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

➤ **From the MD's Desk:**

Dear Friends,

Greetings on the occasion of our Independence Day!!

We will have the flag hoisting and a 'Vanamahotsava' to mark the occasion.

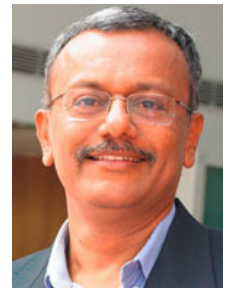
You will be getting the notice for the AGM soon; please remember to give proxies if you are not attending the AGM.

Phase-1a and the beautification of the entrance are going on in full swing. The entrance work will be done by end August and Phase-1a by end September. I foresee a month's delay in the latter.

After a 6 week vacation, Mr. Chigateri is back at work as the COO. Please address all issues pertaining to day-to-day activities, maintenance issues and requirements from the office etc. to him. This will reduce my workload. I thank Mr. Chigateri again for helping us out. Most of the day-to-day administration will be done by him in consultation with the resident directors.

Regards,

Dr. K. Lakshman



SNL Archives: All back issues of Suvidha News Letter are available at: <http://suvidha.co.in/news-letters.html>

Note: Download the desired back issue for activating the hyperlinks in the document. Then read it at leisure.

➤ Event Highlights:



30-07-2016: Adhyaatma Discourse and Bhajans

Smt. Vasanthi Naik along with the members of the Ladies Club organised a two-day long discourse programme by different authorities. On 30th of July there was a discourse on Adhyaatma rendered by Sri Narasimha Prabhu, followed by Pravachana by Smt Bhavana Prabhu and later by Bhajan Programme. Many interesting subjects came up for elaborate discussion which included Meditation, Vendantha and Dasa sahithy etc. The whole programme was a new experience for the residents who attended the discourses with rapt attention. A few photos taken on the occasion are presented at this link: <https://goo.gl/photos/f29AmvY5Lq662apo8>

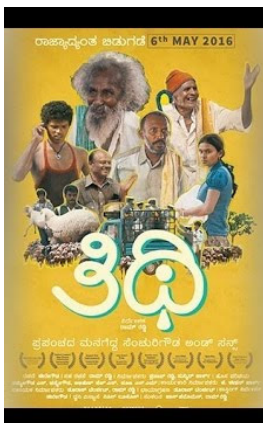


06-08-2016: Sanskrit skit on Shakuntala

On 6th Aug we could witness a beautiful programme of rendering shlokas along with dance by cute little kids and a Sanskrit skit on Shakuntala. Both the above programmes (30th July & 6th August) were sponsored by Mrs Vasanthi Nayak & Mr P K Nayak of Cottage #167. Brig. Pardhasaradhy of Cottage#84 was so overwhelmed by the Shakuntala programme that he spontaneously announced monetary gifts to the participants. Here is the link to photos: <https://goo.gl/photos/mrFiebWZEN3o8SfVA>



13-08-2016: Monthly Movie Program



A very interesting movie was screened on Saturday, the 13th August at 6.15 PM in our Club House. The movie is **Thithi**. It is a Kannada Movie of 2 hours duration with English Subtitles.

Gist Of The Movie: **Thithi** (Kannada: ತಿಥಿ, English: Funeral Rites) is a 2016 Kannada- drama film co-written and directed by Raam Reddy. Consisting of a cast of non-professional actors from villages in the Mandya district of Karnataka, the film is a light-hearted story about three generations of men reacting to the death of their 101-year old patriarch. The film is an Indo-American co-production, jointly produced by Mr. Pratap Reddy from Perspective Productions and Mr. Sunmin Park from Maxmedia.



Thanks to Mr. C.B. Prabhakar of cottage #119 who arranged the above monthly movie programme.

➤ **Suvidha On The Move :**

- 17-07-2016: Thanks to Smt. Saraswathi Bhatia (resident of 32-D) who donated 65 saplings of the exotic trees at this opportune time to plant them. These saplings were planted by her at a space opposite the lake bund.
- Tata Power Solar have transferred the material required for the roof top solar project to the site and are expected to start the work on erection of the panels soon.
- 27-08-2016 : The Forest Authorities have donated over 150 healthy tree saplings Suvidha. Thanks are due to the forest officers : Mr. Champati; Mr. Vinay Luthra and Dr. Munireddy. These plans will be planted on Vanamahostava Day at SUVIDHA on 15th August 2016.
- Landscaping work in front of Phase-1A has started after obtaining the clearance from the Civil Department that there will no further digging of the area in front of the cottages.
- Annual repair work of the badly damaged staff quarters following heavy rains is progressing satisfactorily.
- Beautification of the approach road along with pedestrian path from security cabin at main entrance to security cabin opposite Club House has been sanctioned and the work is in progress as per the outlay conceptualized by Prof. Jaisim.
- The work order for erecting a green house at Suvidha by modifying the disused stores shed behind the phase-1a has been issued. The civil work of the project is expected to start in a day or two.
- The work of completing the security cabin is progressing satisfactorily and one can see that the roofing work is almost completed.



- Our COO, Mr. Chigateri who returned from an intercontinental tour has gifted an interesting canine disperser unit to the Village. It is a hand held portable device that emits intense sonic signals that keeps the dogs away!
- Ever enthusiastic Mr. Chandrakanth Bhat has come out with an idea of installing an Industrial Dish Washer at our Kitchen. The idea has been accepted in principle since our dinner plates and the food carriers will come out hot and hygienically cleaned through a dish washer which uses recommended cleaning agent.
- Likewise, the idea of installation of an industrial laundry unit at SUVIDHA is in the pipeline. In this respect the shareholders who have personal experience or can contribute towards the details of sale and service centres of the industrial type dishwasher is welcomed.
- Thanks to Prof. Jaisim who has designed and also guiding in erecting a structure at the club house ground floor hand washing area. The rain water from the club house roof entering the hand-wash area and making the floor wet and slippery, will be curtailed to a great extent and at the same time the air circulation and the natural lighting will not be hampered.

- The civil work with respect to the Viewing Deck has started to take shape. The foundation work on the approach road to the Phase 1a has been laid.



- The Lake is continuously overflowing since a week due to recent rains. The lake is rejuvenated with 7000 common carp fish on 02-08-2016.
- A detailed report with recommendations on setting up structured check dams, deepening the surroundings of the existing bore wells, deepening the lake bed, reinforcing the embankment dam of the lake and establishing a weather station have been submitted by the experts from Vyakthi Vikas Kendra under the expert guidance of Mr. Lingraju Yale.

➤ **The lighter side of life:**

"I love you, sweetheart."

Courtesy: Mr. Satya Murthy Subba Rao, Cottage#139

A group of women were at a seminar on how to live in a loving relationship with their husbands. The women were asked, "How many of you love your husband?" All the women raised their hands.

Then they were asked, "When was the last time you told your husband you loved him?" Some women answered today, a few yesterday, and some couldn't remember.

The women were then told to take out their cell phones and text their husband: "I love you, sweetheart." Next the women were instructed to exchange phones with another woman and read aloud the text message they received in response to their message.

Below are 12 hilarious replies. If you have been married for quite a while, you understand that these replies are a sign of true love....who else would reply in such a succinct and honest way?

1. Who the hell is this?
2. Eh, mother of my children, are you sick or what?
3. Yeah and I love you too. What's wrong?
4. What now? Did you wreck the car again?
5. I don't understand what you mean?
6. What the hell did you do now?
8. Don't beat about the bush, just tell me how much you need?
9. Am I dreaming?
10. If you don't tell me who this message is actually for, someone will die.
11. I thought we agreed you wouldn't drink during the day.
12. Your mother is coming to stay with us, isn't she?

➤ **Suvidha Talent Corner:**

Under this banner, we 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 presentations. We welcome all such talented members to participate in this endeavor.

- **Paintings:** Dr. Narayanan R, is a popular gynecologist and a resident of Cottage No. 107 at SUVIDHA. Dear readers, you have enjoyed some of his paintings over the past two years. They were captioned under the heading, "Flora of Suvidha". To bring in a change, he now intends to capture the beauty of Suvidha by sketching a few familiar scenes. Hope you will enjoy !



ON THE ROAD TO SUNSET CLUB



- **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 101 different species of birds in the Village.



White-throated Munia

The **White-throated Munia** aka **Indian Silverbill** (*Lonchura malabarica*) is the size of a common sparrow, between 10-11 cm beak to tail. It is a plain, earthy brown thick-billed finch with a pointed black tail, white upper tail coverts* and whitish underparts. Both sexes look alike.

(* Coverts: a set of feathers that cover other tail feathers and help to smooth airflow over wings and tail)



The species is found all over the sub-continent and is widely distributed from the drier parts of India all the way up to 2000 metres elevation in the Himalayas. It has a chirruping call and just now you can see them in our Village in family parties of between 6-10, chattering away in bushes, looking for food which is generally grass seeds on the ground and feathery tufts or ears and also for material to either build or repair their nests. When they sense human presence close by, they quickly fly away. But if one stands still for a few minutes, they fly back to the very same place where they were first sighted and resume their activities, quite unconcerned about the human. That is how I was able to take this picture a few days ago.

This species' nesting season is virtually all year. The nest is a large globular structure made up of coarse grass lined with softer flowering grass. Both sexes share all domestic duties. It has been observed that sometimes disused nests serve as dormitories by the family long after the young ones have flown.

- **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.

COMMON BARON



Common Baron

As the name implies the **Common Baron (*Euthalia aconthea*)** is found almost everywhere in the sub-continent and is seen in a wide variety of habitats, all the way up to 2400 metres in the Himalayas. It tends to avoid very dry scrub and grassland. With a wingspan of between 55-80 mm its strong, rapid flight is almost always close to the ground. When in the air its flight is sustained by a powerful and rapid wing-strokes and then it glides swiftly and gracefully.

It feeds on rotten fruit and tree sap and is fond of basking. Dr Krushnamegh Kunte, well known field biologist and lepidopterist has an interesting observation to make about this species. He says that this species "...is a habitual alcoholic. It is not attracted to any flowers at all. Instead it greatly relishes fallen, rotting fruits that are rich in alcohol. This is one of the butterflies to be expected on a pile of fallen fruits under a fruiting tree..."

The female of this species is much larger than the male and the accompanying picture is that of a female.

➤ Readers' Corner :

Relevance of the Values of the Gītā in today's world
Chinmaya Leadership Dialogues - Pune 2015

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.)

There are some classical texts which belong to all ages and all climes. These classical texts never lose their significance as they contain perennial wisdom which has an appeal to people of all times. The Bhagavadgītā is one such text which has served succeeding generations in different ways and has stood the test of time. It seems to speak to the audience in a myriad different ways. This is evidenced by the number of commentaries that have been written on it which try to get at the true meaning behind the verses and the effort still continues.



How does an ancient text like the Bhagavadgītā become relevant to its people in modern times? It is in this context that the strength of the multilevel interpretative tradition of India's knowledge systems come into play. This tradition of interpretation of ancient texts has been prevalent in Indian knowledge systems and it allows an understanding of many of these wisdom texts in a contextual manner. This tradition starts as early as the Vedas where there is a three level interpretation called the **ādhibhautika** (pertaining to the physical level), **ādhidāivika** (pertaining to the religious or divine level) and **ādhyātmika** (pertaining to the domain of the self/ spiritual level, as well as the relation of the self to society). The interpretative phenomenon got refined and specialized with Pūrvamīmāṃsā framing some broad hermeneutic principles for this. In this context it is important to understand that in the traditional hermeneutics of interpretation, the Upaniṣads are considered to be bhāṣyas (commentaries) on the Vedas and in turn the Bhagavadgītā (Gītā) is regarded as a bhāṣya on the Upaniṣads; thus the task of interpreting the wisdom of the Upaniṣads has been assigned to the Gītā; it is the versatile nature of the contents of the Gītā that must have led to the assignment of this role to the Gītā as the nature of the text is such which lends itself to being understood in a way that succeeding generations can also follow and benefit from them. The Gītā takes its task very seriously and makes an honest attempt to restate and explain some basic principles in a manner that can aid one to lead a harmonious life in the world. As opposed to the language and style of the Upaniṣads which is rather cryptic and enigmatic the Gītā generally adopts the easier śloka metre and a diction which is simple and attractive to convey both what the Upaniṣads advocate as well as some other truths fit for the age in which it was written. After all texts have to be made meaningful to the context in which they are read. Today's reading of the text like the Gītā cannot be the same as was relevant for instance during Aśoka's time. Even though the ultimate message of the Gītā is the attainment of liberation it does not forget the fact that the culmination of the spiritual aim can only come about when there is an all round development of the physical, mental, intellectual and spiritual faculties in a human being. Each of these faculties has to be developed to its maximum potential in order to achieve the highest goal. Śarīram khalu ādyam dharmaśādhanaṁ (it is the body which is the first means for the performance of dharma) is a maxim not forgotten in the Gītā's message of values. Thus the ādhibhautika also figures prominently in the message of the Gītā. Since the steps leading to the spiritual can only be through our bodies and our mental and intellectual capabilities therefore this all round approach of the Gītā makes it of eternal relevance to any society at all times. In this presentation I shall look at those verses in the Gītā which have relevance to living in today's world.

The modern world is a materialist and consumerist driven world. Almost all sections of society today all over the world including our own seem to be possessed by this materialist culture and also seem to be suffering from some kind of tension and stress. Today words such as 'stress', 'tension' and 'depression' have become commonplace and every section of society seems to be affected by it. Even though drugs and psychiatric remedies seem to have proliferated in response to these maladies there is no concrete evidence to suggest that there is a marked improvement in the quality of life. There is thus an imperative need to take help from all available sources to stem this menace and it is here that our own heritage texts can help. My task therefore is to look at some of the verses in the Gītā and try to analyze them with relevance to the present day conditions of living. I shall also touch upon the ethics of the Gītā which also will be helpful in this regard.

The paramount need today is to wean people especially our youngsters from the consumerist tendencies that are spreading its tentacles like a disease in today's society. This tendency seems to have been warned against already in the Gītā and makes us wonder if it was also evident in the times when the Gītā was composed i.e the time when the Mahābhārata (Mbh) was composed. After all it was the greed for more and more land that Duryodhana desired which

eventually led to the war itself. So even though the goods desired in modern day society may differ the tendency to possess more and more or greed (trṣṇā) is what is at the bottom of the matter which is a perennial evil. It is that evil which is hinted at in the two verses 62 & 63 of the second chapter of the Gītā. Thus it says when one is constantly engaged in the material world a desire to possess the material goods grows till one becomes attached to them inordinately. This leads to anger and rage (in the event of being deprived of them). That in turn leads to delusion or lack of discrimination (sammohah) as to what is good and bad and due to delusion one starts losing memory (of what is important and becomes obsessed); due to this (misplaced) memory one loses the capacity to think or discriminate between what is right and wrong (buddhināśah) and then one is completely ruined (praṇāśyati). This is a pretty graphic picture of the undue attachment to material goods. This is almost a psychological wake up call and cautions against consumerism which can only finally lead to one's own destruction. This is evident in today's society.

I have personally witnessed how mothers and children, shopping during festive occasions go crazy and throw up their hands in despair as the child is not able to make up its mind on what toy to choose. Of course it is not going to make any difference which toy one chooses as any toy loses its fascination after a few days and the craving for something else springs anew. The seed of craving has already been planted in that little child and it is only going to grow manifold as time passes and instead of toys the adult child will indulge in one consumer good after another to satisfy this growing need for satisfaction. The lesson of contentment if not taught early is difficult to cultivate and we are witness to the material culture spawning across nations throughout the world. So the only remedy is to instil a sense of what is of lasting value and its opposite early in the child's life. And that is where the discrimination of what is important and what is unimportant comes in. Parents have a heavy responsibility in this regard. They themselves need to be aware of the metaphor of what is of permanent value and its opposite. The choosing of what is of permanent value can only happen if there is a serious attempt to plant some basic ethical values into the child. A character building exercise from early childhood will prove immensely beneficial in this regard. The Gītā lays down a number of ethical virtues and they are relevant for all times. If the child is inculcated into these values from early on it becomes much easier to follow them in later life.

Certain moral virtues are needed to be inculcated early as almost all cultures have insisted. Socrates spoke of the highest virtue as the seeking of wisdom and similarly Aristotle classified certain virtues such as justice and reason as necessary virtues for a good life. Indians right from the time of the Rgveda have also pondered on this question of virtues and in keeping with their own culture have enumerated a number of virtues to be cultivated. The Gītā following the same tradition refines them further and throughout its 18 chapters we find mention of these virtues sometimes directly and at other times indirectly hinted at. The Gītā in the words of Arjuna points to the restless nature of the mind and Śrī Kṛṣṇa points to the need to be guided by the intellect and a higher spiritual presence to combat this distraction in verses VI. 34-36. Scattered throughout the Gītā is the constant refrain of practising 'karmayoga' with an attitude of detachment and free from ego and also surrendering oneself to a higher principle (XVIII.56-59). Developing a mental attitude of equanimity also helps in this regard. Thus we have verses such as 'adveṣṭā sarvabhūtānām maitraḥ karuṇa eva ca, nirmamo nirahaṅkāraḥ samaduḥkhaḥ kṣamī. (XII.13) which advocates an attitude of no hatred for anyone, to be friendly and compassionate to all, cultivate an attitude of detachment and unselfishness, and a capacity to endure evenly both pleasure and pain. One could say that amongst the virtues that are repeatedly stressed are the attitude of detachment which is needed both to meet the challenges of material attractions as well as to achieve progress in one's spiritual journey. Surely these virtues are sorely needed today and the young in particular are under a lot of stress as they take every single experience to heart and brood on it. They also have no spiritual grounding to turn to.

Let us now try and summarize what has been stated and look at how the values advocated in the Gītā can be usefully employed to meet the challenges in the present situation. Let us go back to the second chapter again which according to me embodies all the guidelines needed to lead a sane life in the lived world. The benefits of Yoga that the Gītā advocates may especially appeal to both young and old alike in today's world where the popularity of Yoga has soared very high and has been internationally recognized as a stress-reducer. Even hospitals, prisons and schools are all convinced of the benefits of Yoga. While there is a physical angle to these experiments the Gītā's approach is one that looks at yoga in a holistic manner. Thus there are three verses in the second chapter which mention how Yoga can help in maintenance of an equitable temperament in adverse circumstances.

In this connection the Gītā's greatest contribution in my view is its presenting the philosophy of 'karma-yoga' in all its different aspects throughout its 18 chapters. While allowing the individual to act in the world with an attitude of detachment towards the result of the action the Gītā presents an alternate to the sannyāsa state of abandonment of all action. Even a sannyāsin may outwardly renounce actions (karma) but it is in the inner attitude of renunciation that karma-yoga comes alive. Thus this is a unique contribution to the philosophy of action that the Gītā presents to us. The three key verses that embody this philosophy are II.47, 48 and 50.

The English translation of these verses runs as follows: Your responsibility is only to do your work and not to (be attached to the) end result i.e. Do not make the result of the action your motive but at the same time do not get addicted to inaction. In an atmosphere where action meant only ritual action and that leading to the desired ends and further giving rise to repeated births and deaths the Gītā is warning against the undue attention devoted to the end rather than to the task at hand. It can be applied to any action and is therefore as relevant today and will continue to be so for ages to come. It is not against desire per se but against thinking of the end result obsessively which will only take away from the concentration needed to perform the task at hand. The other line which cautions us not to get addicted to inaction as an escape is particularly appropriate today wherein children and the youth are glued to their different gadgets and are for the most time whiling away their time in inaction.

The question then arises as to how an average person can develop this kind of an attitude; and the answer is given in verse II. 48 where it is mentioned that this attitude of detached performance of one's action can come about through cultivation of an equanimity in both adversity and prosperity. It is a psychological training of one's mental and intellectual faculties which can accomplish this task; this sounds like psychoanalysis and as Swami Vivekānanda said following the Yogasūtras 'if there is a bad thought one needs to oppose it with an opposite good thought.' (pratipakṣabhāvanam) to combat it. Thus once that is continuously cultivated it will be possible to perform actions with that mind set (yogasthaḥ kuru karmāṇi saṅgam tyaktvā dhanañjaya, sidhhyasiddhōrsamo bhūtvā samatvam yoga ucyate'). The net result would be 'yoga' which is a state of tranquillity and which will lead to skill in performing whatever action that one undertakes (yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam).

I shall touch upon one more important point from the third chapter before I conclude this short paper. The third chapter again emphasizes the fact that inaction is no substitute for result-detached action when it says that no one can stay even for a single moment without action. Life or Nature itself is programmed in a manner so that one acts in accordance with natural laws (kāryate hyavaśaḥ karma sarvaḥ prakṛtijaiḥ guṇaiḥ III.5). Śrī Kṛṣṇa gives a method by which a common individual like one of us can practice karmayoga. He thus says that one could dedicate all one's actions to the Supreme which can be practised more easily than the mental resolve of desireless action. The greatest statement that the Gītā makes in this context is that even by practising this kind of surrendering all actions to the Supreme one is able to attain liberation (III.30-31).

There are thus many strategies in developing this state of karmayoga. It can be tabulated as follows: (1) Learn gradually to control the mind and concentrate on the task at hand (2) develop the virtues which cover all the dimensions of the human personality i.e physical, mental, intellectual and spiritual (3) cultivate a selfless non-egocentric attitude (4) have faith in a superior power outside of oneself be it God, Truth, Reality or the Supreme Principle (5) dedicate all one's actions to that Supreme one believes in.

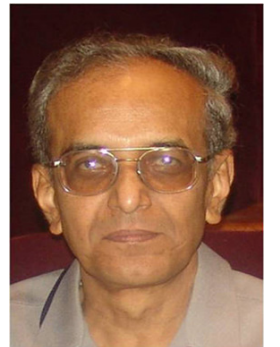
Since the Bhagavadgītā is thus talking about human tendencies and working towards changing the way humans orient themselves towards a non-egocentric behaviour pattern it will be of relevance for all time to come.

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Road Map to tread the Last Years of Life - Part II

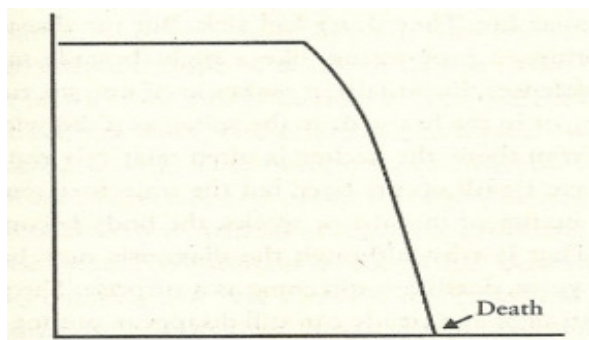
Compiled by Dr. P M Chandrasekhara, Cottage # 75

Given the opportunity under new globalisation, the choices for the elderly proliferated. Seeing these changes, in the year 1960, Del Webb, an Arizona real estate developer, popularised the term "Retirement Community" and launched Sun City, a community estate in Phoenix exclusively for the retirees. It was a controversial. Most developers believed the elderly wanted to more contact with other generations. Webb disagreed. He believed people in the last phase of their lives didn't want to live with their children's family who have their own pace of activities. He built the Sun City as a place with an alternative version of how people would spend what he called "their leisure years". It had golf course, a shopping arcade, and a recreation centre, and it offered the prospect of a active retirement of recreation and dining out with others like them to share it with. Webb's version proved massively popular, and in Europe, the Americas, and even Asia, retirement communities have become a normal presence. There is arguably no

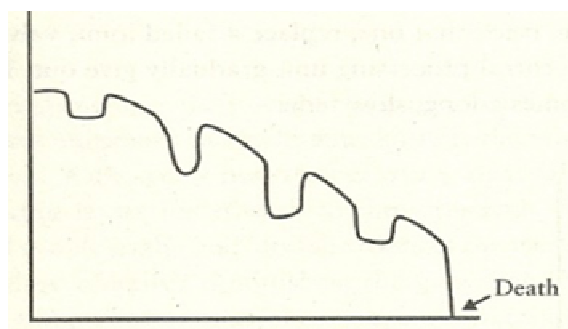


better time in history to be old. The lines of power between the generations have been renegotiated, and not in the way it is sometimes believed. The aged did not lose status and control so much as share it. Modernisation did not demote the elderly. It demoted the family. It gave people – the young and the old – a way of life with more liberty and control, including the liberty to be less beholden to other generations. The veneration of elders may be gone, but not because it has been replaced by veneration of youth. It's been replaced by veneration of the independent self.

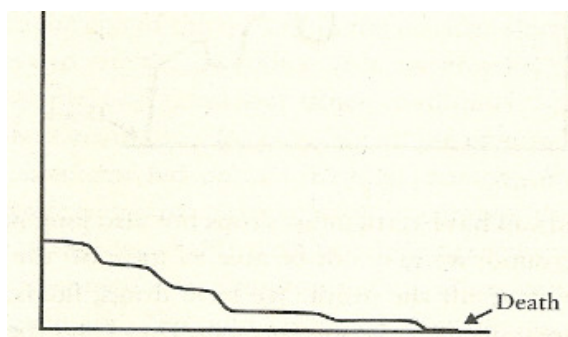
There remains one problem with this way of living. Our reverence for independence takes no account of the reality of what happens in life: sooner or later, independence will become impossible. Serious illness or infirmity will strike. It is as inevitable as sunset. And new question arises: If independence is what we live for, what do we do when it can no longer be sustained?



Medicine and public health have transformed the trajectory of our lives. For all but our most recent history, death was common, ever-present possibility. It didn't matter whether you were five or fifty. Every day was a roll of the dice. If you plotted the typical course of a person's health, it would look like this:



Life and health would putter along nicely, not a problem in the world. Then illness would hit and the bottom would drop out like trap door. Over the years, with medical progress, the bottom has tended to drop out later and later. The advent of sanitation and other public health measures sharply reduced the likelihood of death from infectious disease and traumatic injuries. The modern medicine has pushed the fatal moment of many diseases further outward. People with incurable disease can do remarkably well for a long time after diagnosis. But the disease, while slowed, continues progressing. Death occurs later, but the trajectory remains the same. In a matter of months or weeks, the body becomes overwhelmed. The road that seemed so straight can still disappear, putting a person on a fast and steep slide down. The pattern of decline has changed. Instead of just delaying the moment of the downward drop, our treatments can stretch the descent out until it end up looking less a cliff and more like a hilly road down the mountain.



The road can have vertiginous drops, but also long patches of recovered ground: we may not be able to stave off the damage, but we can stave off death. They enter the hospital looking terrible: Medical attention make it possible for them to make it home – this time weaker and more impaired. They never return to their previous baseline. As illness progresses and organs damage worsens, a person becomes less able to withstand even minor problems. A simple cold can be fatal. The ultimate course is still downward until there finally comes a time when there is no recovery at all. The curve of life becomes a long, slow fade.

The progress of medicine and public health has been an incredible boon – people get to live longer, healthier, more productive lives than ever before. Yet, travelling along these altered paths, we regard living in the downhill stretches with a kind of embarrassment. We need help, often for long periods of time and regard that as a weakness rather than as a new

normal and expected state of affairs. In a sense, the advances of modern medicine have given us two revolutions : we've undergone a biological transformation of the course of our lives and also a cultural transformation of how we think about that course. Decline remains our fate; death will someday come. But until that last backup system inside each of us fails, medical care can influence whether the path is steep and precipitous or more gradual, allowing longer preservation of the abilities that matter most in your life. Most of the Doctors don't think about this. They are good at addressing specific individual problems: colonic cancer, high blood pressure, arthritic knees. But when an elderly woman with high-blood pressure, arthritic knees, and various other fifteen ailments besides – an elderly woman at risk of losing the life she enjoys – and the Doctors hardly know what to do and often only make the matters worse.

The geriatric clinic or the centre for Older Adult Health Clinic geared to people eighty years or older has two things : as much freedom from the ravages of disease as possible and retention of enough function for active engagement in the world. Most doctors treat the disease and figure that the rest will take care of itself. To a geriatrician, though it is a medical problem. People can't stop the aging of their bodies and minds, but there are ways to make it more manageable and to avert at least some of the worst effects.

Researchers at the University of Minnesota identified 568 elders over the age of 75 years who were living independently but were at high risk of becoming disabled because of chronic health problems. The researchers randomly assigned half of them to see a team of geriatricians. The others were asked to see their usual physician. Within 18 months, 10% of both the group had died. But the patients who had geriatric care were a quarter less likely to become disabled. They were 40% less likely to require home health services. The geriatric team saw that arthritis controlled, toe nails were trimmed and meals were square. They looked for worrisome signs of isolation and had a social worker check that the patient's home was safe. Unfortunately the university closed the division of geriatrics. The university said that it simply could not sustain the financial losses. According to a study, the geriatric services cost the hospital \$ 1,350 more per person. Scores of medical centres across US have shrunk or closed their geriatric units. Meanwhile, the twenty-plus members of the proven geriatrics team at the University of Minnesota had to find new jobs. Many geriatric units no longer advertise their geriatric training for fear that they'll get too many elderly patients. But the dismal finances of geriatrics are only a symptom of a deeper reality: people have not insisted on a change of priorities. We want doctors who promise to fix things. But, geriatricians? Who clamours for geriatricians? What geriatricians do – bolster our resilience in old age, our capacity to weather what comes – is both difficult and unappealingly limited. It requires attention to the body and its alterations. It requires vigilance over nutrition, medications, and living situations. And it requires each of us to contemplate the unfixables in our life, the decline we will unavoidably face, in order to make the small changes necessary to reshape it. When the prevailing fantasy is that we be ageless, the geriatrician's uncomfortable demand is that we accept we are not.

Answer to a question: What could be done to ensure that there are enough geriatricians for the surging population? the answer would be “nothing” or it is “too late”! Creating geriatric specialists takes time. In a year, fewer than hundred doctors will complete geriatric training in the United States, not nearly enough to replace the geriatricians going into retirement, let alone meet the needs of the next decade. Geriatric psychiatrists, nurses, and social workers are equally needed, and in no better supply. The situation in countries outside the United States appears to be little different. In many, it is worse. Another strategy would be to direct geriatricians towards training all primary care doctors and nurses in caring for the very old, instead of providing the care themselves. In addition it is recommended to establish courses in every medical school, nursing school, school of social work, and internal medicine training programme at an earliest.

TO BE CONTINUED....

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