there are two other days in a year when, like getting promoted to the new class, I make up for the old deficiencies. One is the new year

day, and the other is my birthday. On my birthday I get special motivation, as I introspect and analyse the last year and plan for the next.

These times and these days are my lighthouses, with whose help I save myself from getting lost. Slow times come. Listless days come. Almost once every month the charge of my battery seems gone low, then I take rest, do not take up any difficult job, eat light, exercise less. I have seen, this monthly low is related to decrease in body's energy. When the body's energy is on the rise, then I cannot resist making the most of it whatever precautions I may take. I work more than the fixed hours, don't feel like leaving work even on holidays. Then the level of energy begins to come down, but one becomes aware of it only when one's motivation begins to decrease. There is no illness, no reason, but one does not feel like getting up in time and doing work. This is soul's safety-valve. If it were not so, many people will become useless prematurely.

Since the day I have become aware of this monthly low my sadness has lessened. Previously I used to worry by taking it as the weakness of my soul and it rather increased the low days. Now when this state comes, I note down the date, reduce the spending of energy, take more nutritious and better food, and wait that within a few days the level of my energy will again begin to rise up, and fix time for more arduous tasks and serious writings.

Therein lies the secret of the spark of life. To live to just pass time is useless. When it is not possible to produce a spark from the life-battery one would better rather leave the desire to live and taking one last breath close one's eyes.

But as long as we live, we must keep up the enthusiasm. For health, for friends, for work, for love we must remain fully motivated. The planned blue print of life should be in front of us to the last breath, with ourselves circling each achieved goal as we go along.

For home, for children, for work, for the country and the world we should have the best of hopes and liveliest of thoughts in our minds.

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Chapter Sixteen

Work Enthuses

Even if you have the best of health and the sweetest of wife and there is no dearth of unearned money, if you are not involved in a work which needs much hard work and attention and in which you do not achieve increased success each year, your life-battery will not produce sparks even if fully charged. Both the ends of the battery need to be linked to an iron-wire of hard work.

This writing will not be able to give much help to an ordinary worker, because for an ordinary worker even making both ends meet is difficult not to talk of promotion under the present political setup. But among my readers there are also a great number of those who, if they use their abilities and their resources with some discipline, can succeed in keeping up their motivation and making the world a better place to a great extent.

This writing is for those readers who have some education, some job, enough motivation, but whose income is less than what they would like to have to fulfil their desires, only because they are unable to succeed in their plans, or do not have the courage to act upon them. They live unsatisfied lives in their narrow boundaries.

I want to tell them that the motivation to make something succeed can work wonders. What you desire, is no doubt very big, and your present qualification

does not compare with it. But this is as it should, because only aiming high can send an arrow high.

High aim and great determination are the two horses of the chariot of success. If you have these two then you need not put your fingers in your mouth on the face of any difficulty or defeat. Every defeat will help by pricking your pride to reach the destination. Every difficulty will open new fountainheads of strength in you.

Go and buy a notebook with wide lines just today. It should have a good-quality paper so that you enjoy writing on it. Don't show this notebook to anybody, nor place it just anywhere so that it comes to the hands of anybody on its own and he reads it. What you write in it is your own talk with yourself, and it should contain no untruths. Nor is there any need to write in style - write whatever and as it comes to your mind.

In it first of all write your life story in brief - note your successes and failures, your merits and demerits. Then write what complaints you have with your present work, and with your luck. Write difficulties standing in your way. After this write your aim in bold letters, and also state in what time-period you can hope to reach there. Divide this period into years. Write a plan for every year clearly - this year I am going to do this and this. There is no need to write in style but writing clearly is a must - writing clearly motivates you at once by clinking the nerves of your brain.

Note from wherever you can get help. You will not get help from many places you expected . Don't complain, because you will get help from many other places

where you did not expect. Make a clear picture of your assets, your capabilities, your friends, all.

After doing all this don't wait long for taking the first step. Even if taking the first step looks to you like splitting a mountain, sharpen your cutting hammer without delay and strike. No splinter has come out - no matter. Strike again! Again!! A year has passed, two years, three years, even then no picture has emerged - no matter. You crack your hammer again, and hear the cracking sound of your hammer - try to lose yourself in the melody of this cracking sound. Fifty times in a hundred you will be surprised at your speed. A time will come when years' work will begin to be completed in months, unimagined helps will begin to meet you on the way. These unforeseen helps play a major part in every success.

You begin your journey - you may or may not find your destination, the direction may be wrong. Somebody meets and sets you on the right track even from the wrong one - but those who do not put their foot out of their home always remain sitting at home.

And when the first step has been taken - then, no return - your honour is at stake. You can only go ahead. No stone is to be left unturned. There is a loss of many thousands rupees - or you had stood guarantee for anyone - you have to make payment for thousands of rupees - creditors harass you - tired of them you feel like saying, dropping the spade from your hands - "do what you want to get your money back, I'm not giving it!" But your self-respect raises its head in you. You have twelve acres of land - you put your all to earn thirty thousands from it - but leave alone thirty thousand you do not get even thirty hundred. People make

fun at your cost. You stiffen your lips. Say to yourself in your heart: I'll show you the next year.

Read books, do some course on agriculture, consult the experienced, visit the government farms, find out your shortcomings, motivate your workers with your dreams. Don't think any work difficult, don't take any sacrifice unprofitable, don't accept any hope impossible. Many have produced double than you - have earned even five thousands per acre. Gardening, poultry farm, being-keeping, dairy, vegetables, seeds, fuel, hay, grass, silk-worms, animal-husbandry - what you cannot think of, do? Easy or difficult, possible or hitherto thought impossible, experiment with everything. Next year, or the next to that, or still next to that you will begin to see the way to your destination very clearly.

You do this last thing while going to sleep: note in the note book what you have accomplished, add to the programme of the next day what has been left, and then rearrange the programme of the next day afresh. In the morning after getting ready, open your notebook. Today's programme is a bit difficult and boring, no matter, roll up your shirt-sleeves and attack it. To accept defeat and withdraw is death, to carry on is life.

The magic of this analysis will dawn on you within a month. No work will seem difficult and you will wonder at how much you have accomplished. Sometimes I have to write an exhaustive article, I go on postponing it again and again. But the postponed work grips the mind like a witch. I consult my *paran pustak* - resolution notebook - and find a way out from the experience of some similar situation in the past, I get inspired. I sit on the table, right words do not come to

the mind, thinking is unsystematic. I place my hands for a few minutes on my eyes and think, and then begin scrawling my pen furiously. I do not care for the words or the way in which they are placed. Whatever comes to my mind I go on scribbling. After writing a page or two in this way I come into the right mood, plot begins to emerge on its own, and the ideas seem to coming like a torrent. And when the first fit of inspiration cools down, I write the first two or three pages again. Now they are more systematic and have better style.

To take the first step, to part lips and utter the first word, to draw pen and begin scrawling, to raise the spade and make the first strike of its blade into earth, to leave the bank and jump into the river, to pour the first pot of water on the back - that is all, and then there is no stopping. Stuck vehicles begin to move and the moving begin to reach their destinations.

The whole magic is in self-satisfaction. We tire ourselves trying to satisfy others - but when one comes to know that it is the self-satisfaction which counts, one has to do something new daily, each today needs to be declared with fresh wins over yesterday. We cannot deceive ourselves, we may deceive others sometimes.

The follower of self-satisfaction acquires a habit of accomplishing works and achieving successes. No work seems very big, no aim looks very high. The follower of self-satisfaction values time. He does not talk unnecessarily, nor takes the step which does not take him towards destination. He does not entangle in enmities, nor takes revenge, always keeps his eye on aim in front - may walk slowly but walks without stopping.

There are many vehicles needing repairs, overturned, stuck, punctured on the road to success - but those untiring travellers who go on walking nonstop reach their destinations one day. On this road walking fast is not as valuable as walking continuously - rain, storm, heat, cold, walking continuously in all situations. Stopped to recover breath, rested under a shade, warmed in sun shine, let the rain pass, storm stop - but then again began walking.

Our present profit-driven economic regime does not leave any enthusiasm in many. But he whose enthusiasm is not dead, must find the way to life with the tiny life-spark. Every step will light the next step. And after succeeding in his aims, combining efforts with like enthusiasts, finally uprooting the devilish regime which has made hell of the earth, he will be able to lay the foundations of the better world afresh.

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Chapter Seventeen

The Energy Bank

Anybody who opens an account in a bank and begins depositing his small savings is surprised to see his bank balance in a few years and wonders: "Who could have thought that my small savings one day would become such a pretty amount?"

And anybody who, saving small moments of patience from life today would begin to deposit them in the bank of inner-peace, will wonder seeing his composed countenance in the looking glass a few years afterwards: "Who could have thought that my small moments of patience one day will become such a blissful inner-peace?"

You will not be able to see yourself clearly in the beginning. Your habits will seem natural to you, but seeing them in others will enable you to see what is wrong with them. In the tram, in the bus, sitting in the rail, standing in a cue, waiting somewhere, study the moments of other people close by:

How many times one gives the sound of *suun suun* with his nose? It is pure habit...and very ugly - which develops at particular times before particular people out of inferiority complex. How one shakes one's knees or strikes one's feet, fiddles with coat's buttons, shuts eyes forcefully, moves hands on moustache or on head to restore hair in place. Some roll tongue on lips, crack fingers, balance looking glasses again and again, scratch in ears or nose. Some toss necks, clear

throats, belch, fart many times by going to a particular place. Many change sides while sitting on chair or seat, correct turban or topi again and again, look left, right and back, spit repeatedly. Many people always look in a hurry - speak in a hurry, walk in a hurry, but cover every distance twice. Many give many kinds of sounds, speak loudly, speak long. Many look with a frown, more energy is spent in looking with a frown than with normal face. Many people slurp while drinking anything and smack when eating. Many even breath very loudly.

Besides these, you will see many other movements, one is not at any kind of loss without them, but if saved can add substantially to one's energy.

To save from hurry one should cultivate the habit of getting ready in time. Many people jump out of bed just at the nick of time, hurry to the latrine, wash, cream face in the toilet, swallow breakfast and run to catch the bus or whatever vehicle they use. This puts a sudden heavy load on the life-battery. He who gets up within time, stretches his limbs and slowly slips out of the bed, happily looks at the time on his watch, and does all chores slowly, can save on many unnecessary movements and keep his mood relaxed. Neither he has to run in haste nor make the other people at home run in haste. A man running in haste is as frightening as a horse running lose in a bazaar.

Whether to go to the office, catch a train, get ready for any reception or picnic, the effort should be to finish all chores well before time. Those people who do not show haste acquire a beauty of their own, and help others acquire the same. In many homes, the time to take bath, time to eat, time to go to the office, is a time

of great chaos. Everybody is at a loss for breath. The daily repetition of this situation robs the peace of the faces of all.

The people of beautiful etiquette learn the way of doing every job in an easy manner, and seem to complete it with half the labour of the others. Where hint can do, they save words. Their words are like electric current, are deep.

Some people really sit when they sit. Some move even more than while walking. We should take full benefit of the time to sit. Every part of the body to be rested, every part to be relaxed in turn, and soon you will feel as if the whole body is lying on its own without your awareness.

When sitting in a garden or a park, sitting in a train or bus, or whenever the time to sit or lie alone is found, the technique of complete relaxation should be practiced. No part of the body to move, not even breath to be taken loudly. Sitting, one should be in a state of complete rest. Some people sit on the edge of a chair, on the side rail of a charpai (bedstead). Whatever place is available for restful sitting, should be fully utilized at the very beginning.

Walking, wandering, sitting, lying, standing, reading, whatever number of unnecessary movements we can save will be added to our Energy Bank. Besides this, a time should be fixed when we can practice complete peacefulness all alone. Ten to fifteen minutes are enough. The whole body should be at rest, thoughts too should be minimum. Every part of the body to be made standstill. Body and mind at such a time should feel fully light. The effect of this practice, which will go deep into life, can only be experienced not described.

Many do not get sound sleep, go on changing sides while trying to sleep. For them the above practice will work wonders. Dr Brown has recommended the following regarding this:

"Shut your eyes. Think of sleep. Only of sleep, of nothing else. Lie down in such a way that the whole body is at rest. Expel everything out of your mind. Think only of sleep. Relax all muscles: fingers, hands, feet, arms, legs, neck, head, face, waist, relax the muscles of all of them by turn. Take some deep breaths, think of going to sleep without effort. Even stop breath for a while a few times. Again think of sleep. Imagine yourself sleeping soundly. Bring picture of your sleep to your mind. The sleep will come to you."

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Chapter Eighteen

The Skill of the Flowers

For a long life a good health is a prerequisite: heart, mind, stomach, lungs to remain working at their best. And it is not difficult to learn the skill of getting the best out of these four.

But for a happy life better skill is required, to which I call the skill of the flowers. Many Rosewood, Banyan, Pipal tree, Jasmine, Rose and other fragrance-giving flowers grow in the same garden. They all fulfil their needs from the same earth. From the same earth the Banyan tree becomes a jungle by growing beards upon beards, from the same earth the Rose finds its colour-droplets to colour its heart red, and then to saturate this red heart with perfume. From the same earth Jasmine draws fragrance to sow extraordinary dreams in the vicinity.

The silken roots of these trees and flowers explore every atom of the earth. The earth contains foul smell, poison, bitterness, but it contains all colours also, all fragrances also, sweetness and nectar also. Thin, aware tongues of the flowers lick the heavenly colourfulness from the dark mud, find the heart-captivating scents from the heaps of rubbish.

Banyan, Pipal, Rosewood trees are the veil of the garden, are the cover, the security umbrella, but the flowers are its colour, its beauty, its fragrance. It is from

the sweet hearts of these flowers that the honey of the whole world is collected drop by drop.

It is the images of these very flowery-hearts which adorn the feathers and plumes of birds. It is the kindled intoxication of this very laboratory of honey which becoming music, rises through the throats of birds and makes them love with happy beaks.

These are the name plates of the happiness in life. The penetrating roots of the flowers have some divine secret, they tear through the sea of poison to suck drops of nectar from the other side, open every treasury in the heart of the earth and steal honey, fragrance and intoxication.

The secret of happy life is in their beauty, in their fragrance, in their varied colours, and in their eternal happy countenance.

Anybody who wishes to remain always happy, should explore the hearts of their partners with the sharp edges of their feelings. These hearts may have many hard layers, bitter, ugly and poisonous, but the seeker of happiness would bring out the rays of underlying hidden beauty by turning them over and over.

Because without happiness long life is not a boon but a bane. The less the bitter, painful, complaining old age, the better.

The eyes of happy life always reflect the picture of a beautiful garden: cover, helplessness, security umbrella, colours, music, fragrance and happiness.

No bitter word comes on the tongue in the presence of such a picture. With long practice, I have seen, every word of happy persons becomes tender like flower-petals. No complain can find a place in happy hearts. The meaning of everything

is clear, every helplessness is forgiven on its own, a centre of sweetness is found from every bitterness. Such people keep their world happy in the company of sweet tongues of the people of many ages through books.

Back-biting, slander, jealousy, are the enemies of happiness. Taunts, careless or stinging words, ill-will are the hot airs which burn the tender petals of happiness.

Music, beauty, compassion, grace are the sources of happiness. Friendship, sincerity, guilelessness enhance the charm of the happy eyes.

Every year of a happy life takes one closer and closer to flowers. The pulls and pressures of selfishness is wiped off from the face, and lips, cheeks, forehead begin hosting a desire for the well-being of all. The tip of the tongue becomes the stream of nectar.

I am definitely not saying, that in the present difficult state of affairs of the world everybody's needs of a happy long life can be fulfilled. In the world of today only a few can achieve that. But if we go whole-heartedly after the goal of a better world, then not one in a million but many millions can reach the goal of a happy long life.

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Chapter Nineteen

The Message of Buds and Koels

Just as countless ways can go to the top of a great mountain, similarly, there is no final way to God. Just as no person will see the last ray of the living sun, similarly, no person will see the last light of God. God is eternal light. The absence of any avatar or prophet will not diminish this light of life. Lucky is one who has recognised himself as a ray of the eternal light. It continuously shines on good and evil deeds, on vice and virtue. It does not accept recommendations, nor dole out special gifts. Gifts flow out of it like the rays of sun at every second, every minute. The wider the pot of the receiver the more gifts he will collect. To go on widening the receiving pot is what makes the knowledge of life.

It is the love of the world that teaches the value of these gifts. He who does not know how to love the world, how will he value the divine gifts?

This world is not an ocean of suffering, nor a cycle of eighty-four lac painful births and deaths, nor yet an affliction. It is a splendour-spread of light, it is a priceless garden of buds and koels. Buds convey the message of their hearts through blossoming, koels and petals give tune to our songs. Buds blossom, give fragrance and whither away, koels sing vociferously, die and become a part of the eternal sound. Those who know the secret of this world do not prevent anybody from seeing what they want to see, from singing what they want to sing. To blossom - job of one, but to blossom for all. To sing - job of one, but to sing for

all. This pure world is not the world for grabbing or possessing, but is the world for singing, merrymaking and sacrificing. Death in it is not a competition with Yama (God of Death) but a recovering of breath of the singing life. Throat full of music rests a while in the cadence of death and then again tunes to a better, sweeter rhythm. In it there are no claims of age, no details of personality.

This is a world of fragrances, this is love-lorn birds' own common flower-garden. Until all feel the ownership of this flower-garden, all are partners in prison. Birds intoxicated by flying high in the skies keep account of every blossoming bud. And are amazed at seeing, that many fools pluck flowers from tender twigs of this beautiful garden and throw them in a heap at the hard earth, and make garlands of them and put around the necks of sculptures, and sacrifice them over dead bodies. Those who grow seeing them, those who feel blessed with their fragrance, laugh at the fanciful whims of these foolish masters, hunters and protectors. Who can deprive winged koels of flowers?

Flowers do not blossom for their masters, fragrance does not throw its blasts for perfumers. Flowers bloom for koels, and throw blasts of fragrance for lovers. Fragrance is a silent message of touch of love. Flowers say: "we are delighted that you looked at us; in response to what your looks said is this fragrance rising from our hearts."

Free from care and worry, these flowery-hearts look all around this garden with gratefulness, but are amazed on seeing many people searching distances and spaces far away from flowers, and want to say to them:

"Why get tired, bored and depressed? Why get disenchanted with this world and exhausted asking for boons for some other? Leave

fruitless search and just look in front - hidden behind the fog of your dejection stands there this world of love, for which the human soul is restless from ages. In this world of eternal interconnections God is not required to be found through fanaticism and bigotry. Here there is nothing but light in every utterance, every look, every touch and every morsel!"



Chapter Twenty

Life, A Piece of Art

The imagination, evolution and light of beauty created a small branch of the human world from the world of animals. But in a small period of just fifty thousand years this small branch overshadowed millions of centuries of history of the animal world.

Though even today the animal world is far numerous as compared to humans, humans have become the masters of the whole world. They have called the aloofness of the stars into question, challenged the waywardness of Nature.

Art is the only difference between humans and animals.

We had read, we had listened the stories of beauties like Sassi, their beauty had seeped into our dreams, but the hunger for beauty of our eyes had almost died down by continuously looking at the emptiness of life all around.

A painter came to live in our town. Sometimes he would invite us to show his pictures. The beauty of our dreams was stuck inside his frames. The clothes of Sohni swimming on top of earthen pot were drenched in water. Mahiwal's face was blazing with the brightness of the burning fire on the embankment . One felt like kissing painter's hands, in whose finger-tips the beauty of centuries was throbbing.

Sarojini Naidu was speaking in a hall at Liverpool - no, some musical melody was flowing, and because I was standing at the end as I had come late, I could see

all listeners swaying to Sarojini's suggestions. There was some magic in her words, some intoxication in her presentation of them.

I read Victor Hugo's (French Poet and Novelist) novels *Les Miserables*, *Toilers of the Sea* and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. Heart jumped at every line, and when I visited Paris I found out Victor Hugo's house and visited it many times like a man possessed. I sat at the feet of his statue for hours. I searched for the big prison mentioned in his novel *Les Miserables* and visited it, and felt that the same sighs were coming out of my own being as once came out of this place.

Tagore's golden words captivated my soul. When he went to America I was there. The newspapers carried the news of his lectures, dew drops seemed to fall on the thirsty petals of my heart. When he spoke, it seemed from within the easy layers of his long falling robe some flying angel was spreading the message of goodwill for the people of the Earth. People used to forget themselves while looking at his celestial features.

I was a child of eight. A potter lived in our neighbourhood. He was famous for his art in the whole area. From home I would go to school, but stealthily I would reach potter's colourful courtyard. Sitting on his seat, he would take a handful of the kneaded earth, and then the next moment would make parrots, peacocks and fairies of it. His colourful brushes would paint strings of cowries (gani) around necks, moons on feet, and saris around slim waists. His full face betrayed deep self-confidence. I had heard, men are made by God, for many years the picture of God resembled in my mind with this potter.

A carpenter was doing his work at his place. A heap of wooden galleys was lying by his side. Removing the knots this kingly carpenter would make beautiful dressing tables from them. Ah, what tables - even human beauty would stand speechless before them.

All these are born artists - magicians of life, loved and revered. They inspire and spread happiness. In their presence evil in us gets frozen and instead hunger for beauty takes over.

But we all, made of ordinary soil, cannot become such artists. Only a few of us can make their minds tune to the flowing melodies of the celestial spheres. Only a few of us can catch the frequency of the tunes in the air on our minds.

Even then, we all are artists of our small individual lives, can make them a piece of art with hard work and patience.

Rich or poor, commoner or famous, short or long, black or white, beautiful or ugly, each one of us can make a painting worth hanging in one or the other gallery.

Many faces are beautiful, but the sight of the one who makes beauty an art is beyond description: he makes everything beautiful and has nothing to do with anything ugly.

And in which class to put those rare artists, who individually have no beautiful feature, yet give the impression of some unparalleled beauty around them - they live beautifully, speak beautifully, dress beautifully, and have unlimited beauty of the heart.

Short in stature, black in colour, living on the fringe of poverty, I have seen many such people overshadowing the handsome of the likes of Yusuf and rich of the likes of Shah of Iran.

From this I have reached the conclusion that lowest of the low life can be made a piece of art, if the goal of beauty is placed before it from the very beginning.

Beauty is not a chance well-shaping of features, but the sum-total of beautiful habits. Beautiful habits are acquired with much hard work and likewise the ugly habits are got rid of with much hard work.

The foundation of all such habits is laid in childhood.

So whoever has passion for beauty, should try to keep the childhood of their children pure and beautiful. They should remove every kind of ugliness from their homes. Rude language has no place in a home desirous of beauty.

How the infinite potential of beauty is punctured at childhood with ugliness - the following poignant story will tell:

A youth came to see me. I asked: "Where have you come from?" He answered: "Where to tell?" Changing the topic I asked again: "What do you do?" He replied haltingly: "Don't ask me even this." I wanted to know whether he was a Hindu or a Muslim. "What is your name?" He felt a bit ashamed and said: "Which one to tell, I have many names."

Finally I asked : " Pray, what can I do for you?"

"Sit alone and listen to my story" - he replied. I was standing in the dinning-hall with others of the community to take food. I went with him. The night was pitch dark outside. We sat on the chairs in the verandah and my visitor told:

"I have come straight to you after release from prison. First time for a month, second time for a year, and the third time for four years I have spent in prison. I am matriculate - my father is a high official - I have read 'Preetlari' in prison - I have come to ask you, can I change my life?"

I asked him the story of his childhood.

"There was a vegetable farm near my father's home. My father would ask me and I would steal vegetables from the farm at night. I would also steal coals from government stores for use in home. My father would become happy - and I became more and more imaginative."

"I went to the college. I had become very clever, and would steal student's things even without any need, would hide them, some times would give them back and many times would not. Once I stole somebody's bicycle. The Police warned me. I stole a fellow passenger's things in a rail and got imprisoned. There I learnt breaking locks. Once outside I stole thousands. Finally I got imprisoned for four years."

Now I have become disillusioned with this life - but I am drawn to stealing by the force of habit. If I have no treatment of my problem I would like to commit suicide."

This young man was very handsome and healthy. He also seemed to have much leaning towards idealism. But he was helpless before those habits which he had acquired in childhood because of the mistakes of his foolish father.

I have a very learned friend. He has a very lovable heart, but is in the habit of using abusive words in the course of his ordinary talk. This bad habit is like the

black spot on his otherwise very beautiful picture of personality. But when I remind him he is never aware of using the abusive words. This black trait entered his white soul in childhood.

A well-wisher writes: " Even though I am faithful to my beautiful wife, I cannot keep myself from staring at beautiful women I see in a rail or bus. I am very ashamed of myself."

In many general stores in London some employees are kept solely to keep watch on people who are helpless before their habit of stealing. Many rich women are slave to this illness. They have no dearth of money, yet whenever they buy things from store they add many more by stealing. The owners of stores do no humiliate them by catching. They have an agreement with their husbands who pay for the stolen things as well.

There are warnings in these examples for the lovers of beauty. Nobody will become beautiful by just resolving at the spur of the moment. Only years of disciplined hard work can make the features of a face tender and beautiful. Irrespective of how white and balanced the features are, if they are not made tender with hard work and passion for beauty, they sometimes betray such cruelty that nobody can look at them in full.

On the other hand a women came in my contact. She had a very small height and had nothing to talk about as to riches. She lived in a rich commercial city of about one lac people. All the houses surrounding hers were like palaces. But her cottage had only three rooms. The whole city had hot and cold water supply, but her house had only one hand pump. She would water her small garden just with

this pump. She would weed the garden herself. She was fifty-five years of age, but from her looks she looked younger than her daughter.

She was a writer, player, her library was enviable, she played chess, wore clothes tailored by herself, because none designed clothes like her. When she played tennis in the park, her face would shine like an electric wire. Everything of her house drew attention, she was carefree, obligation-free, self-reliant, earner of her bread by her own hands - around her, like around the moon, there always remained a circle of friends. She had no self-deception, no artificial hope, no bigotry. Her friendship demanded no riches. She was always an inspiration for her friends. When she sat by a patient, illness would give place to intoxication of health. When she sympathised crises would turn into valuable experiences. Her company inspired goodness. The young man whose writing she appreciated would become a writer, whose poem she read with interest would become a poet.

Lean, small, very small, loaded with work she was the topic of discussion for those who lived in palaces. Millionaire women sighed, if only she would accepted a gift from them.

Not everybody can become a writer, or a poet, but by disciplining, learning, improving one's short or long life one can at least make it a peace of art.

We cannot change the outline of our features, but surely we can make sure that none of our things is unkempt, irregular, dirty, rough and out of tune.

It is true that only resolutions cannot take us to our destination, because we are a product of circumstances, but it is also true that revolutions take place first in the resolutions of men. Such people begin their war with every evil of the world

drawn by their passion for beauty, and to make their world beautiful they fight every injustice, every evil, every resistance.

In the beginning the passion for beauty is satisfied with the personal beauty, but soon it goes beyond mere eyes and lips and occupies all the corners of mind and heart. Then the poverty, helplessness, illness, and ugliness of the partners takes it beyond one's personal feats and even the greatest of artists is lost in the nakedness, hunger and ugliness of the common masses. But nothing is lost forever. Every lost artist is found in ten others and a day comes when from the closed life fountainheads of art burst open on their own, become a deluge and the world is changed.

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Chapter Twenty-one

Being Likeable

It is true that to a certain extent the personal improvement depends upon the improvement of society, but it is not untrue that the measure of personal happiness is personal improvement. Undisciplined and unimproved person cannot achieve happiness. Therefore one cannot forget one's personal happiness till the society as a whole is improved. Happiness is the fuel of life.

Many centuries have been spent to bring about the social regime, at least one more will be a must to improve/refine it. He who is desirous of happiness cannot do without it for so long. Whether one is on a great mission or small, whether one's sacrifices and services are beyond measure, so long as he does not learn how to improve himself daily his life may be valuable but not happy.

For being happy it is necessary that we should be likeable to our partners. There are many intelligent men and women before whose great accomplishments we bow our heads; we do whatever they demand from us to do; but we are not happy in their company, we want to go away from them as soon as possible.

There is something lacking in them, because of which they do not look likeable to us. The art of being likeable is even costlier than being an artist. Many an incomparable artists died insane because they could not spare time for the art of being likeable. Wife, children, servants, neighbours all respected them but none

had called them likeable, none had come near and seen them with appreciation in their eyes.

The art of being likeable is a must for all, a farmer and a daily worker, a master and a servant, communist and capitalist, ruler and the ruled. Without it one day the heart will feel depressed, the work in hand will be left, and even the bravest of the brave person will die sighing for an appreciative handshake.

This art is personal, not societal. About this, I think it my duty to give suggestions to those of my readers who complain that despite qualifications they could not succeed, despite the desire for love could not find love.

Irrespective of whether you are rich or poor, you can broaden your horizons for being likeable for you.

The first necessary condition for being likeable is the desire to "give". It is not only money which is worth giving - there are numerous worthier things than that.

A bus coming from Lahore stopped near the Shalimar garden. A Muslim fellow entered in a harried state. He said that his son is ill in the village and he wishes to take the doctor there. But the driver does not allow him abroad the bus because there is no vacant seat. Finally a Sikh fellow got up from his seat and also asked his son to follow suit. The Muslim was hesitating to accept so much sacrifice, he just wished that the co-travellers request the driver to take two excess persons with him.

The Sikh father-son took out their luggage from the bus and allowed the Muslim's to be taken in. Muslim fellow was too overwhelmed to find words of thanks. Many people said that it was a great sacrifice on the part of the Sikh, but

the Sikh's face seemed saying that he had earned happiness far more valuable than the value of the seat.

Everybody has plenty to give - smile, good wishes, good words, sympathy, a just response, thanks, a few lines of appreciation, and so on.

The influence of the desire to "give" creates the atmosphere of beauty. It needs to be accompanied by friendliness and sympathy. Unsympathetic, unfriendly behaviour loses many chances of happiness in the myriad encounters of life. Those desirous of happiness do not make a show of their difficulties, do not draw heavily upon the sympathy of others, nor keep their tongue swollen with complaints.

They care for the happiness of others, and whenever find the chance, do not miss to appreciate someone's good clothes, good body, good words. And keep the influence of their own nature in such a balanced state that looking at them one feels shy of one's own anxieties. Harried, unstable nature is not conducive to happiness.

A happy person's words are respectful and his face calm. Such people may have simple and less-costly clothes, but they wear it with great care, not out of any ego considerations but because of their desire to make others happy.

Happiness has no place for arrogance. No arrogant person has ever been happy in the real sense of the word. Only those people are happy who know how to hide their own qualities from others. Their qualities are felt in their absence, their faces are a picture of calmness.

Happiness demands friendships. Whether one is a shepherd or a master of the sheep, happiness is their soul's food, and much of this food can only be eaten on the table-cloth of friendship.

We will have to explore many ways to earn friendships - the ways to come in contact with others. Common games, walks, exercises, to invite new acquaintances to homes, to go to their homes, books, music, paintings, eating together, picnics, flowers and many other hobbies can be used to draw new acquaintances into the circle of friendship.

Only a desire for friendship is not enough. Many people complain that they have a pure heart, have never deceived anybody, yet have no friend - whosoever met them, proved selfish, none capable of winning a place in their heart. Such people do not know that friendship is not such a easy commodity to be had for the asking, without moving an inch from your place. Friendship is a kingly affair, needs kingly tastes. He who has a friend - real, heart-to-heart friend - is better than even a friendless emperor.

To be happy you need to know how to be truly appreciative. Many people will never praise anybody unless they have some axe to grind. They will more easily take out a rupee from their chest than to utter a word of praise from their mouth. Often their words do not seem to be coming from their mouth, but rather from their uneasy sides. They are suspicious of everybody.

Such people should have no hope for happiness. Their neighbours, their servants, their washerman, their shopkeeper - are all bad, dishonest and evil. Such

people always remain dejected with the pain of imaginary wrongs people do to them. Nobody looks at them twice, only the one by chance is enough.

A man can live without everything written above, can earn money, and in these days of corruption can earn heaps of it - but he cannot be happy, nor can develop confidence installing, satisfied, self-sufficient and smiling features and the eyes which can enter into an other's heart and ask for his well-being - those features and eyes seeing which we forget our own pains and rather a desire to remove the pains of others is born on its own from somewhere.

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Chapter Twenty-two

Happiness

What hunger for happiness, and how it is considered to be rare! Yet how full is our earth, with means of happiness - food to eat, work to do, beauty to enjoy and friends to love.

This maker of two hundred grains from one sown in it, our Earth, whom it cannot give sufficient food, for whom it cannot find sufficient work?

How much beauty to enjoy - the springs to stir lyrics from dry throats, singing birds, shapely animals, frolicking rivers, undulating mountains, fragrant valleys, colourful hearts of flowers, ambrosial fruits, golden honey, silky greenery, silvery waterfalls, shining moon, sparkling sun, twinkling stars - which is the hunger for beauty this bride of an earth cannot satisfy?

And this townsville of couples, Preet Nagar, where no face is so unattractive as not to be able to be anybody's hear-throb; where every lover is eager to meet his beloved and every beloved is eager to meet her lover: where every *Ranjhan* is eager to meet his *Heer*, and every *Heer* is eager to meet her *Ranjhan*.

But this foolish man could not learn how to be happy. First he attacked the source of happiness in haste - he got trampled, the happiness held in his hands got fractured to pieces.

Then one, two million clever people took control of this source of happiness. He who could not be done without was given a bit, the rest were left to sulk, and happiness kept sighing for want of air below the heaps.

Only if this foolish man will now turn wise - the source of happiness will be made to belong to all, and everybody to guarantee the happiness of everybody else. A single social institution to be setup, people need not give applications to ask for their share of happiness, rather it will be the duty of this institution to see that none on this earth is left without happiness, because it is only in the company of happy partners that the happiness of every man or woman can be made certain and long-lasting.

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Chapter Twenty-three

To Live Today, not Tomorrow

One day I had to stand in line for an hour to buy a ticket for the bus to the city. Tired, I thought of busying my mind somewhere else.

Buses leave from this bus-stand in every fifteen minutes, every half an hour in the day. The company earns thousands of rupees per month from this bus-stand. In developed countries such bus-stands are a very lively part of life: Waiting rooms, newspapers, pictures, flower-pots, radio, toilets. But here there is rubbish everywhere, on uneven ground, with open, dirty sewerage. The tickets were being given from the corner of a very dirty-looking shop. Life looked like a smouldered down dung-cake, no red spark seemed left anywhere.

Got the ticket. The bus was painted in some gaudy colour. Despite efforts to save some colour got rubbed on clothes. The conductor quarreled with the passengers, the passengers quarreled with the conductor, and thus the bus left. All faces in front of me, I watched with care, none had any shine on them, passenger sitting with passenger, as if prisoner was sitting with constable.

Wherever the bus stopped on the way there was some row - yet thankfully the bus would move. At one bus-stop two passengers entered into the bus forcibly. The conductor said, "I will not move the bus." The passengers said, "we will not get down." The remaining passengers pleaded with both the parties - but none of them seemed eager to reach anywhere - the journey came to a standstill.

I and a person standing near me said, "we will get down, let the bus move, why should all suffer?"

Our offer was accepted, we got down, the bus moved off.

Somehow I reached the city. I was to buy something but on that day forgetting everything I just decided to find a happy face. Wished to see, some face would sparkle, but all sorrowful, darkened, dejected. Either someone will speak too loud, or too low as if the sound was coming from a well. Neither the sellers seemed proud of their trade, nor the buyers happy of their buys.

I came out into the *parantha-wallah-bazaar*, the shop sparkled from afar - looking glasses, pictures everywhere. Began to eat, the vegetables were all stale. I complained. The owner rebuked the servant - "fool - you should have seen whom you are serving - why didn't you serve him fresh vegetables?"

Sobbing, the servant brought a few spoonfuls from some other kettles and emptied them on my platter, murmuring, "...becomes honest - he himself said 'first serve left-over from night'."

I was to buy a box of sky-blue paint. Could not find exactly what I wanted. Somebody told me of a big shop at the end of the bazaar, found it a bit difficult to locate.

I wanted to ask somebody. But could not dare seeing people's faces. Busy, frustrated, harried, hurried, none seemed to have the time enough to do this favour.

My feet stopped in front of a shop, as if moon came out suddenly from behind a cloud. There were many other shops decorated there, but here was something on it which is on the plants after the spring is on its full bloom.

"Please come in - what can I do for you?" a voice came from inside.

But this was not a shop of paints. For a moment thought, must buy something, anything from here. But the friendly atmosphere made this dilly-dallying needless.

"In fact I was to buy a box of sky-blue paint - could not find - somebody told me of a shop near here - could you please help?"

Please come in and sit," he said pushing a chair ahead, " you seem to have made enough rounds in search - yes the shop is nearby, and the paint you ask will also be available."

I gave him a chit of the like paint, seeing which he said, - "yes, it is with them, I bought a similar one from there."

I tried my best, that I will find the shop from the given address, but he made me to relax - and sent his son with my chit and a ten rupee note.

I was possessed of seeing people today. The customers were coming. When they will hear his words, their faces will relax a bit. After a long time, I had heard those words, which were flying off all around like the honey-bees flying off full of honey from the heart of a flower.

He offered me water, asked about my well-being, stood up and shook my hand when told I was the editor of 'Preetlari'.

Finally the box of paint arrived. The same box I had wanted. He said, "please accept my offer for 'Preetlari'." But then seeing I was unwilling, he accepted the cost with a smile. I also saw, that seeing some of the customers were refugees, he will take less money, without anybody's asking.

The evening was about to set in. He asked me where I was to go. My place was at a considerable distance, and as he had already asked me, my family had yet not shifted along with me, so he wished that I would stay with them. My readers seem like a family to me, so I agreed.

"I close the shop early - otherwise the children go to sleep."

Front of the house was sparkling clean. Because the house was built recently the electricity connection was not yet taken - but a small lamp was lighted near the stairs.

The whole house seemed to be waiting up there. I was introduced, every face responded enthusiastically. Having got the radio in the sitting room switch-off he said, "We shall listen to your talk."

The simplicity, the cleanliness and the freshness of the room were witness to an enthusiastic living. The low light of the small lamps burning in the bathroom and toilet gave the impression of electricity.

We took our meals, all together. Glasses, spoons, plates all were pictures of freshness. Went on the roof, many bedded charpais were placed in a row. White beds in moonlit night looked like small, dense plots of white *kaina*.

Children had not yet come up. I had come close to such a lively soul after ages. Showing my happiness I said, "You seem to me a very happy man - happiness is

my passion, I would like to write about your happiness in Preetlari. What is the secret of your happiness?"

Praising me out of his natural humility he tried to parry my question. But finally I succeeded in drawing him out. Looking at the moon he said: " Like this moon I just try to spread whatever more or less light I have on every moment of life - in our house best glasses, best spoons or best beds are not kept in wait to be used for the special guests."

Saying this he sat on the parapet and very respectfully invited me to do the same.

"I have taken my wife into confidence that within our means we shall live life to the fullest. There were times when the better part of our earnings was saved for guests, special days, marriages etc. We ourselves merely passed days in the name of living and kept our schemes to live fully for 'next month, next year'. Now we have left this borrowed living behind - living on cash has given us great happiness. Past and future now no longer worry us. I say, let us enjoy life now - what happens after death we will see when it comes..."

No sooner had I opened my mouth to appreciate his beautiful philosophy than the children hurried up on the roof. Their faces betrayed no fear or hesitation of the new-comer guest. Laughing, talking, making small retorts at each other they occupied their charpais and I was told of mine.

Their youngest daughter was very lovely. She asked: "Father, may I come on your charpai for a while?"

The father invited her. Father-daughter duo remained engaged in small talk for a long time.

The girl asked: "Father, in our book it is written that these moon and stars are made by God for our seeing."

"No, Pammi, these are bigger suns than our own world - they have their own planets like our Earth to whom they give light."

"Then there must be many more Earths like ours?"

"Yes...Pammi...many...with people living on them...many Pammis like you... and their fathers like me."

"Will we be able to see them someday?"

"Yes definitely...though I will not be able to...but when my Pammi will be of my age, perhaps by then rockets will be made which will link many of the stars."

"Will we be able someday to go for a dinner in somebody's home on the polestar?"

"Yes...Pammi...you will go...but now go and sleep...your mother is coming up...she will say I did not let you sleep."

Pammi left and Mother came up. They talked for a while, not of stars, but of the things on Earth, and then they went to sleep. But I remained awake for a long time.

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Chapter Twenty-four

When 'Life' Complained

Years have passed...since the war ended...but still the basic necessities of life are getting scarcer by the day and their costs escalating. New hopes are shying away from man. Peace-movements are being responded to with the possibility of a third world war.

Ah, will we again be at each other's throats soon, without even resting for a breather? Artillery, Bombs, Tanks will look like harmless fireworks now. Nuclear weapons will destroy not only the homes and buildings but the cities altogether. Regions will be erased from the map of the world...

One day this thought stunned the clock of my hopes to a stop. The eyes closed to any future, and closed hopelessly, they filled with sleep.

The veil of sorrow suddenly got lifted. Hardly have I seen such a beautiful dream in my whole life.

Beautiful forests, flowers at full bloom, singing birds, dancing rivers, majestic mountains bursting with wealth, well-organized cities, blooming gardens, wide, open meadows, and happy, handsome horses, cows, oxen, goats and sheep grazing in them with abandon. A wonderful peace had descended on the earth, like the warm, golden rays of the sun in winter.

No human being was there except me in this scenario, yet I felt somebody else besides me...neither man nor woman...just a feeling of a human being. He was

flying me over this beautiful scenario. He did not speak a word but nevertheless I was listening something.

I began to feel that the dream was coming to a close - I had strongly wished it to continue for a long time - but it just came to a close.

The stars were laughing in my open eyes. And I felt I too did not have the sorrowful mood anymore. Rather my whole self was pulsating with a sweet, new hope.

To understand the meaning of this beautiful dream I kept awake for the rest of the night. I felt, someone who was with me as a feeling, neither man nor woman, was rather the Life itself.

While lying on the bed I was complaining to Life why there was so much shortage of happiness in it? Why there was unemployment, disease and suffering everywhere in her world? Why the future was frightening, worries gnawing at the vitals of life from within, and someday its shallow skeletons seeming in the danger of getting unhinged and falling on the ground?

Life had wished to respond to my reproach. She wanted to tell me how much unaffected she was with the sacrifices of man. What she did not have that she needed to envy man's happiness? How much water her rivers had and how it danced along the flow. What tunes her birds did not have in their throats, what colour her flowers and what red diamonds her mountains were not full of? What palaces there were which she could not build?

She asked me, what offerings the fullness of her could still need? Prayers, fasts, ringing of bells, blowing of conches, recitations, meditations, what all this could

mean to her? These temples, these gurdawaras, these mosques, what could they give her? What should she think of these painful sacrifices of man?

She wanted to complain that why man had fragmented, rubbished and bled her beautiful, clean nature?

Life leaps freely in her forests. None is worried about food. Why only man's face is weighed down by worries?

I moved my hand on my face, felt ashamed of my sadness, and let my whole soul go with the flow of life.

I felt, a wave of compassion has come over Life's face, and she began to ask me:

"Instead of fulfilling all his needs from the unlimited potentials of my Nature, why man is becoming breathless rather in trying to keep his fellow beings in deprivation? Why he devices painful rites and rituals? Why he puts chains around his own freedom? Why he draws poison by fermenting my fragrant flowers and fruits? Why he moulds swords, assembles guns and makes bombs?

"I daily walk past his evil laboratories laughing, flash glimpses of beauty into his tortured eyes, cajole him with my rainbows, shoot arrows of love at his daily hardening heart. And when he sheaths his sword after checking its blade, I collapse his freed arms in some embrace of beauty.

"For a moment he startles, looks up, tightens the embrace, sometimes even kisses... but then again brings out the weapons from his furnace and begins to hammer them.

"You asked me, why happiness is such a scarce commodity in my domain?" Life was acquiring a form before my eyes, "I ask you, from where did you bring

this needless pain? There was no trace of pain in my domain. Just as you prepared poison by fermenting my flowery nectar, similarly, you made a featureless polity of pain by misusing my pleasures.

"My forests, rivers, mountains are overflowing with abundance of Life. Many times more than men - have you ever seen a dead bird burning anywhere? When did you see a dead body being mourned and wept over? When did you see the curled tresses of a widowed beauty being left to rot unattended? When did you see a spouse helpless in the possession of a disliked partner?

"This is my unconscious part. Man was my conscious part. The happiness of my unconscious part can not go beyond eating, drinking, self-preservation and self-propagation. But there is no specific limit to the happiness of man. If he wants, he can re-mould my Nature to his hearts desire; can change the atmospheres to his liking; can colonize the moons and the stars; can create new beauties, new desires, new passions, new tastes and new satisfactions.

"But he went stray from his destined course. He did not need any safety, he had nothing to worry about, if his one side touches cold, indifferent reality, his other side is bound to my omnipotence. If conscious man were to get lost in a desert, the desert will not be able to kill him, but he can kill the desert by making a garden over it.

"The man made a mistake. He took the differences in airs and waters as the differences in nations. He mistook the other nations as enemies, raised armies against them, made weapons, wrote hate literature and filled his heart with unwanted acrimony and bitterness.

"In this struggle he forgot how to live. The fear of defeat crippled his soul. He sought refuge in the deities up in the empty sky. He suffered hunger to offer them food, he worshipped them, prayed to them for their blessings."

"You ask, why the happiness is such a scarce commodity? I ask you, for whom your brother makes these difficult sacrifices? In whose worship his forehead has developed lines of attrition? For whose happiness he himself suffers hunger and deprivation? Whom he is calling, whom he wants to see?

"Why doesn't he understand that he himself is the flower of this whole Nature? Countless suns and stars have whirled for countless centuries to mould him. He is not answerable to anybody. No Dharmaraj is there to make judgements on him. He himself is the symbol of my boundlessness and sovereignty. No heaven is greater reward than he himself, no hell can keep itself in existence in his presence. He can light darkness, convert rubbish into gardens, develop beautiful cities of the likes of Venus on marshes.

"All he needs to do is to use his birthright of making, breaking and re-making; then this world will no longer remain a house of suffering, but a fairy land of dreams.

"The main need of human life is not the security from enemies, nor taking care of the symbols of national pride, nor yet keeping the sanctity of age-old traditions. The main need is that the creative potential of man is kept in a state of maximum social freedom. This freedom should not only be for the selected few, this freedom should be for the whole mankind. This can be done only if the potential of all men is increased by considering them as my common part. The potential of

all can only be increased in a society committed to progress. Prayers cannot sort out life's entangled webs. Man will have to analyse his surroundings, explore the hearts of his mountains, measure the waters of rivers and search the treasures of the earth.

"Then he should fix targets of production. Production not for persons or for governments but for enhancing the productivity and happiness of all mankind, so that man becomes independent of all wants. My power of production should be unleashed in full. As of now numerous rituals, rites, religious injunctions, laws are standing in its way. The magnetic centre of my power of production is man. Man has countless ways and means of production, to free these ways and means and bringing them into optimal use is man's main need.

"All precautions of England and America are needless. The war cannot be won with nuclear weapons, the war can be ended by making sufficient production and fulfilling the needs of all.

"And this can be done only if production is made not for profit, not for particular persons, but for the whole mankind. The means of production should be made common, and the productivity of every person should be enhanced by respecting and honouring his personality. Everything - food, power, trains, homes, motors, airplanes should be produced in such abundance that not even a lowliest person feels deprived of basic needs, nay, not even of social needs.

"Spirituality can be possible only for such people. Spirituality is not as much an individual achievement as a social. Occasional Mahatmas here and there do not make a society spiritual.

"Individual Mahatmas and Messiahs have not been able to renew the world. Gurus came, messiahs came, messengers of God came, avatars came, but the world could not be saved from the hold of the old. It went on becoming older and older.

"Mankind is not in need of Mahatmas, mankind is in need of creative freedom, of freedom of production. Just remove hurdles in its way. The whole nation, the whole society should join hands to enhance each individual's potential, and create ways and means for their creative and constructive experiments and fulfillment.

"Then the whole world will look so beautiful that a bomb fallen anywhere on it will seem to have fallen on one's own home. What to talk of Mexicans, of Eskimos, all will be felt like the beat of a common heart. Wherever a man will go, no other man will feel shy of him, be afraid of him. The look of a foreigner will be like the look of a new moon to the children and women of far off lands - the eyes will smile, the lips will quiver, the arms will pulsate!"

Each part of my body was trembling in an invisible embrace. I was in the embrace of the total Life of the cosmos. What a beauty this world looked!

Life was laughing at my face, and then she warned me:

"Your Hindus and Muslim leaders, both are mistaken. Both are unfortunate for their communities. Those who separate atom from atom can only bring material destruction, but those who separate man from man bring in their wake the destruction of the souls.

"May it be a country, may it be a nation or a religion, whatever creates differences between man and man disturbs the rhythm of life by creating disgust in its one part against an other, and is the leprosy of human life.

"The happiness and deliverance of mankind lies in enabling every person to produce and giving him the full opportunities to produce.

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Chapter Twenty-five

The Highest Ideal

The highest ideal of man is not bhagti, mukti, vision of god, reaching heaven or sitting in samadhi. It is a state of well-balanced and smooth-functioning body and mind, in which body, mind and soul are able to live in harmony with each other as well as with their surroundings.

This may not sound a very high ideal to many. But every passing year of my life is confirming my belief that there is only one lasting satisfaction, and that is the passage of our life in a balanced and smooth manner, that is to say, without any part of it getting lop-sided. If the tiny boat of our personality is balanced on the sea of life then even the greatest waves will not be able to harm it. And it will even be able to carry a heavy baggage, provided it is loaded evenly. But if any side of it - front, rear, left, right - is lop-sided, it will always seem at the verge of overturning even empty what to talk of carrying any heavy baggage, and we will live in dread of it every minute.

To achieve a well-balanced and smooth state we will have to know our body, our brain, our mind, and the forces surrounding us. This state can only be achieved with much hard work and much knowledge. This is the state which can be called the state of jeevan-mukti.

The body which is the home of our personality, to know it fully is our first need; the brain through which this personality is to prosper, to know its importance and

strengths is our second need; and the mind through which this personality can manifest itself, to know it is our third need. These needs cannot be fulfilled by ordinary, irregular and half-hearted exercises, these cannot be got as boons from some holy men, these have nothing to do with performing parkarmas (going around) of holy places or having holy dips there or drinking water off the feet of idols, or offering flowers and sweets to idols. Just as no body can become a wrestler without exercising in an akhara, similarly, no body can fulfill his above mentioned three needs in some other way except by knowing the laws of Nature and the working of his own body, brain and mind.

And above all, is his fourth need: to familiarize himself fully with the powers surrounding him, to use the powers sympathetic to him in his favour and to secure himself from the opposing ones. To fulfill this need the man will be required to explore the whole of Nature. Sun, moon, stars, air, water, fire, society, polity, civilization, sex, love - all will require that man fully reconciles with them. Whatever is not fully understood and reconciled with, its presence will create unease. He who does not know how a radio speaks, or how an electric bulb gives light without oil or fire, how armies and armies fly through air, how submarines run through the deepest waters of the sea, when he sees such things, first he gets awed by them, and then feels himself hollow because of his inadequate knowledge.

Society, love and sex have a deep relationship with man, but he had never cared to know about them. The result is the present uncontrollable, fluid state. Marital

discords, misunderstandings, disinterestedness, impulsive behaviours, hysteria, madness are the result of this very ignorance.

Man made great temples, suffered unbearable pains for the sake of a deceptive mukti, wrote abstract philosophies, made difficult rites and rituals, tortured and got tortured, heard soundless sounds, received revelations - but did not further his knowledge of himself and his surroundings, nor realized his unity with Nature.

The result is the hell that we have prepared for ourselves on this earth, where nobody is free to do anything, everything is in chains taut and tense. To live, to be, to enjoy, to see, to appreciate, nothing is dared. Fear stalks every step. Restrictions cover every inch. Every happening is frightening, every moment one is afraid of an omnipresent power happy to run down our efforts. Sermons are delivered from all sides to remain bowed before this very power for hours together and rub noses. He who tries to look up by lifting his neck a bit gets his neck cut. The man will not face more frightening hell anywhere else - he lives in this very hell now.

But to live in heaven should be his ideal. Heaven, not after death, but now, and in this very world. Every kind of happiness is man's birthright, provided he can have it without usurping any body's right and without giving any body pain. That image of God is mistaken and harmful which keeps man in fear, and making him a sinful nonentity shows the only hope for him in asking for forgiveness. This image does injustice to man and God both. If no God can be thought of without such an image, then man is in need of no God. Building temples for such a God are useless, and worshipping him has no effect except making man slave and lazy.

But what prevents us from imagining a better and more beautiful God? Stars are beautiful, moon is beautiful, sun is splendid, sky is clear and limitless, forests are full, deserts are wide, seas are unmeasurable and unfathomable, earth's potential is unlimited, love is ecstatic, hug has a wonderful electric current in it, sweet words have magic in them, to sacrifice is to gain fullness of life, health is happiness, hunger gives a unique taste of its own, food gives wonderful satisfaction, good wishes are harbinger of peace, beauty has bloom, sympathy has embrace, tears have some memories dissolved in them, flowers have messages, birds have music, music has intoxication - and in the laughter of this intoxication is the tingle of God.

Is it a small worship to understand this God? Do the eyes closed in blind-faith depict a better state than the knowledge of such a God? Isn't the God which remains present as happiness and beauty in skies, in the hearts of everything a far better and beautiful imagination than the one who sends those who do not worship his name to hells and to repeated cycles of births and deaths?

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THE SPARK OF LIFE

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