



SUVIDHA - Where the good life gets better

SUVIDHA NEWS

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Thought for Today <http://www.thoughtfortoday.org.uk/todays-thought/>

➤ From the MD's Desk:

Dear Friends,

I see that the decision of the last AGM about the repair of cottages has caused a lot of heartache among some SH. One of them has circulated a legal notice he gave us and our reply to that notice, to all of you. He is obviously seeking support for this legal action. This is a time for all suvidhites to think calmly about the problem at hand and take the correct decision for the good of all suvidhites. Certainly legal action is not the way to go. All of us will be wasting our own money in paying the lawyers!!



There are a few simple truths that we have to face up to;

1. Our cottages come up for repair on a regular basis; having a blame game on why they come up for repairs will take us nowhere. We are in this situation and we have to accept that. Repair, we must - but who pays for the repair?
2. The SH and the company are the same - Suvidha is unique in that the company, the product (cottages), the SH and the consumers are all the same 'family'. Either all of us pool in or the individual pays for his repair.
3. As administrators we wanted to be fair, transparent and democratic; hence, we asked the 'family' what we should do. They told us that the individuals should pay for the repairs with some caveats.
4. One of the family members is questioning the legality of the process; We can assure you the before the AGM and again after the legal notice was served, we have taken opinions from civil as well as corporate lawyers; they are clear that there is nothing under the law that says that the company has to maintain the cottages. The question as to who should bear the maintenance cost is left to the SH to decide.
5. A lot is made of the 'ownership'. The company owns the cottages - agreed. But who is the company? - its us the SH. and we are all owners of the estate. And so, we should decide how maintenance is carried out. Surely the SH are not just tenants?
6. Some SH are saying that roof leak is structural; we had collectively decided that the TC is the best judge for deciding what is structural and what is not. Should we not abide by this?
7. Today the hot topic is roof leak; tomorrow it will be something else - like a crack in the wall; the day after it will be floor tiles etc!! where will this end? and how will the SH (the company) find the money to pay for this? and, should we take it that the cottages should be maintained for life by the SH collectively?

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8. All I can say is that we have been very fair and democratic in what we have done; we gave the opportunity for the SH to decide; we have followed the directions given by the SH. If one or a few of them take the legal route we will again get back to the difficult situation that we were in 2 years ago. We hope good sense prevails.
9. we have very few options - either raise the MF by about 2000=00 a month; or the individual pays for the repairs; or, we have some fund that is built up by contribution from SH - perhaps 50,000 inr per SH - that is used for repairs. the problem with the last option is one of collection. Going by past experience, very few people paid when a request was made with a promise of 8% interest (the law does not permit this any more)

At a different level, why can we not function without vituperative emails and legal threats? These take us nowhere; they just vitiate the atmosphere.

I request all SH to put down their views in writing; we are not claiming that ours is the only correct way; we asked you - gave you choices and we followed what you wanted us to follow.

There is no future if we do not follow the majority; some people question if the decision of the AGM is the majority decision. What else can we do - the AGM is the prescribed process. We are happy to send out a questionnaire to all SH; our experience is that very few respond! And, that survey is not legally valid.

Your views about how we should take this debate forward are most welcome.

Regards,

Dr K Lakshman

➤ **Event Highlights:** The month witnessed the following interesting events.



24-01-2016: Open House @ 11.00 a.m.

Dr K Lakshman was in the chair; He welcomed the gathering and discussed the following issues.

Security cabin

The MD explained that the work on building the frontage for Suvidha has started. This is scheduled to be completed in six months. Some of the members had not received the basic plans of this structure. MD promised to send it again to all the SH.

Issue placed in the forthcoming EGM on 13th February.

Most people knew about the significance of the change being sought in the RVM regarding the age of 'permanent' residents. The MD explained that this is essential for the safety of Suvidha vis a vis section 109 implications. Adequate safeguards are put in in the modification to protect all SH.

Landscaping issues

The MD explained a situation where in objection from a neighbour has stopped the work, that is sanctioned by the SLC, in a common area. He further stated that one of the resident directors had spoken to the neighbour to try and convince them that this work should go on. This attempt was not successful. The MD felt that the rule of law has to be respected by all SH; if individual SH have veto powers, then chaos and anarchy will prevail. At the same time, it is not nice for the board to be seen as harsh and dictatorial, particularly if force is to be used to implement a legally accepted rule. The MD hoped that, this kind of a situation will never arise again.

After due discussion, the house agreed that the SLC order must be implemented. One more attempt is to be made by two residents to reason with the objecting neighbour. If this persuasion does not work, the management was asked to take the necessary steps to implement the SLC order.

Any Other Matters:

Office staff having access to communication from SH

One SH objected to the Estate Manager forwarding a letter from one other SH to all SH; this became necessary as the concerned SH had no posting rights on 'our suvidha'. The letter in question was a response to another letter in 'our suvidha'. The house unanimously agreed that once a letter comes into public domain, it is quite in order for the office staff to help in 'posting' such letters, such that all SH get the necessary information.

Permission for young students to stay for 2 nights

One resident requested the house to give him permission to implement his plans of getting some young students from a muffosil area to come and stay in Suvidha for 2 nights; he wanted to show them Suvidha as well as take them round some sights in Bangalore. He promised that there would be no disturbance to the residents and that he would take full responsibility for the safety and conduct of these students. The house agreed to this request.

Growing vegetables

One SH suggested that we should grow vegetables and sell them to generate revenue; also it was suggested that we sell compost. SLC has promised to look into the feasibility of doing this.

The meeting ended with a motion of thanks to the chair.



26-01-2016: Republic Day Celebrations

Prof. Krishna Rao Jaisim of cottage # 126, hoisted the National Flag to commemorate the Indian Republic Day celebrations at SUVIDHA village. He addressed a large gathering of residents & other shareholders and took everyone on a reminiscent trip of events since the inception of the idea of a retirement village and the later hurdles & developments in the execution of Suvidha project. It was a very touching narration of Suvidha history to date. He concluded his speech hoping that all Suvidhites would join hands to take Suvidha to greater heights. Dr. Narayanan took special care to design floral decoration of the flag post to include the national colours.



13-02-2016: EGM & Open House

As per the notice issued on 18-01-2016, EGM was held to discuss, amend if necessary and adopt the proposed resolution to amend the terms of the cottage use as mentioned in the Residents and Visitor's Manual (RVM). After detailed discussions a modified resolution covering all views expressed was passed. After the EGM, an Open House meeting was conducted to discuss / clarify few issues requiring immediate attention of the residents and the management.

Detailed minutes of the proceedings of EGM and Open House will be sent to all the Shareholders shortly.



13-02-2016: Movie Time

The movie is **Ulidavaru Kandante (As Seen By The Rest)**. It is a Kannada Movie of 2 hour 33 minutes duration. English subtitles were available. All residents enjoyed the movie.

➤ Suvidha On The Move :

○ World Women's Day Celebrations:

Preparations are afoot for the forthcoming Women's day celebration and health check-up for women. To commemorate World Women's day hectic pre-camp preparations and meetings are on the way to organize a cancer screening camp on Saturday the 12th March 2016. Under the detection camp, it is envisaged to cover all the women folk of the Village which includes the residents and their relatives during the pre-lunch schedule and all the women staff and their near relatives in the afternoon session.

○ **Suvidha Club House Updates:**

- a) Thanks to Ms. Ahalya Shetty who has donated two decorative metal pot holders apart from a beautifully carved bar counter for use of Suvidha.



- b) **Electric Scooter.** Orders are being processed with M/s. Ampere Vehicles Pvt. Ltd. Coimbatore to procure an electric scooter [Ampere V 60 Retro] with a factory fitted with metal basket in the rear to carry the water bottles and the food carriers. This will reduce the work load on Buggies.



○ **Suvidha Electrical Jobs:**

- a) For reasons of easy fault diagnosis and maintenance, the Electrical Section of the Maintenance department is contemplating to contain all these loose wires in a metal box with a lockable door.



- b) Three flood lights have been fixed on the pillars at the club house parking area to enhance security to vehicles parked at night time. This would also throw enough light to enable the morning walkers to move without fear.

○ **Suvidha Landscaping Updates:**

- a) Cleared the thorny bushes present in the valley starting from old car park area up to Prof. Jaisim's cottage # 126. With the clearing the original beautiful rock formation has been exposed and risk of snakes etc., is also minimised.



○ **Updates on other Projects:**

- a) With commencement of the construction work on the main entrance as well as the security and staff changing rooms the Security Cabin No. 1 at the front gate has been relocated at a far off place. And the ground work of the construction work has been started from 12th. February.
- b) Construction work on last five cottages under Phase-1a, is progressing well at an even pace. A new approach road to these cottages is being explored.



➤ **Suvidha Family News :**

○ **Resignations :**

Mr. Madhusudan C, Driver, has resigned from his job effective from 1st February 2016. Now he runs a taxi service by name M K M Travels and could be contacted on 9980178436. Being a known person, SUVIDHA residents may prefer him to avail his services. We wish him all the best.

○ **Appointments:**

Mr. Lakshmisha who is a B.Com graduate with seven years of experience in the field of accountancy, has been appointed as Accounts Assistant. Suvidha extends a warm welcome to him and wish him a successful career.



➤ **Suvidha News Corner:**

Recently, Dr. SV Venkateshaiah, a Suvidhite , has been felicitated by eminent academicians and pujya Swamiji on the occasion of releasing his book **'ರೂಪಾಳಿ'**. Needless to say that all Suvidhites are proud of this event and his achievements. On behalf of all Suvidhites, we congratulate Dr. SV Venkateshaiah and wish him well.

- **Suvidha Talent Corner:** Under this banner, we plan to introduce to our readers, the contributions of our Suvidha family members who have developed substantial special skill sets as hobbies. Hope you will all enjoy such presentation. We welcome all such talented members to participate in this endeavor.

- **Paintings:** Dr. Narayanan R, a popular gynecologist and a resident of Cottage No. 107 at SUVIDHA, will be introducing us to the fantasies of flora / fauna around the Village through his intricate miniature paintings.



CHRYSANTHEMUM



“If you want to be happy for a lifetime, grow Chrysanthemums.” (a Chinese philosopher)

The chrysanthemum was first cultivated in China as a flowering herb and is described in writings as early as the 15th Century B.C. As a herb, it was believed to have the power of life. Legend has it that the boiled roots were used as a headache remedy; young sprouts and petals were eaten in salads; and leaves were brewed for a festive drink. The ancient Chinese name for chrysanthemum is “Chu.” The Chinese city of Chu-Hsien (which means Chrysanthemum City) was so named to honor the flower.

So taken were the Japanese with this flower that they adopted a single flowered chrysanthemum as the crest and official seal of the Emperor. In Japan, the Imperial Order of the Chrysanthemum is the highest Order of Chivalry. Japan also has a National Chrysanthemum Day, which is called the Festival of Happiness.

The chrysanthemum was first introduced into the Western world during the 17th Century. In 1753 Karl Linnaeus, renowned Swedish botanist, combined the Greek words chrysos, meaning gold with anthemion, meaning flower.

Hybridizers in England, France, Japan, and the United States have developed a wide range of floral colors, shapes, and sizes. Today, its colors include various shades of pink, purple, red, yellow, bronze or orange, and white. Some cultivars (varieties) have different colors between the disc and ray florets and some have ray florets that are bi-colored on the face and reverse sides.

Since the chrysanthemum was first introduced into the United States during colonial times, its popularity has grown such that mums now reign as undisputed “Queen of the Fall Flowers.”. Mums remain the most widely grown pot plant in the country and are one of the longest lasting of all cut flowers. This latter attribute, along with their artistic allure, make mums highly favored by floral arrangers. In the United States, the chrysanthemum is the largest commercially produced flower due to its ease of cultivation, capability to bloom on schedule, diversity of bloom forms and colors, and holding quality of the blooms.

In contrast, in many European countries the chrysanthemum is known as the death flower. In countries such as Belgium and Austria, the chrysanthemum is used almost exclusively as a memorial on graves.

As a landscaping plant, the chrysanthemum makes a beautiful display for the home garden. With skill and artistry, many varied effects can be achieved, even when only a small growing area is available. Chrysanthemums can accentuate an entrance way; provide the Fall colors to a season-long growing bed; or dominate a growing area with the many varied shapes, sizes, and colors. Used in this fashion, chrysanthemums provide an outstanding climax to the season before the colds of winter arrive. As with all gardening efforts, it is not luck or the so-called green thumb that achieves results, but rather hard work and dirty fingernails.

- **Birds of SUVIDHA:** This is a series of beautiful and at times stunning pictures of birds that are either resident of or visitors to our Village. Mr. Ashok Dey, a permanent resident of SUVIDHA since November 2010, has been able to photograph as many as 91 different species of birds in the Village.



PURPLE SUNBIRD



Purple Sunbird

With our Sun having begun its northward journey and day temperatures rising, the flowering bushes and shrubs in the Village are in full bloom. Morning walkers are greeted with the loud calls of a large assortment of small birds who keep hopping around tirelessly in the foliage, feeding on little insects and quenching their thirst with nectar from flowers. Prominent among these early morning foragers is my bird-of-the-month the **Purple Sunbird (*Cinnyrus asiaticus*)**.

Just 10cm from beak to tail, the species is widely distributed all over of the subcontinent except in the northeast and the northwest. It has a slender downcurved bill and the breeding male (pictured above) is metallic blue-green and purple and appears all black from a distance. The non-breeding male resembles the female as both have brown to olive brown backs with uniform pale dull yellowish underparts. The only difference is that the non-breeding male has darker wings and sports a black stripe running down the middle of its breast. In this stage the male is known to be in *eclipse plumage*.

The breeding male, attracts female attention by singing excitedly -- *cheewit-cheewit-cheewit* -- from exposed perches. That is what the specimen pictured above was doing when I was lucky enough to 'shoot' it. Nesting season will begin in a few weeks from now. While the female will build the nest and incubate the eggs, the male will assist in feeding the young.

- **Butterflies of SUVIDHA:** India has over 1,500 species of butterflies. Mr. Ashok Dey, permanent resident of SUVIDHA since 2010, has been able to photograph and identify 47 species of butterflies inside our Village until now. Our Newsletter will carry this new series comprising pictures and descriptions of butterflies of SUVIDHA.

LIME BUTTERFLY



With a wingspan of 80-100 mm, the **Lime Butterfly (*Papilio demoleus*)** is a medium sized, common Swallowtail widely distributed on the subcontinent and can be spotted quite easily in our Village, basking in very open places with its wings spread flat. It is on the wing almost throughout the year and can be seen mud-puddling in large numbers on damp patches in summer. (Some of our gardeners have reported seeing this mud-puddling activity on damp sand in the southeastern corner of our village.)

Both male and female specimen are similar : various shades of yellow irregular spots on the upper wing with a beautiful pattern in lemon yellow, red and blue on the underside. The abdomen has longitudinal black lines on a lemon-yellow background. this species lacks the characteristic tails of the Swallowtail family. The species is an avid nectar feeder.

➤ **Readers' Corner :**

The Brahman – the approach of Kenopaniṣad – Part II

Courtesy: Dr. T. S. Rukmani, PhD, D Litt.

Resident of Suvidha Village, Cottage # 73-74

(Presently, the author is a Distinguished Professor Emeritus, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada.)

We covered the introductory verses of the Kenopaniṣad (K.Up) in the earlier newsletter. The K.Up consists of two parts the first part consisting of two sections being in verse and the second part again containing two sections composed in prose. While I will try to complete the whole K.Up. in this issue in case it becomes too long we will leave the explanation of the second prose part for the March issue.



The refrain '*tadeva brahma tvam viddhi nedam yadidam upāsate*' which is the last line in verses 5-9 of section one of the first part has already been explained in the earlier Suvidha Newsletter. We will now attempt to understand the verses in the second section of the first part. The rest of the first part is devoted to explain how we can know or comprehend this Brahman which is behind all the cognitive functions of our existence.

The earlier statement that the eye does not see or the ear does not hear etc., without the One that impels all this to happen can still be confused with the 'sense of I' or the ego as one normally says 'I hear'; 'I see' and associates the actions with the ego which is what one understands by the 'sense of I'. Therefore the first verse of the second section of part I wants to dispel that notion i.e the confusion of the 'ego' with the ultimate Brahman as one fails to distinguish between the ego expressed ordinarily as 'I' and the higher Self. Thus trying to state that position clearly it mentions 'If you think that you have known Brahman well enough then you have known only the very little expression that It has in the human body...and ends the statement by asserting that Brahman needs to be deliberated upon seriously since there is confusion in the disciple's mind'. (*yadi manyase suvedeti daharamevāpi nūnam tvam vettha brahmaṇo rūpam...mīmāṃsyameva te manye*). Following that advice the student deliberates seriously and then declares : I think (Brahman) is known.

We all have a strong sense of ego and also are convinced that decisions are taken by ourselves backed by the intellect. The Upaniṣads however by an analysis of the ephemeral nature of the human body along with the sense of I or ego as also the presence of the experience in 'deep sleep' when all the senses along with the ego is also asleep has come to the conclusion that there is a higher consciousness which is behind all cognitive activities and acts as a witness at all times. Its argument is as follows: After deep sleep when the ego is also asleep and one awakens there is a feeling that 'I slept very well; I did not know anything'; the Upaniṣads explain this experience of knowing that one slept soundly is due to the witness consciousness which was active even during that time. Thus this 'Consciousness' also called the 'Witness' is behind all the cognitive activities in the human body. There is a simple truth in this statement as every experience needs a subject to experience. Since the mind, intellect and sense of ego are also asleep at this time one can only explain the experience of deep sleep due to the Witness Consciousness.

The first verse given above therefore tells the disciple he needs to deliberate or think hard about this underlying 'witness principle' without confusing It with the ego. 'Mīmāṃsyam' is a significant expression. It is used in a 'prescriptive sense' and not in a 'descriptive sense'. In other words it is almost a command to the disciple to pursue further hard thinking and deliberation with reasoning to understand the difference between the 'ego' and the 'Witness Consciousness'. The disciple does so and then declares (*manye viditam*) "I think I have realized (Brahman)".

What does the disciple mean when he makes the statement that he has realized Brahman. Surely he did not 'realize Brahman' in the interval that elapsed between the two verses of the K.Up. He must have spent a long time deliberating on the inner meaning of this 'Witness Consciousness' and finally states his experience and findings in a set of verses starting with I.2.2-5.

These four verses (I.2.2-5) try to explain how one can 'know' Brahman or rather experience Brahman. The disciple first states his mental state as follows: I do not think I know (Brahman) very well; however nor do I consider that I do not know and I know as well. In other words 'I know and I do not know as well'. He goes on to say that 'One who comprehends the statement that I do not know (Brahman) (but at the same time) I know and also do not know (that Brahman) (truly) knows that Brahman (*nāham manye suvedeti na na vedeti veda ca; yo nastadveda tadveda na na vedeti veda ca*) (K.Up. I.2.2).

In ordinary life when we say we know a thing it means we have a certain knowledge of that thing. Thus when I say that I know the animal in front of me is a cow I know that fact because of certain characteristics such as a dew lap, horns, hoofs and so on. In other words, there is certainty regarding the knowledge of the animal in front of me. And I cannot also add something like 'I am not sure I have knowledge of the animal in front of me'. That will be a contradiction and is a logical fallacy as one cannot have knowledge of a thing and also not have knowledge of that same thing at the same time. So on the face of it, the disciple by saying that 'He knows Brahman and at the same time he does not know Brahman' seems to be making a logical fallacy. To add to the confusion he adds that 'One who simultaneously feels that he knows and also does not know Brahman, truly knows Brahman' (*nāham manye suvedeti na na vedeti veda ca; yo nastadveda tadveda na na vedeti veda ca*).

Since words or śabda or worldly language deal with mundane subjects they are incapable of expressing other worldly 'knowledge or experiences'. That is the reason that the Rgveda talks about four levels of śabda which are spelt out as *parā, paśyant, madhyamā* and *vaikharī* in the philosophy of grammar later. Of these *vaikharī* alone is used by us humans and the knowledge of Brahman cannot come under that category and does not belong to any kind of ordinary human knowledge of an object. That is the predicament that the disciple is facing and he is unable to express it clearly; so he says that he knows and he also does not know; but at the same time he cannot deny the knowledge of Brahman. This is further explained in the third verse.

Verse 1.2.3 starts off by stating the Upaniṣadic position as follows: It is known to him who does not know (and) It is unknown to him who knows; It is unknown to those who have realized (Brahman) and known to those who have not realized (Brahman) (*yasyāmatam tasya matam matam yasya na veda saḥ, avijñātām vijñātām vijñātamavijñātām*). Both the lines state the same idea in different ways or by repeating the same idea twice. It is well known that repetition is always used as a device for emphasis and the Upaniṣad is also using that device for its purpose. All the Upaniṣads strive to emphasize the fact that one can never experience Brahman in the worldly sense and here also that is being stated. The first line thus points out the defect of identifying Brahman with the senses of knowledge, intellect or the ego and dismissing any individual who thinks he knows Brahman in that sense. The second line also is just a variation of the first idea. It is in the fourth verse that the K.Up. spells out how one can understand this knowledge of Brahman.

Verse 1.2.4 - This verse tries to describe what are the signs by which we can realize that 'I now know Brahman'. The translation goes like this: When each state of Consciousness reveals Brahman then one can say Brahman is known; in this state one attains amṛta or immortality. Through one's Self one attains courage and through Knowledge one attains immortality (*pratibodhaviditām □ □ t □ □ □ ṛtatvam hi vindate; ātmanā vindate vīryam vidyayā vindate □ ṛtam*).

This is indeed a very enigmatic verse and needs a lot of explanation. The word *pratibodhaviditām* can be understood as a kind of reflexive knowledge. It is not a superficial knowledge of a subject knowing an object; but it is beyond that and can be expressed as 'knowing that one knows'. There is a flash of knowledge of an intuitive kind which carries a conviction that ordinary knowledge does not possess. So when an aspirant to Brahman realization feels this higher intuitive reflexive knowledge in every 'knowledge situation' one can say that he has realized Brahman. The experience of seeing something for instance and getting the experience in the form 'I see that object' is no more at the sensory level but transcends that and reveals the underlying Consciousness that makes every knowledge experience possible for such an individual'. Thus the śabda '*pratibodhaviditām*' is the fulcrum on which this realization of Brahman is woven. One could compare this to the *ṛtambharā prajñā* that Patañjali's Yogasūtras talk about. According to this yogic *prajñā* every knowledge reveals the true nature of the object known (*ṛtam bibhartīti ṛtam bharā*). One cannot go deeply into that here. As a result of realizing the truth in every knowledge situation (*pratibodhaviditām*) there is immortality. Immortality according to Upaniṣadic thought means that there will no more be birth and death. One can also understand it as a state of mind where one has the supreme satisfaction of having realized the ultimate reality which is the actualization of one's true identity. The next line which emphasizes the quality of 'courage' is the signature tune of the entire Upaniṣadic philosophy. In almost all the Upaniṣads the quality of courage called variously as '*vīrya*', '*dhairya*'; and a courageous person called '*dhīraḥ*' draws our attention to the fact that it is only a person who has tremendous courage can even start on this path of search for the Supreme Truth'. Such a one attains the necessary reflexive wisdom (*vidyā*) and then attains immortality.

The last verse of this section (1.2.5) sums up the purpose of human existence in the Upaniṣadic worldview. The translation reads: If one has realized (Brahman) while living then it is the truth (means it is worthwhile). If it is not realized here (while living) it is a great loss. The brave ones having realized (Brahman) in all beings and turning away from this world become immortal (*iha cedavedīdatha styamasti na cedihāvedīnmahatī vinaṣṭiḥ; bhūteṣu bhūteṣu vicitrya dhīraḥ pretyāstāllokād □ □ ṛtā bhavanti*).

The words in this verse have been chosen with a meaning. The K.Up declares that only such a life is worth living or is in fact true living when there is the realization of Brahman in this life itself. It thus points to a fundamental belief of *jīvanmukti*

or liberation while embodied in the body that Advaita Vedānta beliefs in. No other world religious philosophy offers such a grand and sublime goal to human beings. Thus the criticism that Indian philosophy or Advaita is a world denying philosophy has no basis. It is world affirming as it is only by existing in the world and following the Vedāntic principles that one attains the sublime goal of mokṣa in this world itself. One also needs to note the word 'dhīrāḥ' or brave/wise/courageous souls who are the only ones who will dare to follow such a difficult path for reaching one of the most valuable goals of human existence.

We have completed the two sections of Part I. The two sections of Part II will be explained in the succeeding Newsletters.

** Sometimes I have translated the verses myself and at other times I have also used Swāmī Gambhīrānanda's translation from his "Eight Upaniṣads".

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BLISSFUL COEXISTENCE

by Dr. P M Chandrasekhara, Cottage # 75

The jungle is one of the best places for the human race to understand the gross realities of life. Many of us wouldn't have explored what LIFE IS ALL ABOUT IN THE WILD. However, we would have at least read about animal's 'way of life' and watched how nature works, through National Geographic or Discovery Channels.

We can learn so many wonderful things from the jungle. In fact, it is the best B-School ever in the history of mankind. The lion teaches us leadership skills, the elephant shows us how to be strong and humble, the cheetah shows us what the speed of execution is all about, the birds teach us aerodynamics and what it is to view things from an altitude, the monkey teaches us how to be cheerful and fox helps us in understanding the strategies. Likewise miniscule ants or bees exemplifies the life in a colony or a collective living where each one knows its responsibility and work relentlessly towards the safe living in a disciplined way. The list goes on, and whatever we claim to have evolved comes somewhere as a lesson learnt from the animals. Thus, one of the best lessons we learnt from the jungle is the wonderful lesson of blissful coexistence!. It is the same piece of land wherein live the predator and the pray, the strong and the weak, the fastest and the slowest, the tallest and the shortest, the most beautiful and the ugliest. It is from the same source of water that all the beings survive, and it is the same flow of air that all inhale. It is so amazing that so many diverse forms of animals, with so many differences, peacefully coexist to form the one term called the "jungle".



Yes of course, there are challenges of survival. The fittest of all survives, and the game is a fair play. Of course, there is the struggle for food and area of domination. There is differentiation amongst the species, and herds prefer to be undisturbed in their area. Fear, hunger, anger, fights, possessiveness and peer pressure exist. It may sound more or less like what we humans undergo in our day-to-day lives. The only difference is that the animals are able to coexist happily, in spite of differences, whereas we humans cannot, in spite of our sixth sense!

The problems of coexistence are so huge for us that, with so much of education and worldly knowledge, many tend to commit suicide, just due to the inability to be at peace with fellow humans at home or elsewhere. It is so funny that we do not have any major problems of survival like the folks in the jungle. We have our share of food guaranteed, our corner in cosy bed guaranteed, a safe roof above our head guaranteed, multiple sets of quality clothing guaranteed and a assured bank balance to maintain all these for life is guaranteed.

We have to learn to use this beautiful tool of happiness in life – blissful coexistence. People who have unlimited happiness and blissful peace are those who know the differences and yet appreciate the similarities, be it with people or things or their expectations in life. We are all in a world of differences, and the variety and diversity of each creation of the existence.

It is so painful to see a husband and wife, who were passionate lovers just before marriage, turning towards options of divorce, as they could not harmoniously coexist with the preferences they had as individuals. Children abandon parents at their old age, and young couple prefers to stay away from parents. The best of all, we have religious wars today just because the so called spirituality evolved cannot accept fact that God is one and the same across all religions!

Harmonious coexistence is the mantra for peaceful living in a community. Making an emotional decision is a matter of few seconds, but the impact that it creates on our life and on the life of our dear ones is huge.

Understanding the importance of peaceful coexistence in every relationship not only makes us accept the differences, but also evolves us to the next stage of life as better human beings. No matter who we are and how much influence we have in this society, there are always things, which we cannot change, yet avoid too. Being the CEO of an organisation, one can dictate terms of how things must work at office, but back home everything may not be as smooth as office. As the roles in life change, the secret of successful coexistence is to understand the rules and harmonize with differences at different situations of life.

In a holistic way of life, blissful coexistence cannot be partially applied. The major problem with many of us is that we are able to coexist happily at some places which give us returns that we expect, but we are not able to do the same for the sake of improving the relationships we need to cherish. While at business, we are patient with the demanding customers and irritating suppliers. The business generates huge wealth and obviously this is for the family, but what good is all the wealth if we cannot be happy with our family just because they are not up to our expectations? Blissful coexistence does not mean, "You do this for me", and It should be 'Let us do it together' or even "let me do it for you". Thus, it is rather "No matter what you do in this relationship, I will continue to love you unconditionally and accept you as you are".

Great leaders from our past are those who could blissful coexist with followers of different capacities. Great cultures are those, which could imbibe the best practices from across multiple cultures. Great species are those, which could survive the drastic changes of nature and adapt themselves with the change over a very long period. Great nations are those that could be at peace with other nations with transparency and acceptance of all differences. Great economies are those, which evolve diverse opportunities of wealth creation that encompassed all classes of working people. Great relationships are those in which individuals look at similarities that draw them closer instead of differences that pull them apart. Every conglomerate, organisation or any place where there are people needs leaders. The leaders are not the masses; they are only the top few or elected one. In many cases, it is a solitary role. The leader excels in understanding the vision and is able to support the organisation in all the means possible to achieve it. It is a collective and shared vision. The leader concocted the vision, and the subordinates or the fellow beings should follow the same. The leader takes certain decisions. There is no certainty whether these decisions fail or succeed. Bridging the gap between certainty and uncertainty would be reality. When the gap widens, the followers should accept the perceived notion and the reality with faith in the leadership.

Every decision taken by the leader need not be in favour of the members of the community, yet it is part of the subordinates' responsibility to take it in a stride. The later need not agree on the decision, yet they would implement the decision in full gusto because their role is to act on the decision taken. The subordinates would voice their opinion with the full understanding that their opinion is heard and due respect is given. They can be opinion makers, but not decision makers. There might be disagreement before the decision is taken, but once the leadership mantle decides, there is only a single decision. Every organisation has leaders. The followers would hold the hand of the leader to say, 'Lead us'. If the leaders and followers understand this well, then it is the smoothest way to success.

Peaceful coexistence starts with a simple quality of "acceptance". This acceptance is the first step, which evolves to maturity. Maturity helps living an emotionally balanced life, which promises understanding relationships better. Once the relationships are understood better, there is peace and harmony. With peace comes happiness, and with happiness comes the bliss of existence! When the animals of the jungle start accepting their strength or weakness, they eventually know how to harmoniously coexist in a dangerous jungle. When animals can do that, why not we, as humans, attempt a peaceful coexistence in our homes or our enclave? The rules of life are always the same because the creator is the same for man as well as the nature. Let us try to live by the rules of existence because man has all the questions and nature has all the answers.

The first indication of a civilised society is the consideration one citizen shows towards his fellow citizen. It is the feeling of oneness, which people have for each other. It is when we elevate from 'me, I mine' to 'us, we, our'. Consideration for each other is the embodiment of togetherness, teamwork, brotherhood, patience and the understanding one person has for the other. It when we treat each other with mutual respect and regard, in spite of diverse and difference of opinion. Consideration for others also means spreading and sharing happiness and love. Our neighbour is anyone around us, and duty is to love and care for them as we would ourselves. Each one of us is guardian angel ordained to take care of our fellow beings. Consideration also epitomizes kindness, cooperation, togetherness and grace, which are an integral part of any prosperous, forward-looking society.

Ego can never mend a relationship, anger can never guarantee power, pressure can never deliver expected results, war can never unite nations, luxury can never improve peace, and money can never buy a home. Master the art of peaceful coexistence, and you will find a loving spouse, respected neighbour, affectionate subordinates, great cultural values, an encouraging organisation, a great nation and wonderful religions. Coexistence peacefully means to live life of selflessness and sharing joy and in fact, joy doubles as you share. Let's grow together; let's blissfully coexist!

Acknowledgement : Excerpts and the modifications from articles by Ravimahajan [Consideration for others]; Guru Prasad Makkam [Can I follow, please?]; Lincy Ann Mathew [Who is your neighbour?]; Ekanthalingam A [Blissful coexistence]; Infinithoughts Volume 4, issue 6 : 8 and 10..

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