

LIVING THE LIFE

INTRODUCTION

“mindsOn”, “mindsOn”, shouted George jumping out of his chair with great euphoria. ‘I got it; Scot, is it not great?’ Scot was unexpectedly taken by surprise seeing George’s face swelling in joy.

They were having breakfast in hotel Ananda (Bliss), in Rishikesh, which is in the foothills of Himalayas. ‘Scot, you know, late last night we discussed about the name which we may have to choose for our application when we succeed in our research to read the mind of other human. I now got the name. The rest is with you. If you succeed in completing your research, then I will design the prototype of the application.

“Congrats, George; It looks appropriate. You have done a great and wonderful job and kicked the ball into my court.” Scot’s response reflected his pressure on his research work.

“Hello; gentlemen. Welcome to Rishikesh. This place is as old as Life in the planet. It is also in the foothills of the sacred mountain range in India. This place is called the gate way to Himalayas and the mount Kailash, the abode of Shiva. From ancient times and till today

thousands of sages and saints lived and are living here practicing yoga and meditation. One can feel and breathe the spirit of yoga and meditation in the air.

Muni Ki Reti ('Sands of Sages') is near Rishikesh although a small town, it is the gate way for Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri and Yamanotri. There are many ashrams here. Kailash Ashram was established in 1880. It is the first and large ashram. This is followed by many founded by Swami Atmananda, and Swamy Sivananda and others.

In 1968, Beatles visited the now closed Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's ashram and even recorded a song here, titled, White Album. They composed nearly 48 songs here. Several other artists, including Mike Love of the Beach Boys, Donovan and Gyp Mills, visited the place to contemplate and meditate.

This place is surrounded by hundreds of Ashrams. They teach yoga and meditation. Seekers of Truth from all over the world come and learn The Way. You can take from here whatever you are seeking such as reading the mind and finding a name for your application."

"What!" Both Scot and George together at the same time shouted and looked at each other. It was just incredible for them to absorb. Having recovered from the shock, they simultaneously asked, "Who are you? Who told you about our project?"

“I am a wandering monk. Please calm down. There is no miracle. All of us met for the first time. What I told was my understanding of your minds. If it tallies with what you are having on your mind, I am not responsible in any way.”

“Still, it is amazing. How can you precisely say what was going in our minds?”

“You know, you both are from some different continent. The other gentleman who is quietly sitting here but watching very closely is from Chennai, in South India and I am from nowhere. All of us are interconnected. Also, there is an electromagnetic field in which every human is positioned in time and space. Through this field everyone is not only connected but also transmit data and messages with enormous speed. This is what our present scientists found out by their researches.

Although we all come from different parts of the planet, we are here for one common purpose. Seeking something is the common purpose. In fact we are all seekers and wanderers to know or achieve something or other. Most humans seek happiness. Some seek The Truth. The rest seek no-thing. In the process of seeking, some tumble upon the great powers of knowing everything, some great achievement hitherto unknown to humanity, and some changing powers of extraordinary results.”

“You are right. We are here to study about ‘mind reading’ as we came to know that there are people here who can do it very well. We want to know and understand how they do it. Can you help us?”

“I do not know whether you are trying to know for the sake of knowing or for the sake of learning. Knowing is one thing and learning is another. The more the clutter one accumulates the more the harm the clutter inflicts. The clutter of knowing everything is no exception. Knowing everything other than knowing one’s *self* leads to nothing. On the other hand if one knows the *self* then everything will be known.”

The monk continued his talking. “I guess your name is Scot. You know Scot; this gentleman from the South is following me like a shadow. He met many successful, happiest, disabled and sick humans from all walks of life such as rich, poor, powerful, mighty, young and old, in different stages of their lives. He watched, talked and moved with all of them.

He found out that each one is endowed with different capabilities and lives with totally different perception, purpose, meaning of life, and also without any purpose or meaning of life. There is nothing common in their living other than physical existential routine necessities such as eating, playing, working, mating, co-creating, sleeping and continuing these activities till last breath in their body.

Finally, he is burdened with one question, ‘whose life is it anyway?’ He now follows me closely to understand and find answers for his seeking. I raised some questions and wanted him to find answers. But, still he is not leaving me. Now, you want to join the band wagon. This is what Bible says: *"Ask and you shall be given, seek and you shall find, knock and the door shall be opened unto you"*. Mathew 9.”

Scot and George became curious. “What are those questions?” They asked in one voice.

The monk thought that one or two questions out of many questions raised by him may help them in their research project. Instead of the monk, I rolled out one by one to them for their information:

‘The mind comes with the body. Although the seat of the mind is still to be located, it occupies by its own nature, the centre of all activities of the whole life. Without the mind there is no life and it becomes totally empty and the body and all its organs and limbs will become dysfunctional. If the brain weighing about three pounds is considered as the seat of the mind, then this becomes one of the claimants along with the brain on the ownership of the life. Lord Krishna in Bhavad Gita says, that *"The mind is the friend of one who has conquered it. But for the one who hasn't done so, the mind is his foe."* (Ch.6.6).

In addition, the heart comes as an organ of the body has direct connection with the life. While the brain and the heart are visible, and physically connected with the entire body by nervous system, circulatory system, and respiratory system, the mind is invisible and more powerful than the other two organs and operates both of them. Then, whose life is it any way?’

‘The soul is where the self dwells. The search for the self leads to the altar of the soul. Humans always live with the materialistic mindset. The materialistic mind’s search will look out for objects which are visible. The seekers therefore find it difficult to reach out to the soul which is invisible. The truth lies beyond the materialistic mindset. Until the seekers reach the dwelling place of the soul either by self realisation or by listening to the feeble voices of the self, it is difficult to determine the ownership of one’s life. Till then, whose life is it anyway?’”

“O.K; these are all philosophical questions. But what Scot is trying to find out is, ‘are there ways and means in scientific terms by which one can read other’s mind?’ You seem to have developed skills of reading the mind. Can we understand, for our research, how could you do it?” George intervened on behalf of Scot after hearing the monk’s questions on Life.

The monk laughed for a moment. He replied saying: “It is neither a secret nor a magic. There are many here. But they do not share for money or trade for

publishing a book. I can tell you this skill is developed over a period of time by observing humans face to face with undisturbed eye contact with strenuous amount of patience and repetitive practices not for this purpose alone but to study the whole head to toe body architecture and its functions.

Also, when the mind is still and free from pollution of any kind and when the body is in total harmony with the mind, then one can read the mind of the other with the aid of one's own mind. Again, I would like to know some clarifications.”

“Why are you researching on this aspect? What is the objective and purpose? What the practitioners do here is not their main activity. As I said earlier, the skill is developed as a by-product of many practices without the practitioner attempting exclusively to focus on it or attempting to master it. This had happened in many scientific research studies as well. It is happening even today.

The mind is the operating system of the whole body. It is a store house of enormous data and information, which are capable of retrieval at any time. It is also the bedrock of emotions. It is the spring board of consciousness. The five sensory arms of the mind determine the development, functioning, living, aging, withering and passing away of humans. Mind reading to a large extent help to understand what is going on in the minds of those who are not able to express to others

clearly on account of many handicaps such as impaired speech or lack of coordination between what is in mind and speech mainly due to cancer, Alzheimer, Parkinson disease, and dementia and accidents etc.”

Scot and George were uprooted from their general perception of monks. They were enthralled by the monk’s understanding of the body, the working of the mind and the depth of the knowledge. As they were collecting their thoughts to reply, three luxury busloads of tourists arrived in Ananda. The entrance and the reception hall suddenly became very noisy filled with hectic activities of the tourists checking their baggages and hand bags running hither and thither making hell of noise.

In the midst of all and before Scot and George collect their thoughts and tried to explain the details and purpose of the study, the monk said ‘Good luck, Goodbye’ and vanished from the scene as he suddenly appeared from nowhere.

Scot and George were totally taken by surprise. Scot said, “What a strange encounter! We do not know how many more surprises are awaiting us in this strange place.”

George nodded his head in total agreement with what Scot said. Later, they proceeded on their own path to discover materials including some humans who practice mind reading for their research work. However, I, from

the South pursued my own research, on ‘the life--whose life is it, anyway?’ on the basis of various issues raised by the wandering monk.

After reaching Chennai, one day, I happened to stumble upon a news item about a centenarian who lives in Nilgiris, now called Udhagamandalam (Ooty) with very active, happy, and healthy life. I immediately thought that this centenarian may provide a lot of insight into the longevity which will help me to find answers for my search on, ‘the life—whose life is it anyway?’

Next week, I went to Nilgiris (Udhagamandalam) previously known as Ootacamund or Ooty for my expedition. There I not only met the centenarian, Dr.Thomas, but also as suggested by Dr.Thomas, I met Justice Ray, also as suggested by Mrs.Ray, I met Mr.Makesh, a planter and industrialist, his son Kiran. I also accidentally met an Entrepreneur and a Potato Farmer, his son Ram, an industrial worker, a landless labourer, a daily wage earner, and an employee of an unorganised sector.

All of them provided their own perspectives on life and what ‘the life’ means to them. The narration of how all of them being sample representatives of various sections of society i.e. ‘Life in Varieties’ either how they ‘live their life’ or how ‘the life live their lives’ are presented in this book. It is up to you to peep into the lives of these gentlemen and find out your own

representative or close to yours who may mirror how exactly they or you are living or not living the life now.

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CHAPTER 1

PLAYERS AND ROLES

**“All the world's a stage,
And all the men and
women merely players;
They have their exits and
their entrances,**

**William
Shakespeare**

THE DOCTOR

“Choose your parents wisely!”

Dr. Thomas replied when I asked him about the secrets of his living actively for 105 years with happiness.

I went to Nilgiris, 332 miles away from Chennai (India) to meet Dr. Thomas to find out the secrets of his long life. A brief news paper report about him as a grand old man who defied age and continue to live actively and happily for 105 years, in a daily news paper prompted

me to go to Nilgiris. This happened in one early morning when I went through the day's news paper after having morning coffee with my wife. Morning coffee and the daily news paper are two inseparable twins and habitual addictions for many. I am not an exception.

Nilgiris mean (Nila-blue and Giris- mountains), Blue Mountains in English. When British ruled India they literally translated the names of many of the Indian cities, towns and villages into English. Many of the names still remain. Nilgiris is one of them which still retain the old name. Although it changed its name to Ooty and now to Udhagamandalam officially, it is called popularly as Nilgiris.

Blue Mountain Express—Nilgiris Express introduced by British as a fast train service between Chennai and Mettupalayam still continue its daily journey carrying thousands of passengers. It is now called Chennai-Udhagamandalam Express. Another train to connect Mettupalayam to Udhagamandalam covering about 21 miles on the hills taking 3.30 hours with a speed of about 7 miles per hour with two engines one in the front and another in the back still going strong carrying sightseeing passengers as a passenger train. Also one can reach Udhagamandalam from Chennai or any other city in India by Air to Coimbatore and from there by Ghats's road up the hills about 58 miles.

When I reached Nilgiris in September, 2014, a very famous hill station, I was stunned to see the entire mountain range about 7245 feet above the sea level covered by gregarious blue bell shaped flowers all over. It was a sight which cannot be imagined or believed unless seen by one's eyes. It was a feast to the eyes. Nature with its infinite glorious colours in the form of blue bell shaped flower called Neela Kurinji (*strobilanthes kunthiana*) painted not one or two bushes but the whole range of the mountains. It is a strange and at the same time nature's sense of timing happens to be an unique phenomenon. It happens exactly once in 12 years.

The flowering once in 12 years has been documented for 180 years. It is reported that the first record of 10 consecutive flowering from 1826 to 1934 were published in the journal of the Bombay Natural History (vol.38) by Mrs. Morrison. However, one could find references in the Sangam Age (200 B.C -300 A.D) of Tamil Literature which suggest that Kurinji used to flower for hundreds of years once in 12 years. Poet Kabilar of the Tamil Sangam Age included Kurinji as one of the 99 flowers listed by him in one of his poems.

In these mountains range, different kinds of tribal are living in various altitudes. They are Todas, Kotas, Kurumbas and Irulas. In higher altitudes Todas and Kotas are living. Below the level of higher altitudes, Kurumbas and Irulas are living. Kattunaickens are

living in lesser altitudes towards Gudalur town. It is reported that nowhere in the world so many tribes are living in an areas close to each other.

I would have missed the nature's bountiful feast to the eyes but for my urge to meet Dr. Thomas to find out the secrets of his long life. Initially I thought that the meeting would end within a few hours and I will go back to my home city next day. But it turned out to be a long journey which he wanted me to travel backwards along with him.

When I went to his house for the first time to meet him, a huge bison was lying happily in front of the entrance gates munching something and eyes half closed. It looked as if she is the security guard to protect Dr.Thomas. I waited for some time a little away wishfully thinking that the bison may move away and I may be able to enter his house. But the bison seemed to have had lost her sense of time. My waiting became useless. I therefore returned back to my hotel planning to try my luck next day.

Luckily for me that day the bison was not there in front of the gates of Dr.Thomas' house. With hesitation and a little bit of knee jerk here and there, I entered the house and rang the door bell. There, someone appeared in full suit looking like a young man of 60 and opened the door. I became more nervous and told him that I came to see Dr.Thomas.

“What you think? I am the same Dr. Thomas whom you want to meet. Please come in and take your seat”.

I went in following him and sat down saying “Thank you, Doctor”.

“Fine, you please wait; I will come and see you.” He went inside. I made a quick survey of his room. It was a consulting room with a table, Doctor’s chair, a small bed on one side of the room and hand wash basin with towel etc. The house itself was a small, modest and old; but kept neat and clean. There were no wall hangings in the room. Even photos were not there. Only one with large letters with golden frame was there as if it was God’s commandments. I went near and I read it loudly because I always liked it so much from the time first I happened to read it, although I am not a medical professional.

“I swear to fulfil, to the best of my ability and judgment, this covenant: I will respect the hard-won scientific gains of those physicians in whose steps I walk, and gladly share such knowledge as is mine with those who are to follow. I will apply, for the benefit of the sick, all measures which are required, avoiding those twin traps of overtreatment and therapeutic nihilism. I will remember that there is art to medicine as well as science, and that warmth, sympathy, and understanding may outweigh the surgeon's knife or the chemist's drug. I will not be ashamed to say "I know not," nor will I fail to call in my colleagues when the skills of another are needed for a patient's recovery.

I will respect the privacy of my patients, for their problems are not disclosed to me that the world may know. Most especially must I tread with care in matters of life and death? If it is given me to save a life, all thanks. But it may also be within my power to take a life; this awesome responsibility must be faced with great humbleness and awareness of my own frailty. Above all, I must not play at God. I will remember that I do not treat a fever chart, a cancerous growth, but a sick human being, whose illness may affect the person's family and economic stability.

My responsibility includes these related problems, if I am to care adequately for the sick. I will prevent disease whenever I can, for prevention is preferable to cure. I will remember that I remain a member of society, with special obligations to all my fellow human beings, those with sounds of mind and body as well as the infirm. If I do not violate this oath, may I enjoy life and art, respected while I live and remembered with affection thereafter. May I always act so as to preserve the finest traditions of my calling and may I long experience the joy of healing those who seek my help.”

It was Hippocrates’ Oath.

The house was overlooking a beautiful green valley with waterfalls flowing from the top of the hills surrounding the valley. One can keep hearing and enjoying the sound of music of the falls if one has the mind, eyes, ear and time sitting in the beautiful flower garden of Dr.Thomas. For a human from Chennai, a concrete jungle, it looked like a fictional paradise. Within a few seconds he came back with his stethoscope. I was stunned.

“Doctor, I did not come here for a check up”. Then I introduced myself and told him about the purpose of meeting him to make everything clear.

“Is it so? It is very strange. Many times the news papers make or unmake news out of nothing. Anyway, please do not mistake me. I always get patients any time either in the day or night. Most of my friends, relatives and other local residents are my patients for many years. All of them visit me for check up. I do it with great passion. This stethoscope had become an extended arm of my body and mind. If you do not mind can we sit out in my garden and talk?”

“That is wonderful, Doctor. Let us go and sit outside”.

We both went out and sat outside and he started talking in a very familiar and most friendly way as if we have been friends for many years. Once what His Holiness Dalai Lama said came to my mind. He said that *“Although we maybe meeting for the first time, I accept everyone as a friend. In truth, we already know one another, profoundly as human beings who share the same basic goals; we all seek happiness and do not want suffering.”*

However, it was surprising to me. It is a rarity to experience such warmth and friendliness to meet and talk to a stranger frankly when every human is afraid of the other even to have eye contact, leave alone to meet and talk to each other in our preset times.

“You wanted me to tell you about the secrets of living for 105 years. The word secret connotes something unusually hidden which will create curiosity. Using this word some very intelligent humans colonise the minds of many others for their selfish purposes. Frankly, there are no secrets. My life is an open book. My habits are very simple whether it relate to eating, drinking, talking, walking, working, exercising, keeping relationships, sleeping, and being a human.

Being is important and being a good and normal human being is much more important. This is my core value of my life. You may be tempted to ask what is good when the thin boundary between good and bad has already getting vanished in the modern times. But to me good means a lot even today. All objects, services, relationships, education, work, behaviour, beliefs, faiths, money, wealth and possessions of any kind, whatever one may need for existential life are subject to the test of this core value. I will accept and follow anything which passes this simple test; if not, I will reject. For me the numbers of years in my life are only arithmetic counting. I tried to live as a good and normal human being and if you ask me, I can confidently say that I have succeeded. To me it looks there is no secret.”

“Doctor, still I feel that there should be some other special factor or factors which helped you to live actively and happily up to 105 right now or more later.

If you help me to get a glimpse of such factors I would be thankful to you and my purpose of visiting you will be fulfilled.”

Before I finished my statement, a graceful lady with a plate containing some snacks and coffee came near to us and took a seat after placing the plate on the central table. She wished me and I stood up and wished her with all my humbleness.

“She is Rose Mary, my soul mate. What I mean is that, she is more than wife to me. Everything around us is not old, but very old. Sometimes I used to say ancient. Our house is century old. Our marriage is eighty years old. Our car is thirty years old. Our house help is twenty five years old, not by age but in our service and has now become a part of our extended family. She is now sixty by age. Our gardener is eighty years old and he is with us for over fifty years.

Likewise our carpenter, electrician and plumber and others who attend to small repair works are very old in our service and continue to be of service to us.” Dr.Thomas still wanted to say something more. But I interrupted him asking “Doctor, what about your children.”

“Oh, they can no longer be called as children. Children never remain as children for ever. This applies to any living species. Humans are no different from them. All have now become grandparents. They are five. One of

them, our son went to America to pursue American dreams, second, daughter followed him, third, son went to London to pursue England dreams, fourth, daughter went to Australia to pursue Australian dreams and fifth, son went to Canada to pursue Canadian dreams. Their children one by one have now become parents of their children and all have now become part of each country which they have adopted to live. We can no longer call ourselves parents. May be perhaps, we are now long distance great grandparents. This is Life.”

At this point Mrs. Rose Mary interrupted.

“We met when we were in Medical College in our second year. Till then I never knew about Thomas. Slowly our friendship grew steadily. I was too naïve to understand what it was. Thomas was a very handsome and intelligent medical student. He started paying more and more attention to me and becoming closer to me as well. We used to come here to Nilgiris, on holidays along with our class mate friends.

Some of my friends were joking that we were in deep love with each other. My class mate girl friends, used to say to Thomas that I always had a special liking for him. The same way the class mate boys used tell me that Thomas always talked about me and he liked me specially. This is the way the friends made us to like each other and it slowly turned out to be a love affair.”

“To put the long love story short we both became Doctors. Dr. Thomas interrupted and said. While I had a passion for medical practice, Dr. Rose Mary developed a passion for social service. We both went to Edinburgh and returned back to India, with four letters added to our already six letters qualifications. After our initial services in Government Hospitals for about a decade, we started our own practice in this place. You know why. This place became very close to our hearts and our love life blossomed only here.

Dr. Rose Mary after looking after five children and our clinic, decided to start her orphanage for poor children. While I am deeply involved in my practice, Dr. Rose Mary had to leave her medical practice and got herself totally dedicated to the orphanage and a school attached to it.”

Dr. Rose Mary continued and said that “our life is filled with full of activities. We provide free medical services to tribal communities in Nilgiris. Dr.Thomas devoted his entire life for medical service in all respects and still continues to do that with great enthusiasm and passion.

He has published 365 research papers, and published 15 books and continues to write with equal passion. He has slowly after many years of medical practice now become a philosopher in his own right. If he starts his philosophical ideas no one can stop him. I sometimes get angry and upset with him.

On such occasions he used to bring down my hot temper by saying that you should have married to Dr. Albert Schweitzer, a physician, philosopher and missionary who served in Africa and realised what would have been the Life”. He always quotes Dr. Albert Schweitzer’s saying that *“Ethics, too, are nothing but reverence for life. That is what gives me the fundamental principle of morality, namely, that good consists in maintaining, promoting, and enhancing life, and that destroying, injuring, and limiting life are evil.”*

Doctor intervened and said, “The fact is that the life is caught always in between pairs of opposites, to start with birth and death. In between birth and death, the journey of life, like water in a river rushes from one side of the bank to the other side of the opposite bank, pushed in between two parallel pairs of opposites. The pairs of opposites are pleasure and pain, love and hate, happiness and sorrow, health and sickness, wealth and poverty, success and failure, power and no power, popularity and loss of popularity, good and bad (evil) and finally positivity and negativity.

Unless unity of consciousness is achieved, the duality keeps impacting everyone without exception. To put it simply, like a coin with two sides, the life has two sides of duality and no one can escape from its clutches at one time or the other in one’s life time. Then, in between the pairs of opposites, whose life is it any way?”

Many asked me many a time, the very same interesting question i.e. ‘Whose life is it any way?’ I have this pet answer and I used to repeat whenever occasion arises.

To me, 'life and philosophy are two sides of the same coin.'

“Doctor, I have some questions. May I request you to spare some time and tell me your views on those questions?”

“Are there any special reasons which made you to live a long life comparing with many others who do not live for a long time?”

“There are no special reasons. Sometimes my wife and I wonder why we are going on living for a long time. Besides our daily living habits such as eating, drinking, exercising-yoga and meditation-walking, talking, working, providing service and sleeping etc. which are strictly on schedule and well planned, we keep our core value i.e. 'being a normal and good human being' as the centre of our life, around which our thoughts, words, actions, are always moulded.”

“What motivated you to live a long life?”

“Other than self-motivation there is no other motivation. Frankly, if one adopts certain principles and core values in life along with health and good environments such as health care, clean water, nutritious food, pollution free air, then perhaps longevity can happen.”

“Do you feel that the way you had lived and live now are the best ways to live a long and happy life?”

“I do not know. Longevity depends on so many factors such as health which again depends on various other

factors, availability of affordable healthcare, healthy environments, and helpful social and political systems for peaceful and safe life to live.”

“Do you have enemies, regrets, unfinished jobs, and unfulfilled desires?”

“No enemies as I treat all of my fellow travellers as my sisters and brothers. Nothing is left unfinished as I complete everything on the very same day as if it is going to be my last day in my life. No unfulfilled desires as I do not desire anything which is not achievable. As I told you our family’s core value protect us from such things as a guardian angel.”

“Lastly, is it your life alone which matters to you in this world?”

“No. My life depends on many people and on many things. As I have realised that everyone and everything is connected, I live a life of co-operative and co-participative life. According to me, living alone for oneself will lead to self-destructive selfishness which I consciously avoid in my life.”

I listened to him with great admiration.

“Both of us have to leave for some work. Let us continue our dialogue later. In the meantime, there is one more centenarian living next door and you may meet him. Perhaps he will tell his secrets of his living long. He is Justice Ray and just completed 101. I will phone him up and you may meet him tomorrow before coming to our home. Thanks. Good Day.” Dr. Thomas and Dr. Rose Mary took leave of me and left.

THE JUSTICE AND THE LAWYER

“Choose happiness today and every day.”

This was the reply, of the former Justice Ray, when I asked him about the secrets of his living actively for 101 years with happiness. He invited me inside his house with warmth and kindness and made me comfortable to sit in the spacious drawing room. He said that Doctor telephoned and told him about me.

“My Lord, you may have some secrets which helped you to have longevity and happiness? I request you to share them with me.”

“Longevity and happiness rarely go together. Frankly, I do not know about any secrets. Many times life’s twists and turns are mysterious. At times, I used to wonder ‘whose life is it any way?’ Every one arrives in the planet alone. Also, every one leaves the planet alone. Both events happen without asking for them to happen. Both the arrival and departure happen on their own terms and at their own time. It is not known where from the life arrives and where it goes after departure. However, in between the arrival and departure, one has very limited time and space left to shape one’s life? During this limited time frame if one adopts holistic

way of navigating one's life then perhaps these two may happen together.”

Justice Ray was very emphatic. He asked me to wait and went inside his house. His house was a mansion. The room was filled with books and tastefully furnished. The house was in the middle of a beautiful garden with many varieties of flowers all around. A stream was passing through near the house and the whistling noise of the running water in the stream continuously provided music to the ears.

The fragrances from various flowers around the house passed through all the rooms which provided a mild and soothing cool air with fragrance throughout the day and night. There were three swanky cars parked in the garage in front of the mansion. There were helpers and servants all round doing their work. The wall hangers and large number of photographs in the room showed how action filled life was led by Justice Ray. It looked abundance had smiled on Justice Ray and his family.

He came back to the room along with a beautiful and young looking lady. He introduced her to me saying ‘she is Mrs. Rena, my wife’. She is younger to me by ten years. You know, it is not chivalry on the part of men to announce the age of a woman. But you are here talking about age. That is why I choose to tell her age. Mrs. Rena may throw some light. I stood up and wished both with a bowed head.

“Justice and I married seventy six years back. Our marriage was settled by our parents and in present day’s terms, an arranged marriage. Both of us studied law together. But till we got married we hardly met privately or dated. Our marriage worked out well with some kind of bickering, tantrums, and fights in the initial periods of our marriage.

We have two sons. Both are Doctors. One chose to settle in U.S.A. and another in U.K. Both are specialists: one in Neurology and another in Plastic Surgery. We are now great grand parents to our sons’ four children”. Mrs. Rena opened up and told about their family tree.

Justice became impatient and intervened. He asked Mrs. Rena “Do you have any secrets of long, happy, and active life to tell? That is what this gentleman wants to know.”

Mrs. Rena said, “No secrets. Life comes and goes on its own course. Here and there one may consciously or unconsciously make special efforts, adjustments, and choices. If all these are done intelligently and purposefully, then life moves smoothly to enhance and increase the life’s expectancy.”

I was impressed with what Mrs. Rena told us. But justice had some other view points and commenced his judgements.

“The life as a journey never moves on straight lines. There are curves, ups and downs, hairpin bends, pit

holes, bridges, and boundaries. One will have to carefully cross over all the hurdles to reach the destination or the end of life. Accidents may or may not happen in any form. But sicknesses in one form or other keep hitting every one without sparing anybody. Life threatening sicknesses randomly attack someone or other in the course of the life.

While the birth by itself is mystical in nature, the death is an inevitable reality. The Law of Nature is uniformly fair to everyone as far as the death is concerned. No interpretation of the Law of Nature is possible either to shorten or extend the life. Both are determined by the Law of Nature in space and time of life in which it is positioned. Therefore, the question of ‘whose life is it any way?’ is repeatedly asked but remained unanswered correctly”.

I asked: “if that is so, why a very large percentage of humans globally have very short longevity while a very small, so to say a miniscule percentage of humans have long life?.”

“This riddle is still staring at the faces of scientists. Religious scriptures, however, are stuck to their own interpretation of life either saying that it is God’s will or *maya* (illusion). To a large extent scientists helped humans to live long and longevity is increasing by and large year after year covering some segment of total human population. But longevity depends on many factors. Similarly longevity alone is not the purpose and

meaning of life. Longevity brings along with it many unexplainable misery to many, to some unresolved health problems and the rest active and happy life. All these issues lead to the same question, ‘whose life, then, is it any way?’”

“What is really the correct path in this Internet Age for a long, happy, and active life?” I asked.

“All paths in any age whether Stone Age or Internet Age led only to one destination. The destination is Truth. The Truth does not make any difference between short or long life. As the life, the longevity and happiness still remain in mystery. The reasons are manifold. Some are mystical and many are manmade. However, as far as we both are concerned we lived our lives on one principle. The principle is that *‘live the life only in one way (i.e. holistic way) and not in many other ways for the sake of living’*. We both stood steadfast come what may and we have not lost anything in our lives. On the other hand we are successful in all our efforts and actively happy in our lives with abundance. You may, perhaps, call this principle a secret.”

When we were talking, a bearer brought a tray filled with snacks and hot coffee pot with three cups and saucers. Mrs. Rena continued saying, “please help yourself; you know while justice pursued his career as a successful lawyer along with me in the same court, the moment he decided to take up justiceship when it was offered to him, I decided to quit my practice as a lawyer

only to uphold our principle of living. This was done to avoid conflict of interest.

Later I decided to devote my time to writing. Today I am a columnist and a published lawyer on law matters. You know, among all manmade codes of conducts, the law is very complicated, oppressive one which makes itself by the authors subject to any kind of interpretation to twist the natural justice. This way of living keeps me going well even today and my purpose is to educate humans on law which affects them in their day today life".

At this point, justice intervened; “we were discussing about longevity and happiness. If you take longevity, humans are witnessing the impact of modern medical care systems’ help to a large extent to prolong the life expectancy globally wherever such medical care systems are made available. But on the other side of the spectrum of human life, there is no system available to provide happiness to old age humans. Happiness is left to them entirely to find by their own ways and means if at all any left behind their long life. This is the major paradox of longevity and happiness.

Similarly, wherever the modern medical systems are not available, humans still live long, due to various living choices they make and the availability of safe environment. In these situations one will find that longevity and happiness go together defying the general belief. This is another paradox of longevity and

happiness. If one looks closely at the paradoxes of life, they reveal, that no matter whatever the humans achieve in science and technology, there had been and there are and also there will be huge gap between longevity and happiness. In spirituality, it is said that *'Truth was there, are there and will be there'*. In the same way the gap between longevity and happiness will continue to exist."

Mrs. Rena being a writer she had the last word on this matter. She said, "I too was asked many times by journalists, "Madam, you and your husband justice Ray live a successful, happy, and long life with abundance. Can you from your life's experiences tell us 'whose life is it anyway'?"

You know, this is what I used to tell them: no human is the same as the other. Each one is endowed with a brain, heart, mind, soul, and body of one's own. Other than the fact they all belong to one race i.e. human race, each one is different from the other. This does not mean that everyone is an island by oneself. Total dependence, independence, inter-dependence, and co-existence with existential co-operation are in-built in every human and also necessary for living a life. Inter connection with every other human and all other living organism to provide ecology to sustain life is not only necessary but also the basic core aspect of living.

Life is being lived not entirely by any living organism by itself but by life's own nature and dharma. Humans

are no exception. Only when this riddle is unfolded with intellect then only one can say that it is resolved. Till then you judge for yourself ‘whose life is it any way?’

“Lord and Madam, I have in this context, some questions to be asked. May I have your permission to ask those questions?”

Both said “Go ahead.”

“Are there any special reasons which made you to live a long life comparing with many others who do not live for a long time?”

“We do not know. Frankly, there are no special reasons. May be the correct choices we made throughout our life regarding the day to day living habits, positive attitudes we developed over time, healthy environmental habitation, caring for health, good relationships, rising children with discipline, taking care of not only our family alone but others as well equally in our living with love and compassion might have helped us to live long.

We also continue to live with our family’s core values such as ‘choose happiness today and every day’; ‘The life will have to be lived only in chosen way (holistic way) and not in any other way for the sake of living’. Perhaps these values including being spiritual in living also must have contributed for our living happily for a long time.”

“What motivated you to live a long life?”

“Care for not only our life but any life. Enrich life with optimal level of achievements and personal contribution towards betterment of life for many humans.”

“Do you feel that the way you had lived and live now is the best way to have a long and happy span of live?”

“Long and happy span of life depends on many factors. Most of them are personal and internal matters. Some of them are external factors such as peaceful and friendly states’ policies, healthy and safe environments, and finally social and economic conditions for human life.”

“Do you have any regrets, enemies, unfinished jobs, and unfulfilled desires?”

Mrs. Rena who was simply nodding her head in agreement with all the statements made so far by Justice, now intervened and said, “Look, it looks as if you want to X-Ray our life and see how it looks. However, we don’t want you to go with disappointment. Frankly, as we said earlier, our day will start with ‘happiness’ and end with ‘happiness every day’. We therefore do not have any regrets as we never had insatiable desires. As we treat everyone as we treat ourselves we do not have enemies. No unfinished job as we treat every day as the last day of our life”.

“Is it your life alone that matters to you in living your life in this world?”

“No. We live because others live. We receive not only from other humans but also from every other organism. We therefore have to give back and enjoy giving. We live not only for us but also for others as well.”

At this point, the justice’s mobile sounded an alarm. He answered, ‘Mahesh, is it a landslide in your estate or in the public road? How the accident happened? How is Kiran? Did he get hurt? If it had happened in your estate, then it is a different matter. You, first, ensure that the victims are safe. The rest is simple. But if someone had lost life then it becomes a serious matter. You may engage Vincent as your lawyer as he is the best in dealing with such accidents. Do not worry. Everything will be fine’.

Then, Mrs. Rena told me that ‘if you have time, please meet Mr. Mahesh too. He is a planter; he owns about three thousand five hundred acres of coffee and tea estates here. He is a very interesting person and also he has now become a very successful industrialist. He will talk to you about many current affairs with a lot of insight’. Justice nodded his head approving the gesture.

Seeing their swift body language, I said, ‘Thank you Lord and Madam. I will certainly meet Mr. Mahesh

and talk to him as well'. I took leave of them and left for my hotel.

THE PLANTER AND INDUSTRIALIST

My hotel was situated in Fern Hill about two miles from Justice Ray's mansion. It was midday. The sun was slowly coming out of the dark clouds. The cool breeze of the hills bathed in the mist was passing through with gentle touch on my face and on my body which was covered by woollen clothes. I felt the freshness of the mind with the swirling of the air with wonderful fragrance of the flowers of the various kinds of plants and trees.

There was absolute silence. The silence was eloquent in impacting the mind. The stillness and fragrance filled with mild musical sound around me made me to jump with joy. I heard the sound of OM all around which I used to chant in my daily prayers. Nature's cosmic music appeared to me nothing but OM, the nature's celestial song. The sound of OM mesmerised me. For a moment, I felt that I was in a heavenly abode and there was no one else other than me in the vast cosmic arena. The aloneness was felt only in my physical form. But I was feeling the wholeness in which I was a tiny part. It

was a flash of a moment which I never had experienced earlier other than in my prayers.

I was told by the practitioners of spirituality that this kind of intuitive flash of moment happens once in a while in any one's life only when the mind is totally empty and spiritually preoccupied. When I experienced this episode I was for a moment in an incredible feeling of happiness and freedom. I felt that my body was shaking. All this happened in a split second. When all these were happening, I felt suddenly that I was dropped from above to reality and realised that I was walking on the road to my hotel.

Suddenly I saw a luxurious swanky car rushing fast towards me chased by two motor cyclists and a crowd. Taken by surprise and without knowing what to do, I went to the middle of the road to stop the car. But the motor cyclists overtook the speeding car and stopped it by parking their motor cycles in front of the car. The crowd came behind running and when the car was stopped they surrounded the car and shouted at the driver of the car to get down. One pulled him out of the car and shouted, 'are you mad! How could you kill that man? We won't let you go till the police come and arrest you'.

The police did not come. In the meantime, the crowd surrounded the driver and were to slap him. I intervened to save him. He looked young, restless, rich by his attire, with gold chain round his neck, hand,

diamond studded golden watch in another hand, well trimmed beard, and long hair. He also looked arrogant and brave enough to hit back with tough muscles. Shockingly I noticed a powerful yet small pistol hanging in his waist belt.

I asked him politely, ‘what happened?’ His answer was dry. ‘A mad man came in a bicycle and hit my costly car. I got down and slapped him. As it was a slope he rolled down and got himself hurt. What can I do for his mistake?’ The crowd became restless and tried to pierce him into pieces.

At this point the police arrived and stopped them after saluting the young man. ‘Did you all know that he is the son of the largest planter Mr. Makesh in this place and he himself a big industrialist? All of you please disburse. We know how to deal with this accident. We were told that the man who got involved in this accident had already been taken to district hospital and we will see that best treatment is given to save his life and all expenses are met by our planter’. The helpless crowd obeyed and later disbursed. The police asked for forgiveness for what had happened, saluted the young man and left the scene giving way for the young man to proceed on his own way.

Next day morning I went to Mahesh’s palace. It was on the tip of the hill overlooking the valley surrounded by pine, silver oak, and eucalyptus trees. From the portico, I looked around the palace. It was a feast to my

eyes. Varieties of flowers in varieties of wonderful colours enchanted me. After climbing ten steps from the portico I noticed that the huge main door was kept open. But I hesitated to enter as I felt knee jerks in my body. A gentleman suddenly appeared and asked for my credentials. After the formal questioning was over he said, 'please come in.' I did not know whether he was Makesh and how to address him. However, he led me to the visitors' room which was about twenty feet away from the main door. He asked me to sit on a giant velvet sofa. I sat and sunk into it. 'My master will come and see you' he muttered mechanically and moved away methodically.

After some time, may be thirty minutes later, a tall, gigantic, well suited, tough looking guy with neatly trimmed moustache appeared and said 'good morning' in metallic voice. I stood up and said, 'good morning, Sir'. Before we finished our mutual formal introduction, two butlers brought two sets of plates filled with fruits, biscuits and high flavoured coffee in gold plated cups and saucers and placed on the ivory inlaid black wood side tables.

"Please enjoy. 'Enjoy, enjoy today, every day'. This is the philosophy of my life. The fruits are plucked from my fruit gardens, the biscuits are made in my biscuit factory and the coffee is grown especially for my family alone in my coffee estates and roasted and ground freshly every time at home. In short all are homemade'.

The life size ego was in full screen in front of me. The fresh aroma of just ground coffee was enveloping the entire hall.

“Thank you so much, Sir. When I met Justice, his wife suggested that I should meet you and talk to you about ‘The Life’. I came from Chennai to meet the centenarians here and find out the secrets of their long span of life”. I replied with great effort with my voice shaking.

“Good; you are welcome. But, I am not a centenarian. Also, none in our family ever attained that kind of status. We live our lives to enjoy and we strongly believe that life is to enjoy at any cost. In short, I would say that one should live the life and not to allow the life to live one’s life”.

I was bit confused after hearing his sermon. Suddenly, he turned towards the other side of the hall and said, “Come along, Kiran, meet our guest. Gentleman, Kiran is my only son. He has just come here from abroad to visit us on a holiday. He had finished his post graduation from Stand Ford and had taken up a job in a multinational conglomerate in US”.

“Good morning. How long will you be here?” I asked in a most mechanical way.

“Oh! I will be leaving tomorrow. It was very hard for me even to spend a week here. I hate India. Thank God, I am lucky to live abroad”. Kiran came into the room

with his iPod on one hand, smart phone on the other and ear phones on his ears. He was conversing with all his gadgets attached to his body, looking at his iPod all the time and abruptly left the room ignoring two living humans sitting on the sofa.

I felt how true the old saying is i.e. 'Like father like son'. They live only to enjoy, come what may.

After he left, a nagging thought was bothering me. Slowly my mind was able to recollect and connect that Kiran was the same boy who drove the swanky car and hit a man on the road which created a hue and cry when I was going to my hotel, the previous day. I could not recognise him immediately as he was in different kind of attire with a blue suit and a black sun glass. Good, I did not speak anything about the incident either to the father or son. However, whether the man who was hit by Kiran was alive or dead was not known at that time. Later, I came to know that accident victim died in the hospital. A brief appearance of the boy on the stage revealed his and his family's values and life styles.

However, we continued our dialogue. "It appears to be an extraordinarily happy life you and your family lead in Nilgiris. Can I take it that 'life is what how one makes it?' In other words, 'it is your life and you live your life as you like'."

Mahesh, answered in an aristocratic style. “We do not care for any restrictions or regulations. We also do not believe in any kind of denial either in our habits or life styles. We always like to live our lives with total freewill, freedom and enjoyment. If anything comes in the way we will not hesitate to eliminate it. This is not our philosophy but our way of life. My son is fourth generation. So far we have succeeded in accumulating wealth generation after generation.”

“Sir, you know the recent exponential development in science and technology is altering our lifestyles and also changing the ways we had lived our lives in earlier days. Had they impacted your life in any way?”

“Yes; of course. Only now I am realising the impact. We all went abroad and took short courses in various disciplines from very famous universities. Also we continued to visit at least four to five times a year. We have connections and friends all over the world. But we maintained our root here intact. With my son, I am afraid that all that we have preserved over the generations might get totally lost and vanished. It is not his mistake. May be, as you said, the impact of modern life has its own ways. You may wonder, how? I will share my family secrets with you.

When I was a child, I was petted and spoiled. I was called troublesome child. When I went to primary, middle, and high school, I was called a bully. When I went to college I was the only one who drove a car in

the whole college. But I was called a show off and arrogant. When I became adult my sole purpose was to enjoy life. I was chasing girls after girls. My friends called me 'Casanova'. Till middle age I did not get married.

Once I was travelling to England. In the flight I met a pretty air hostess. During the entire lap of the journey, Nancy paid extra attention to me. First I thought every first class passenger would be given special attention. By the time the flight reached London, I realised that Nancy's attention was more than normal. I took her address, phone etc. and gave mine. Thereafter only to meet and talk to her I took many trips to London without any purpose.

Later, we kept on meeting many times in the mid air and travelled to many exotic tourists' centres in USA and Europe and spent time together. I wanted to carry on like this. My father's wish was that I should marry a girl from our own clan, with equal wealth and status. He reminded me again and again about our accumulated wealth for three generations, our religion being Hindu and Nancy's Christianity and total incompatibility between us.

But Nancy was not prepared to carry on like this unless I marry her. She was very clear from the beginning that she loved me dearly and I should marry her. I loved her but I was not prepared to marry her. Small and big tantrums and fights followed endlessly. Finally

Nancy attempted suicide with a note that I was responsible for her end. I was shattered. I did not know what to do. I saved her from the deadly situation and later I married her secretly in a church. My life took such an unexpected turn which impacted not only my life and our entire family.

My father was shattered and my mother could not stand this occurrence and she fell sick. While my father slowly reconciled himself, my mother was not able to recover from the shock and sickness and finally died.

However, Nancy and I moved away from Nilgiris to Bangalore, now called Bengaluru and continued to live there. Days, months and years passed. When my son was born my father refused to attend a grand naming ceremony celebration of my son in Bengaluru. However, we were visiting Nilgiris once in a while to look up my Dad. He was slowly sinking in health with heart problems resulted in by-pass surgery, and seriously aggravated diabetic conditions. When his conditions worsened I took him to U.S.A for treatment. I tried all the possibilities at my command to save his life. Finally doctors told me that ‘there is no chance but you can take him to India and keep praying to your family deity to see some miracle happens’. After we returned to Nilgiris he lived for only few weeks and died. He was 56 when he died.

After my father, the entire family responsibility and managing huge tea estates fell on my shoulder. I moved

back to Nilgiris. But my wife stayed back in Bengaluru as she did not like to live in mountains. My son went for higher studies to U.S.A. After graduating, he joined a multinational conglomerate. Slowly he developed hatred towards India and liked living conditions in U.S. He took U.S. citizenship and settled there. He made it clear that he will not return to India and live. Most of the time, I wonder what am I going to do with all my wealth and large tea estates which my family kept on acquiring and accumulating for four generations.

After all these incidents which I used to call accidents in life happened, with all the abundance around me, I slowly developed a feeling of emptiness in my life at 48. I was told to search ‘whose life is it any way?’ by a spiritual Guru. To me it is only mine. And I live, as I like to live. I live only for me and not for anyone or anything. To enjoy pleasure and derive happiness are my purpose of living. Living is to enjoy. The rest such as health, exercise, diet, religion, spirituality, longevity, and service mean to me nothing. Living for the day and looking out for adventure and pleasure at any cost is my way of living. I live my life only in my way and not in any other way. But all of a sudden the feeling of emptiness follows me like a wretched shadow wherever I go and whatever I do and stare at me with a threatening look.”

“Did you not try to find a way out?” I intervened.

“One day, Dr. Thomas invited me for a lunch in his house with one nameless wandering monk when he visited Nilgiris sometime back. Doctor introduced me to the monk saying, ‘Mahesh is a gentleman, a very rich, wealthy for four generations, well educated, married with a boy, a big planter of this place and lately a successful industrialist in South India. So to say he is young of 50 years, and with all abundance one can envy, he always keep saying that of late he is feeling of emptiness in his life. He has very strong views on life. He thinks ‘my life is mine only’ and he will live his life as he likes. But ‘emptiness’ has crept in now and he is struggling with the burden of his own thought. Can you help him?”

The monk as usual laughed like a child with total innocence. He said that “Mr. Mahesh, please contemplate on the following aspects of life and find out what happens:

‘The journey of life commences once the life secures the body and comes out of the mother’s womb which the humans celebrate, as birth of a baby. The purpose is unknown other than the co-creation by the humans for multiplication of their species. However, the path ahead of the journey has never been a royal path ever. Not one path but many will unfold. All are with many swifts, turns, and pitfalls. Which to choose and where to go will always remain elusive. Then, how can one say

that it is my life and I live only in my way and not in any other way?’

‘The life’s purposes are manifold. The main purpose is to co-create and multiply. Others are different for different people. The fulfilment of the main purpose is in- built mechanism as in the case of other species as well. But for other purposes, one needs to take cognizance of other lives’ existence, contributions, interactions, and interconnections. In addition, nature, time, basic elements, and other species’/organisms’ co-existence will have to be recognized and respected. One will have to be a part of it all, if not be of it all. Then whose life is it any way?’”

Mahesh told me that “the wandering monk never waited for reply. He suddenly vanished from the scene. Mahesh continued saying that “I am now contemplating on these aspects of life. Now I am struggling to find answer. My old thought about ‘emptiness’ is slowly vanishing”.

Mahesh sounded wiser at this point of time. He did not know that the same wandering monk whom I followed him in Rishikesh had given similar questions to me to meditate and find answers to these questions.

I wished him good luck and took leave of him saying Goodbye, deriving comfort in knowing that one more human is now in search of answers for the wandering monk’s questions.

THE ENTREPREUNER

Next day morning after having a good night's sleep, I woke up fresh and went to the coffee shop in the hotel to have my breakfast. Half full with tourists, the coffee shop was busy. I looked around and chose a window table to have the panoramic view of the hills around the hotel and quietly sat there for my breakfast.

A lady was sitting alone in the next table. I wished her saying 'good morning' while I was going to fetch some juice and roasted bread. She acknowledged saying 'good morning'. She followed me to the central table where the breakfast items were spread and started her conversation with me.

“Are you a tourist from south?”

“Not exactly; I came here from Chennai to meet one centenarian to collect information about him to find out what made him to live for long years.”

“Quite interesting; I am Urmila. I came here to have some rest and peace before I get back to my routine whirlwind work in Silicon Valley. Anyway, are you doing any research on these matters?”

We took some items for our breakfast and came back to my table and she also joined me in the same table. While having our breakfast we continued our conversation.

“I am not a researcher. But after I started following the famous wandering monk, one day he asked me ‘whose life is it any way’? I did not know what to say. I asked for his enunciation. He ordered me to go around and find out the answer. It happened some years back. Still I am trying; yet I did not find the answer.” I replied.

“These things happen only in India and not anywhere else. It looks strange. To me it looks that there are no answers for such questions. Therefore people generally avoid going there to find answers.”

“Madame, are you a foreigner?”

“No. I was born and brought up in Chennai. I was the only child for my parents. I left home to study in U.S.A. Thereafter I was preoccupied with my studies without having any time to reflect or realise what was happening around me in my life and to my Mom and Dad in Chennai. Quickly after I finished my Doctoral programme I was offered a big position with fat package in number one computer company.

I served them for about fifteen years. Then I formed my own start up company with the help of venture capitalists. I worked for sixteen hours a day and became workaholic. I did not have time to visit my parents. They were left alone to mend their ways by themselves. One day I got a message that my father passed away. On that day I was in Geneva conducting a seminar. I could not attend even my father’s funeral.

This incident shook me badly. I started looking at my life in a different perspective. I find relevance in your question i.e. ‘whose life is it anyway?’” Urmila poured out her story with a lot of emotion and pain.

She said that her company was doing very well. One day she received an offer from one of the midsized company for a merger. “That was the time I was in severe turmoil; thinking about my life. Initially I was not for it. After series of meetings and discussions I offered it for sale.

Finally I sold my company for US \$150 million. That was huge and I never expected. After this happened, my confusion and severe mental agony started to bother me. In one hand I had huge amount of money and on the other hand my life looked empty and lonely. I lost touch with my roots and close kith and kin. There was no one even to appreciate and say good words. I did not know from where to start over again and also where to go. I never thought about my life and relationships earlier as I was blind to reality and pursued a workaholic life so far.”

I thought of changing the subject to ease the situation. She did not allow me and continued to talk. However, I intervened and asked her what brought her here to Ooty now. She pulled out a sheet of printed paper and asked me to go through it. I read it quickly and told her that I and the whole country are proud of you.

The paper she gave me explained briefly her qualifications, achievements and contributions she made in her life. She was graduated from the Indian Institute of Technology in Chennai in the year 1986. After completing Masters Programme in Massachusetts Institute of Technology, she completed her Doctoral Programme in Harvard University.

After thirty years of her leaving home now she came back to Chennai to donate US\$15 million to Indian Institute of Technology her alma mater. She donated the amount in a simple function without any pomp and show a few days back in Chennai. This was the note circulated by the Indian Institute of Technology in the small function.

Now she is in Ooty, to spend some time peacefully and to rest her restless mind to quietude.

“Madame, your achievements are great and your contributions are much more inspiring not only to the students of the Indian Institute of Technology but also to the younger generation as a whole.” I congratulated her.

She was not very much concerned about what I said. Something was worrying her. She started sharing her worries and concerns.

“Look, all these, now appear to me nothing. Till now I was like a machine, you may call robot. Only now I realised that I should have been first of all, a normal

human being which I was not in all these years. Adding a few letters after my name as great qualifications and huge cash on my lap brought only emptiness at the end. I have none to share; none to interact. I have now become a stranger or alien in my own birth place where generations lived in close proximity and also closeness in all respects.”

It was very sad for me to hear her personal loss of her own self identity and dignity of living together in an interconnected holistic way of living. To make her cool down and divert her attention I told her that, “Life is a cooperative venture. It is also an interdependent and interconnected voyage. When these merge together a state of unity consciousness will emerge but not solely independent of the other.” This is what the wandering monk told me once.”

“What, wandering monk? Where can I see him?” She was spontaneous in asking this question.

I told her that, he would not stay in one place and he has no permanent place of staying. He does not have disciples and ashrams. He comes and goes on his own unscheduled plans.

Urmila has achieved many things in life. But she is still lack something which is unknown to her. She seemed to me an unusual seeker of truth.

Later she shared some of her personal lifestyle issues and took leave of me abruptly.

THE FARMER

After three days of wandering around Nilgiris, I went into a tea estate to have a panoramic view of the grand tea gardens. I was walking through a small pathway which is the only footpath for the labourers to use it for their work in these tea gardens. There are so many small such pathways throughout the tea gardens. Although they are called tea gardens there are gardens of about 50 to 100 acres to about 3000 to 4000 acres or even bigger estates.

Tea is cultivated in hill slopes like in terrace cultivation, where shade trees are planted in advance. Seeds are shown in the germination beds, and the saplings were transplanted to the garden. The garden is regularly hoed and weeded so that tea bush grows without any hindrance. There are slopes and curves all around. One single tea plant is a bush of many branches trimmed and pruned repeatedly for the growth of fresh leaves.

Manures and fertilizers are generally used in tea gardens. Oil cakes and green manures are also used in many cases. Pruning of the plant is an essential part of tea cultivation. It helps maintaining the proper shape of tea bushes to a height of about one meter with about the same diameter. The aim of pruning is to have new shoots bearing soft leaves in plenty and to facilitate the plucking of leaves by the labourers from the ground.

Plucking of two leaves with the bud is the specialised way of plucking by the trained labourers. Then, these leaves are dried, processed and packed for sale. The whole process is labour intensive and mostly women are engaged in plucking the leaves while men are engaged in other processing operations. I was standing in one small path way in the middle of a large tea garden of about 2500 acres. The entire hills range looked like one extensive giant area to the extent of eyes could see covered with dark green carpet as if to protect the hills from the misty air and pregnant clouds. The cool air after passing through the fresh leaves and buds in the tea garden all over swiftly went on washing my face with tea flavour. There was absolute silence. There were not even the birds' chirping sounds. At this point of time I was stunned to see the sea of green cover all over. When I was immersed in such an extraordinary sight, the question of 'emptiness' talked about by Makesh, came to my mind.

I felt sorry for Makesh. May be if he decides to free himself from the burden of accumulating wealth and selfish adventurous pleasure seeking style of living, emptiness may not bother him now. But it means different things to different people.

Can we call zero particularly the space inside the circle which is '0' as emptiness? As it stands zero means nothing. But if it is added with any numerical number then it acquires value and meaning. To make it clear, 0

acquires if it is added to 1, 2, -- 9 say 10, 20 and 90 and so on. The more 0s we add, the more value it acquires such as 100, 1000, 10000, 100000-- 200, 2000--900, 9000.etc. and so on.

Lao-Tzu the Chinese philosopher in Tao De Ching says that,

**“The Tao is empty but
inexhaustible,
bottomless, the ancestor of it
all”.**

Similarly, the concept of ‘sunya’ in India has also expressed same views. It is reported that ‘the Indian scholar Pingala (200BC) used binary numbers in the form of short and long syllables (the latter equal in length to two short syllables), a notation similar to Morse code. Pingala used the Sanskrit word śūnya explicitly to refer to zero.

The earliest text to use a decimal place-value system, including a zero, the *Lokavibhāga*, a Jain text surviving in a medieval Sanskrit translation of the Prakrit original, which is internally dated to AD 458. In this text, *śūnya* ("void, empty") is also used to refer to zero.

The origin of the modern decimal-based place value notation can be traced to the *Aryabhatiya* (c. 500),

which states *sthānāt sthānam daśaguṇam syāt* "from place to place each is ten times the preceding".

Śūnyatā, (Sanskrit meaning "Emptiness" or "Voidness"), is an important Buddhist teaching which claims that nothing possesses essential, enduring identity because everything is interconnected in a chain of co-becoming and in a state of constant flux. In various schools of Buddhism, Śūnyatā is a key concept used to express that everything one encounters in life is empty of absolute identity, permanence, or an indwelling 'self' because everything is inter-related and mutually dependent—never wholly self-sufficient or independent. The importance of this insight is especially emphasized in Mahayana Buddhism.

His Holiness Dalai Lama says that,

“One of the most important philosophical insights in Buddhism comes from what is known as the theory of emptiness. At its heart is the deep recognition that there is a fundamental disparity between the way we perceive the world, including our own experience in it, and the way things actually are. In our day-to-day experience, we tend to relate to the world and to ourselves as if these entities possessed self-enclosed, definable, discrete and enduring reality. For instance, if we examine our own conception of selfhood, we will find that we tend to believe in the presence of an essential core to our being, which characterises our individuality and identity as a discrete ego, independent of the physical and mental elements that constitute our existence. The philosophy of emptiness reveals that this is not only a fundamental error but also the basis for attachment, clinging and the development of

our numerous prejudices. According to the theory of emptiness, any belief in an objective reality grounded in the assumption of intrinsic, independent existence is simply untenable. All things and events, whether 'material', mental or even abstract concepts like time, are devoid of objective, independent existence."

When I was walking through the small pathways in the large tea garden, all these thoughts were clouding my mind. After walking for some distance, I came to hit an open space with one single orange tree standing in the middle of it. When I came near to it I saw about 6 to 7 men sitting in two wooden benches and relaxing. As soon as I approached them all stood up and requested me to sit in one of the benches. Although this is a customary practice, I was moved and sat in one of the bench. I offered my greetings and introduced me why I am here in Nilgiris.

The oldest gentleman introduced one by one starting first with himself. He said "I am a potato farmer and my name is irrelevant. The others are industrial labourer, small shop owner, daily wage earner, carpenter, plumber, and my son. All of us have our own names. But we are truly nameless, faceless and voiceless lot of the society. We have nothing of our own other than our children. We raise children not to inherit our wealth but to work along with us to share our family burden and to take care of us when we become old. We all live to work. Work makes us live. What we know is to work, work and nothing but work. This is the way our lives are lived by the life.

Among us, my son alone can claim that he is educated as he has a degree, the so called symbol of education. We are all called uneducated. By what name one can call those who have degrees but become inhuman? If anyone knows to speak and write in his own language, then he is also educated. We all know this. But still we are called uneducated which hurts us badly.

My son, however, chose to become a potato farmer instead of going to a petty job in a town. He is the fourth generation of potato farmer. My great grandfather was a potato farmer, followed my father, myself and now my son. People say a lot about development and modern life. But we remain and live as our great grandfather was remaining and living.”

His son Ram intervened and asked “Sir, why are you chasing centenarians?”

“I am researching on ‘The Life’ to find out ‘Whose life is it any way’?” I replied.

“Is it not crazy? If you ask all of us, we will all say in one voice that ‘it is neither our life nor any one’s life.’ We all live for the sake of living without any option. Only to live we work, eat, mate, produce children, and die. If we have something to eat, then we eat. If nothing is available we starve. We always work for others. We produce potatoes, rice, all other grains, pulses, raise cows, buffaloes, and produce milk, but we will never have enough to eat or drink as all of them go to others who have money. We are the uncared for and unduly neglected lot of any society. The tragedy is we are the majority but we suffer the most. By the by, you said

you are meeting centenarians. My father may be a candidate for you to talk to him about his life.”

“Yes. Sir, what is your age?” I turned to the potato farmer and asked him as his son suggested.

“I do not know my age. You know, we have no records and we do not count years to determine our age. We count only events. When we live only for this day, we do not have anything to think of next day. However, my son reconstructed my age from the events which I recollected and told him from my memory which he later correlated with the recorded list of such events. According to him my age is 107.”

“Great. Wonderful.” I responded with great amazement. I immediately jumped with my question to the grand old man, ‘What is the secret of your long life.’”

“No secrets. I do not know why all my parts are working well still. All my teeth other than two are intact. Eyes are O.K but for dullness. Ears are working but a little short of hearing. I breathe well, walk well and work with my hands, eat less, and sleep well”.

I was totally taken by surprise and amazement. I felt that this potato farmer may be a rare of the rarest phenomenon ever one can encounter. I was therefore tempted to ask him some more details.

“Is there anyone amongst you who is a competitor to you in age?”

“Why one? There are some older to me and some others younger to me who are closer to me by what you call age”.

I was thrown out of my balance when I heard his answer. After recovering from the shock, I told him that “there must be some reasons if not secrets for living the life with long life span. What are those common factors among such people?” ”

His son Ram answered my doubts. “Sir, I want to know why you are chasing people with long life span and the centenarians. You may be surprised because you think long span of life is possible only when humans are rich, eat nutritious food, go to gym, educated, and enjoy medical care facilities. For safety of living they may have police stations, for other purposes post office, banks, purified water supply and plenty of food supplies and so on. These factors may be true for town and city dwellers. But we do not have any of those things. Still we do not know how it happens, why we live long and what purpose. But we have fresh air, spring water, and hard manual work with long walk as part of our living. Also we eat less and sleep well without any possessions, anxiety and worry. However, the life itself is living the life of ours.”

I asked others. They also said the very same thing in chorus. But the mystery of nature baffled me. In this context, a report about Okinawa Island in Japan about which I happened to read sometime back came to my mind. The report said that ‘Okinawa's elders and centenarians have experienced a slower age-related decline and markedly delayed or avoided entirely the

chronic diseases of aging, such as Alzheimer's disease, cardiovascular disease, dementia and cancer”.

It is hard to believe that there were about 740 centenarians in a total population of 1.3 million people in 2006 as per Japan Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare in the tiny island of Japan. It is considered to be the healthiest place in the world, where the average life expectancy is 81.2, as against Japan's 79.9, Sweden's 79.0, Italy's 78.3, Greece's 78.1, and U.S.A.'s 76.8. . The most important fact is that they live long, healthy, energetic, and happy lives.

The secrets of long life are their fat free diet, daily working pattern, stress free life styles, close knit family and finally the genetics.

It is reported that even a 100-year-old woman says that she would like to live a few more years to spend with her grandchildren. There is also a saying in Okinawa, which goes to say that, “At 70 you are still a child, at 80 a young man or woman. And if at 90 someone from Heaven invites you over, tell him: ‘Just go away, and come back when I am 100’.”

However, the modern and western life style has not left Okinawa untouched. The younger generations are slowly going away from the old, traditional, and healthy life styles and are adopting to junk foods, bottled carbonated drinks, uncomfortable denims, club life, leisure and fun loving work styles, long hair styles, loud music and video games etc. In spite of all these developments the recent study says that the number of

centenarians in Okinawa had increased to about 900, the raise which had never seen after 1975.

Sardinia, in Italy is another place where there is an unusually long life expectancy and the presence of a large number of centenarians.

This increase in the number of centenarians worldwide is mainly due to larger and healthier birth cohorts who have had access to better medical care, public health infrastructure, housing, income, and nutrition than previous cohorts.

With confused mind and many unanswered questions I returned to my hotel.

CHAPTER 2

OWNERSHIP OF THE LIFE.

**“Nothing is yours. It is to use.
It is to share.**

**If you will not share it, you
cannot use it.”**

Ursula K.

Le Guin

One of the meanings of the word ‘life’ as per the Oxford Dictionary is ‘the state of being alive as a human being’. Truly, the state of being alive depends on many factors, ages, and forces. Many of us do not think even one of them or all of them for a minute. We take them for granted as and when they happen to us. May be historically our mind is conditioned over time. May be the regularity of happening of such events in life does not provide any time to reflect on such matters.

FACTORS: internal

Human life attaches huge importance to ownership aspect of anything in life. Whether it is property, wealth, family, relationships, qualifications, experiences, township, village, town, city and country etc. They acquire identity and status with these attachments. The more they acquire any one or more of these attachments their identity and status increases correspondingly. Humans are always proud of saying my house, my wealth, my family, my son, my daughter, my wife/ husband, my qualifications, my experiences, my township, my village, my town, my city and my country., The ownership of life itself is no exception. Everyone asserts the claim that this is her/his life.

Obsessive attachment such as ownership to anything without the corresponding responsibility attached to such claims results in disappointments in life. This applies equally to the ownership of the life itself. Attachment with detachment is the holistic pathway to spirituality.

Added to the common claims of ownership which comes to the humans naturally and also made legally necessary, much has been written stressing the obvious ownership of the life as if it is not known to anyone. If one's life is caged in one's body, is it so necessary to keep on saying that it is her/his life only? It is but obvious. In this context, the wandering monk's comments are pertinent to remember.

“The life is endowed with the body as a trust. The life is eternal. But the body which is positioned in time and space spectrum is subject to growth, decay, death and vanish. The trust's property does not convey permanent ownership and cannot be passed on or given away to someone else. The life has to be lived for the sake of living alone for billions of humans who do not have anything to aspire for living. In such cases the life itself lives the life of humans.

The life which gets the environmental opportunities and health purely by accident may provide the humans to choose and live their life partially by them for millions of humans. In such cases the life is managed to some extent by the humans. But only a small

percentage say 1 to 10 percent of humanity may have a chance to live their life entirely by them on their own terms. This being the case how can one claim that the earthly life accidentally comes alive is her/his own?"

He also said that, "Every one arrives in darkness. Every one leaves in darkness. The light is sighted only after birth and death. During the interregnum in time and space the body claims the life as its own. But, the life claims the body as it is own too. The claim of ownership by each one on the other leads humans into a constant conflict endlessly. Then, whose life in between the claim and counter claim by the body and the life, is it any way?"

One of the meanings of the word 'life' as per the Oxford Dictionary is 'the state of being alive as a human being'. Truly, the state of being alive depends on many factors, ages, and forces.

FACTORS: external

The major factors mostly external are the basic essentials such as food, drink, breathe, light, and space. These are provided by the basic five elements i.e. earth, water, air, light, and ether. The mother Earth, seasonal rains, air, the great sun and moon, and open empty space are provided by the Nature. All are interrelated and interconnected. All these in co-ordination with one another and in a most balanced way provide fundamental ingredients for 'life' to be alive.

In modern times most of the countries face severe scarcity and pollution problems of human creation on account of mindless and reckless development and modernisation programmes. The crowded cities are worst hit. Food has become scarce. The water has become most scarce commodity. People are saying if at all there is going to be a third world war it may be due to food and water. United Nations have been warning countries to provide food security and water security to their people.

If you take pollution, the Earth is enormously polluted. The water is polluted. The air is polluted. In fact all other ingredients for life to live are polluted. In some large cities the pollution level has crossed the danger mark. Even normal breathing is affected by pollution. In such cities the drinking water is sold like any other commodity. God's given free water by rains and stored under ground by mother Earth is sold in bottles branded as mineral or purified water. The humans who own multibillion dollar businesses are supplying water to their own less blessed sisters and brothers for a price which in some countries is costlier than milk for a litre.

Most of the population in such cities live in one room wholes which are called dwelling houses. In most of such dwelling units there is no water, toilet and electricity. The humans live worst than animals. They live just to exist on the edge or on the margin. There is no freewill or choices available to them.

Food scarcity is looming large in most of the countries as humans move away from agriculture as it has been totally neglected sector by governments and the unviable price structure for agricultural production. Agriculturists are no longer respected by the society although they were once respected as the back bone of human existence. Agriculture has become unviable in many countries and some countries declared it so officially as well. The climate changes seriously keep affecting the normal seasonal rains pattern which in turn results in repeated crop failures.

In some countries agriculturists are dying to protect their honour by suicides due to their inability to repay heavy debt burdens and interest burden on account of crop failures. Their numbers are rising every year in thousands. The alarming cries of the dying farmers although echoed in all the corners of such countries, they have been falling on deaf ears of many governments. The younger generations whether educated or uneducated in such situations think agriculture is untouchable. They all prefer to go to governments', private sectors' and even unorganised sectors' small petty jobs rather than engage themselves in agriculture.

If anyone asks three fourth of the total human population of our lonely planet, 'Whose life is it anyway?' what answer one will get? 'Will any one of them say that it is my life?'

SEVEN AGES

Similarly, there are seven ages of human life which shape and lead the 'life' to be lived. William Shakespeare's original seven ages still holds good. To quote,

**“And one man in his time
plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages.”**

The seven ages are: infant (baby), childhood, adolescence, adulthood, middle age, old age, and back to childhood (childishness). Each age is significant by its own nature and for the growth of the body and mind. Also, each age has its own specific role to play by humans. These roles are specified by laws of nature and also determined by the religion, culture, and customs of the society and country in which one lives.

No one can prevent, skip, or change the order of the seven ages. Every age has its own mask, identity, label, personality, and character. From babyhood to middle age the growth of the body within and outside and the mind will be on the ascendant order. But on reaching middle age the growth takes a reverse route of descendent order till finally reaches second childhood. No one has the power neither change nor stop the natural order.

The organs and the limbs slowly but year after year, degenerate and start wearing out causing pains, sufferings, and diseases. Also the body starts losing one after the other organs and parts such as hair, teeth, eye sight, hearing, and some parts such as knees, hip, kidney, liver, heart for repair or replacement etc. The automatic functioning of liver, kidney and heart get affected over a period of time. Modern scientific medical advancements provide repair, removal, and replacement, etc. to help heal and survive.

These changes happen on account of the law of nature. Only when the age changes, the above mentioned features will also change, the actor being the same but one will have to play the role of the age. There are certain common characteristic features of each age which are common to all and no one can claim that they are special only to her/him and belong only to her/his own life.

INFANT (BABY) AGE

In the infant (baby) stage, which covers about five years, (one to five years), the life depends totally on the parents mostly on the mother. Infants need the support and comfort of the mother and the father totally in feeding, bathing, toileting, dressing, helping to rise, walking, and sleeping. God has provided a mechanism of love, affection, attachment which unite all the three

unconditionally. Attractive beauty, unquestionable innocence, infectious smile, is the hall mark of baby stage.

The love and affection between the mother and the baby grows automatically from the birth; we can say even before the birth when the baby grows in the mother's womb for about nine months. This love, affection and attachment are without any entitlement and totally natural and unconditional. The spirit behind this kind of attachment is universal and unquestionable. It is not only true of humans' life but also of animal kingdom, birds, and others as well. The Theory of Attachment developed by J.Bowlby and Ainsworth explains these emotions elaborately on the basis of psychology and some of their findings are being used in clinical applications.

CHILDHOOD AGE

The childhood stage begins from the end of babyhood. It happens between six and ten years. This period may vary from country to country. In childhood, the child learns slowly all the essential daily duties such as brushing, bathing, toileting, dressing, eating, drinking, playing, studying, sleeping independently but with the guidance of the parents. The child's safety, security, and education are taken care of by the parents. Also, other activities such as playing, socialising, resting etc needs to be attended to by the parents. Care is taken against child's abuse, assault, insult, kidnap, and

shooting, etc. by the parents on a constant vigilant basis. In this stage, dependence on the parents continue if not fully but to a large extent.

ADOLESCENCE AGE

This stage occurs between eleven and twenty years. A lot of physical and psychological changes take place during this stage. Puberty along with characteristic changes occurs during this stage. Physical changes are noticed in the bodies. This development leads psychologically to experience shyness, blushing, modesty, and a greater interest in privacy.

Behavioural changes sometimes occur in such a way to take sudden interest in risky adventures like smoking, and drinking alcohol. Curiosity in sex and admiration and infatuation for other sex may also occur. Importance of parents slowly starts weaning away and closeness with friends will grow. Other than friends and their relationships no other relationships such as relatives and close family friends will look important. In most of the countries, the stage between sixteen and eighteen years is considered to be the stage in which legally majority status is being attained. However, the dependence on the parents in certain areas will still continue.

ADULT AGE

This stage is between twenty one to forty years. In human life, this is the most important stage in which the individual's personality and identity will be established. Self interest to work, earn, develop friendships and live independent of parents with

partners or without partners will take place. Biological changes which take place in this stage make one as the most independent, physically strong, mentally stable, and self motivated. The yearning for acquiring money, wealth, sex, marriage, children, family, and all other status symbols like owning homes, cars, etc. will keep growing. In this stage whatever one can achieve as independent achiever will happen. The dependence on parents will more or less vanish in most cases if not in all cases.

MIDDLE AGE

This stage in the life of a person which is between forty one to sixty years can be referred to as middle age. This is the period of consolidation of whatever one has attained or achieved in the adulthood stage. Physically, mentally, and financially till the middle of this period of this stage, the stability will come to play. Balancing acts between work and family, socialising and commitments to family and children, spending and saving for future and all other similar areas will occupy the major space in this stage.

Health and work will always pull in different directions. While work takes away much of the time, the health becomes uphill task to achieve. Signs of aging slowly creep in the forms of pains resulting in multiplying health issues. Other than the natural wear and tear of degeneration of the body the modern life styles will also add to problems to aging.

OLD AGE

Old age stage would be the final stage for many. This stage covers a period of ten years i.e. sixty one to seventy one years. There are many definitions of old age in different countries. According to the United Nations' view that sixty plus years may be usually taken as old age, and this is the first attempt at an international definition of old age. The world average longevity of human life is considered at seventy one years. As such it is safer to consider old age as between sixty one to seventy one years.

SECOND OLD AGE

This is the last among the various stages of life. Whoever crosses seventy one will come under this stage till death and there is no final end year. This is the period of the return of second childhood. William Shakespeare's words explain this stage very vividly.

**“Last scene of all,
That ends this strange
eventful history,
Is second childishness
and mere oblivion,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans
taste, sans everything.”**

1) Infant (baby) age	1 to 5 years	5 years
2) Childhood age	6 to 10 years	5 years
3) Adolescence age	11 to 20 years	10 years
4) Adulthood age	21 to 40 years	20years
5) Middle age	41 to 60 years	20years
6) Old age	61 to 71 years	11years
7) Old age (Second)	72 plus-- till death	_____
.	Total	71 years

If one adds these years in the last column above, it will come to seventy one years. This is worked out on the basis of the world average life span of human beings which is seventy one years. There may be exceptions in some countries. On an average this is a general pattern of human lives of seven ages.

However, the period of effective working life for an average human being would be thirty four years i.e. nineteen years in adulthood age plus another fifteen years in middle age stage. This period may vary from country to country. But the period of effective working life on the basis of world average works out only to thirty four years. Only during the thirty four years of effective working life one can claim that one is not dependent on the parents.

In the first twenty six years one is dependent on the parents in one way or other. Similarly in the last eleven years of old age, one is dependent on children, government's old age schemes, pension benefits, medical care, and support system of local communities, old age homes, nursing homes, assisted home care centres etc. Even in the effective thirty four years of working life there are other forces operate to enforce dependence on them. In these circumstances, if you ask any one 'Whose life is it, anyway?' the answer may be, 'it depends on many factors, ages and forces.

FORCES

In addition to these factors, stages of ages, there are forces which enter, remain, contribute, dislocate, destroy and disappear from the scenes of everyone's life at every stage. The major forces are health, education, poverty, friends, work/job, money/wealth, relationships, family, relatives, society, living village/town/city/state/country, environment, science, technology, laws, customs, religion, culture etc. Each force plays an extraordinary and influential role jointly with some of these forces or singularly in directing, shaping, and finally making the way the life will have to be lived by the humans. Like the various factors and stages in human life, these forces are also deeply interrelated and interconnected. In these circumstances, to claim that my life is my own seems to be unrealistic to understand.

The life of humans is incomparable in many respects with any other earthly lives. While the body is the container of life which is scientifically called a ‘chemical factory’ produces various kinds of trillion and more cells and proteins which again make it to be termed as ‘factory of proteins’. Biologists today identified how interdependence, interactions and intermissions between the cells make the humans as intelligent living beings.

Similarly, the container-the body- also interact with the ‘life’ through every organ of its own which has its own mind and sensitivity. If the toe hits a stone on walking, immediately the cells around the toe send the message to the brain with more than lightening speed and the brain reacts with the same return speed to produce pain in the toe and feeling of pain in the mind. Simultaneously the mouth makes a noise, ‘Oh, my God!

All these happen in a split second without any time gap, and simultaneously with extraordinary speed. On the whole the interaction and interdependence as such are the core aspect of human existence. These are necessary within as well as outside of any organism. Interdependence and interactions are the core aspect of existence for every living organism on Earth. The humans are no exceptions. All humans are designed to have interdependence and interactions within their body and also with every other object in the Universe including every other human. When one realises this

fact on the basis of scientific and spiritual understanding, then it is difficult for anyone to claim exclusive ownership of life as one's own.

Within the body, as we have seen above, there are many such internal forces.

There are also external forces which also take away much of the spaces in anyone's life leaving very little space to function independent of dependence. Among them health occupies primary space. Unless good health is maintained throughout one's life no claim can work and dependence will increase. In many countries there is no affordable health care system available. Billions of humans live without any health care. Wherever health care system is available, only those who have their own insurance or availability of governments' health care facilities will be able to avail of medical care. The rest will be totally left out.

In the present times, sickness of all kinds and also new types of diseases such as anthrax, ebola, zika, chikungunya, and super virus with the same or more speed along with the new development of scientific instruments, apparatuses, investigations, surgeries, and medicines increases. Nursing homes and state of the art hospitals are multiplying in developed and undeveloped countries. Still the gap in the health care coverage is widening. Chikungunya, Ebola, Zika, and Super Virus are causing new dimensions to the existing problems. Chronic diseases such as diabetes, hyper tension,

obesity, in addition to the depilating diseases like cancer, alzheimer, and dementia are playing havoc in humans' life. In these circumstances the dependence increases than decreases.

Illiteracy is a great concern for the humanity. Billions are not able to get even primary education in twenty first century. Wherever the educational institutions have come up in large numbers, particularly in undeveloped countries, the unemployable graduates are multiplying without the corresponding increase in job creation.

In developed countries educational institutions have become investment institutions with enormous amount of surplus funds at their disposal. These institutions have individually funds amounting to billions of dollars which are bigger than the total revenue of some countries in a year. They have also created a new class divide in society as elite school students and others. These elite school graduates grab all available cream of jobs while others go even without any job.

Illiteracy and unemployment create poverty all over. Poverty is the worst type of debilitating disease and it is the first priority of the humanity to eliminate in this age of scientific and knowledge age. In these situations, the lives of billions of humans' dependency increases.

Similarly, friends, work/job, money/wealth, relationships, family, relatives, society, living

village/town/city/state/ country, environment, science, technology, laws, customs, religion, culture enter the human life at different stages at different times and impact the life. Their individual and collective influence makes the humans more and more vulnerable and their dependence increases with every force's impact. In these circumstances, if you ask any one 'Whose life is it anyway?' the answer may be that it all *depends* on any one or more of the above mentioned forces.

CHAPTER 3

POWER CENTERS

**At the center of your being
you have the answer;
you know who you are and
you know what you want.**

Lao Tzu

The life is composed of major three elements. They are body, mind, and spirit. Each one has its own intelligence. These intelligences constitute the operational system of the life. They may be called power centres like nerve centres in the human body and these power centres are very powerful. The living of life therefore depends on three components physical, mental and spiritual. Essentially, these three power centres will make or unmake the human life. They are Physical Intelligence, (body), Mental Intelligence (mind) and Spiritual Intelligence (spirit). They control and operate the human existence.

Historically, many writers tried to identify and highlight the importance of various intelligences which according to their findings became important to understand the living of life in better perspective. According to Edward L. Thorndike there are three intelligences: abstract, mechanical, and social. He defined Social Intelligence as “the ability to understand others and act wisely in human relations. He maintained that Social Intelligence is different from academic ability and a key element in what makes people succeed in life.

Professor Howard Gardner in his book ‘Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences’ brought out the following intelligences. 1. Verbal linguistic intelligence, 2. Logical mathematical intelligence, 3. Spatial visual intelligence, 4. Bodily kinaesthetic intelligence, 5. Musical intelligence, 6. Inter personal intelligence, 7. Intra personal intelligence, 8. Naturalist intelligence, 9. Existential intelligence.

However, only four i.e. Physical Intelligence (P.Q), Intellectual Intelligence (I.Q), Emotional Intelligence (E.Q), and Spiritual Intelligence (S.Q) have developed in recent years as primary intelligences.

In the year 2006, Daniel Goleman brought out the theory of Social Intelligence in his book titled ‘Social Intelligence’. This theory caught up very well and accepted by psychologists and biologists as an important component of human life both in personal

and work/job life. The interactions and interpersonal relations between one human with the other in everyday life depends on the social intelligence. In the present times this aspect assumes more and more importance as the life expands on account of multiplicity of opportunities, commercialisation, and globalisation with frequency of travels from one country to another, in work/job life. Similarly, in personal life, the multitasking and multifarious activities having increased on account of modern life styles demand the necessity of social intelligence.

It is therefore becomes important to include social intelligence as the fifth primary intelligence in the group of already discussed four intelligences. As such, today's present life depends on the following five intelligences for a successful life.

All of them can be classified as Physical Quotient (P.Q), Intellectual Quotient (I.Q), Spiritual Quotient (S.Q) Emotional Quotient (E.Q), and Social Quotient (So.Q) making them five in number.

As the humans have five senses i.e. hearing, sight, touch, smell, and taste which are physiological capacities for perception, they also have five primary intelligences as shown below for existence as human beings. The health, education, work/job, relationships, physical growth, mental growth, spiritual attitude, success or failure, longevity of life of humans are

controlled by these intelligences and the humans are dependent on these intelligences.

PHYSICAL INTELLIGENCE (P.Q)

INTELLECTUAL INTELLIGENCE (I.Q)

SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE (S.Q)

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (E.Q)

SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE (So.Q)

Human life as we have seen earlier depend on various factors and forces both external and internal. In addition, human life depends on these five intelligences. Coordination, co-operation and dependence on one another are absolutely necessary for a harmonious living a life of their own by humans.

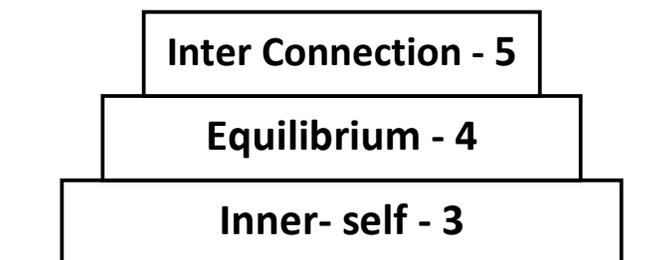
The journey of life commences once the life secures the body and comes out of the mother's womb which the humans celebrate the event, as birth of a baby. The purpose is unknown other than the co-creation by the humans for multiplication of their species. However, the path ahead of the journey is never being a royal path ever. Not one path but many will unfold. All are with many swifts, turns, and pitfalls. Which to choose and where to go will always remain elusive. The success or failure of human's life depends on these five intelligences.

Also, living is neither an art nor a science. Living is a minute to minute or even a fraction of a second to a fraction of a second, an existential affair; breathing, drinking, eating, working, playing, socialising, loving, mating, sleeping and repeating all of that again and again in everyday life.

Similarly, the Divine Designer who designs the architecture of the body has already made it a grand engineering marvel. Nothing is left undone either to redesign or recreate newly. There is also nothing left for the humans to make living either an art or a science. But, living is simply navigating the boat of one's life wisely without crashing or sinking in the turbulent waters of the sea of life. For such navigation, the humans depend on these five intelligences on a day to day basis.

In the present times this aspect assumes more and more importance as the life expands on account of multiplicity of opportunities, commercialisation, and globalisation with frequency of travels from one country to another, in work/job life and holidaying. Similarly, in personal life, the multitasking and multifarious activities having increased on account of modern life styles demand the necessity of social intelligence.

It is therefore becomes important to include social intelligence as the fifth primary intelligence in the group of already discussed four intelligences. As such,



today's present life depends on the following five intelligences for a successful life:

PHYSICAL QUOTIENT (P.Q.)

The body as a whole and all its organs and limbs have their own minds and intelligences. The humans always have a tendency to take everything for granted. The awareness is the first prerogative for living a life. For this purpose it is always necessary first to know what Physical Intelligence is.

The physical intelligence is the foundational aspect of life. All other intelligences will depend on this foundation. The body is unique in its own right and has its own mind and sensitivity. The body knows what it needs, at what time and in what quantities. If one pays attention to this intelligence the body can be trained in

such a way to respond to increase and regulate the movements and effectiveness of the body to a very high level. The cases of sportsmen, athletes, soldiers, highly motivated professionals, dancers etc. are a few examples. The developmental psychologists and physiotherapists generally use this intelligence for their professional work. The body keeps sending subtle signals whether anything which it needs is short, excess or optimal by various means such as body language and emotional indications.

The physical intelligence helps humans to pick up the signals and act accordingly. Body language, such as discomfort, stiffness, fatigue, and hunger and more pleasant sensations such as a sense of strength, agility, balance, endurance, relaxation, peace, happiness, vitality, are the subtle signals of the body. Similarly, the emotional indications are fear, loneliness, and joy.

The body keeps sending such signals, and indications regularly. Identifying, receiving, and acting on such signals and indications are the existential responsibility of the humans. But many humans tend to ignore and indulge in excesses in any of such activities resulting in pains, sufferings and diseases. For example over eating or over indulging in pleasurable activities ignoring body's signals will always result in sickness and suffering. In most such cases over indulgences lead to addictions from which it would become impossible to return back to normal life.

It shows how humans are dependent on physical intelligence for their well being.

INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENT (I.Q)

I.Q is a test to measure in terms of numbers the level of intelligence of humans. It is a method developed from a series of standardized test to measure and compare intelligence among humans. It started mainly to test the learning disabilities of the students. French Psychologist Alfred Binet first introduced I.Q. test in 1905. Later Henry Herbert Goddard, American psychologist revised the form and later a lot of changes have been made to make the test more effective and purposeful. Slowly it is developed to test the intelligences in others as well. Although it was once thought that IQ remained static throughout a person's adulthood, now there is some evidence to prove that people can increase their intelligence quotient.

Activities that are healthy for your brain are generally related to helping to boost IQ. There are links between IQ scores and social status, parenting, mortality, and morbidity. Additionally, IQ scores can sometimes predict job performance, educational advancement, income, whether one may commit a crime, and special needs.

It is now reported by researches that exercise most importantly Yoga and Meditation play a vital role in enhancing the I.Q. Those who practice yoga and meditation regularly will acquire energy, lightness of

the body and mind, and higher IQ scores. It is also proved by neurologists that exercise is known to stimulate brain cell growth through a process called neurogenesis and floods the brain with pleasurable neurotransmitters like dopamine. Regular exercises help to reduce stress and improve cognitive performances.

While yoga prepares the body for flexibility with different kinds of asanas i.e. postures, the mind is prepared to focus to do the meditation. These processes will help to achieve quietness and stillness of the mind. At this stage, the body and the mind harmoniously achieve the blissful status. If this practice is continued regularly, the body and mind become healthy, steady and alert. Meditation also helps to decrease stress and improve clarity. This helps to increase the I.Q. of any human.

EMOTIONAL QUOTIENT (E.Q)

E.Q. is generally explained as the ability or the measure to deal with oneself and others with self awareness, empathy and balanced interaction. Also, it provides the ability to love and to be loved by the friends, partners, and family members. This concept was elaborately brought out by Daniel Goleman supported by enormous research materials of various neuroscientists and psychologist in his book, 'Emotional Intelligence' in the year 1995.

It is the ability to perceive, indentify, assess, and evaluate and control. It gives humans compassion,

motivation and empathy. In his words, “People with well-developed emotional skills are also more likely to be content and effective in their lives, mastering the habits of mind that foster their own productivity; people who cannot marshal some control over their emotional life fight inner battles that sabotage their ability for focused work and clear thought.”

SPIRITUAL QUOTIENT (S.Q)

S.Q. is the intelligence which was not in the realm of multiple intelligences till recently. Only in the beginning of the twentieth century it started to be highlighted along with I.Q. and E.Q. Spiritual Intelligence is considered to measure the spiritual aspect of one’s intelligence like the E.Q is considered to measure the cognitive intelligence. It is concerned with the self-awareness, inner self, the purpose and meaning of life. Animals and other species do not have this aspect of intelligence which makes the humans different from all of them. It is not concerned with any religion or any sect or particular God. It is the inner self of the body which moves the mind towards higher consciences and provide values to human actions and meaning for purpose of life.

Danah Zohar and Ian Marshall who propounded this theory of spiritual intelligence say that *“By S.Q. we mean the intelligence with which we address and solve problems of meaning and value, the intelligence with which we can place our actions and our lives in a wider, richer, meaning-giving context, the intelligence with which we can assess that one course of action or one life-path is more meaningful than other”*.

SOCIAL QUOTIENT (So.Q)

Social intelligence is the natural instinct of humans as they are “social animals” which differentiates them from animals. *“Man is by nature a social animal; an individual who is unsocial naturally and not accidentally is either beneath our notice or more than human. Society is something that precedes the individual.”* This is what Socrates said. According to Thomas Merton *“No man is an island”*.

Humans by biological as well as psychological basis evolved themselves over a period of billions of years as social animals on account of their interpersonal and interdependent relationships with their own race. Interactions, interpersonal communications, interdependence, and participation in families’ and communities’ events are part of living the life of humans. These interactions happen in the family, work/job, communities, and society, in the social, political, and economic activities of everyday human life.

In this context social intelligence acquires important role in human life. Daniel Goleman in the year 2006 brought out this theory in his path breaking book ‘Social Intelligence’ supported by elaborate scientific researches made in last two decades. He says, that *“Neuroscience has discovered that our brain’s very design makes it sociable, inexorably drawn into an intimate brain-to-brain linkup whenever we engage with another person. That neural bridge lets us impact the brain—and so the body—of everyone we interact with, just as they do us.”*

All these five intelligences are required in balance for any human to live the life. In other words, the human life depends on these five intelligences in balance.

CHAPTER 4

LIFE IN THE WEB OF MATEREALISM

“It is preoccupation with possessions, more than anything else , that

**prevents men from living
freely and nobly.”**

Bertrand Russell.

Materialism is an extraordinary force which seduces and attracts the humans and makes them to depend on it to such an extent that without which no one can live a life. What begins as a need slowly becomes an addiction and ends up in slavery.

In Ancient Times, the concept of materialism was developed as a theory of philosophy. Ancient Greek and Roman philosophers contributed greatly for the development of this theory. Thales, Parmenides, Anaxagoras, Democritus, and later, Epicurus, and Lucretius contributed to the development of conceptual materialism to larger extent. The core aspect of materialism was that all things are composed of material and all phenomena are the result of material interactions. It was considered as a sort of Monism in contrast to Dualism or Pluralism, Idealism, and Naturalism.

Originally, materialism was considered as a philosophy and later become a way of life. Materialism believed that everything in the world is matter. All depends only on physical matter. Matter is real and the human existence depends on matter.

In Medieval Times, not much importance was given to the theory of materialism. No new thoughts or theories had developed. It was considered by philosophers that it was too metaphysical in nature. It was therefore defined univocally, in terms of the definitions of matter in vogue during those times.

In Modern Times, (beginning of 17th, Century), the idea of Rationalism was developed and propagated by Rene Descartes and Baruch Spinoza. The concept of rationalism emphasises the human reasoning as the core of knowing. The famous saying of Rene Descartes, "*cogito ergo sum*"—"I think, therefore I am" explains the important aspect of rationalism.

Determinism is considered the main aspect of Spinoza's concepts. He says that "*the infant believes that it is by free will that it seeks the breast; the angry boy believes that by free will he wishes vengeance; the timid man thinks it is with free will he seeks flight; the drunkard believes that by a free command of his mind he speaks the things which when sober he wishes he had left unsaid. ...*

All believe that they speak by a free command of the mind, whilst, in truth, they have no power to restrain the impulse which they have to speak." Thus for Spinoza morality and ethical judgement like choice is predicated on an illusion. Like determinism, dialecticism also developed as a theory surrounding the theory of monism.

After the Industrial Revolution (18th. and 19th. centuries) the concept of materialism took different route and underwent changes according to the then existing times. Humans live in the material world composed of matter and surrounded by the same. It has therefore become necessary for humans to get attracted towards materialism.

Preoccupation with the material world and material success and progress are considered as the highest values in life. Spirituality, consciousness, thoughts and feelings are not considered as important as physical matter in life.

The dependence of humanity on materialism grew in many folds. Even before Industrial Revolution there was dependence. All religions took note of its influence and kept on preaching against over dependence on materialism.

In Christianity, the Old Testament and New Testament in Bible, two ways, one God's way and the other the Devil's way are discussed and it is left to the wisdom of humans to choose the best way i.e. God's way for salvation in spite of the seductive and luring ways of the Devil. It is said that,

“But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires

that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.”

Bible--

Timothy 6:9-10

In Hinduism, Lord Krishna in Uddhava Gita said

“that the perceived material Universe is like an illusion, taking shape according to the dictates of the senses and as a result of conditioning. My deluding energy known as *maya*, makes it seem real, though it is not. You

should further be aware that all material things are temporary, which is part of their illusory nature.”

(Chapter 1.7)

In Islam, it is said that,

“The materialistic world has dragged mankind in the race to unlimited desire, to achieve and more which results in a dreadful life of homicide, genocide, drugs, child abuse, women abuse, and all family and social misbehaviour. Islam is undoubtedly the only solution for these problems, for, it teaches not only about this worldly life’s achievements,

**but it also teaches mankind
to be God conscious
(Taqwa).**

Surah A1-

Ankabut 29:64

In Buddhism, in contrast to the idea of preoccupation to acquire and possess, material objects, money and wealth which is the essence of materialism, it is said that,

“The root of suffering is attachment.”

“To live a pure unselfish life, one must count nothing as one’s own in the midst of abundance.”

Buddha.

Similarly, all religions preach about the value of life against the obsessive dependence on materialism. However, the dependence grows more and more as and when the economic advancements and scientific and technological developments take place.

In present times, Materialism has reached monstrous proportions. It looks as if, without which no life can exist. It has become a way of life rather than a philosophy or theory. It has also become a world phenomenon. Fuelled by the economic and monopolistic large scale production of materials and services, the materialistic way of life leave any one untouched. The Internet and Knowledge Revolutions

seemed to be the second largest Revolutions after the Industrial Revolution in human life. These Revolutions added further fuel to materialistic way of life. It throws up alarm signals in twenty first century with its enormous power of affecting the centuries' old and nourished from time immemorial, the faith and belief systems of humans.

In the present times, materialism keeps humans obsessively busy in acquiring, possessing, adding, and protecting, money and wealth. In the same way they keep the wheel of life moves in acquiring, possessing, adding, and protecting material and physical objects of any kind, including gorgeous gadgets, cars, houses, helicopters, personal planes, islands, and mansions in different exotic places of the world.

In materialistic society every human is enticed to follow these paths irrespective of their position and status either poor, or middle or rich. The reason is Materialism measures the value of human only on the basis of one's possession of material objects, money and wealth and not on the basis of one's spiritual values, thoughts, feelings, emotions, and other good virtues.

When the spiritual value system is uprooted by Materialism then every individual human will fall prey to the mechanics of Materialism whether one can afford or not. The question of affording or not will not arise. Materialism provides paper money which we can call easy money without actual money to buy anything

under the sky. A system had been evolved to create money by plastic cards, mortgage papers, and second or even any number of mortgages on bundle of mortgage papers to multiply money without any real and matching assets. Further, over- valuation of future profits, brand names, and goodwill of companies can also become intangible assets for creating money. Easy money without any hazards encourages every other human to indulge in spending more and more money making every one indebted forever in one form or other.

SUBTLE EFFECTS OF MATERIALISM

When the worship of money and wealth occupy the central stage, the worship of God is thrown out of alter of life.

When material possessions, money, and wealth alone fully occupy the space in the heart, the door will be shut for love and compassion for others, and makes one completely selfish.

When one is preoccupied all the time with the pursuit of money, wealth, pleasure, happiness, day to day acquiring of all and ever changing, every day advertised gorgeous gadgets, cars, houses, not one but many, one will not have even little time and energy left to think of the life, consciousness, feelings, compassion and love for near and dear in one's family. When one indulges in excessive accumulation of every kind of

material goods far in excess of one's or family's needs this kind of activity will lead to idolatry, false self satisfaction, and ego booster.

When self interests become the primary concern on account of materialism, it will breed selfishness, greed, arrogance, and impatient.

When accumulation of money and wealth occupies time and energy, normal sense of morals, right and wrong, belief in God, and righteous behaviour will vanish from the day to day life.

When materialism takes over fully, one will become slowly but definitely isolated, leading to the feeling of insecurity, desperateness, and unconnected with any other human on account of self inflicted egoistic behaviour of accumulated wealth.

Swami Rama said that, "What good does it do to have all the riches of the world and all the world's pleasures? They will all disappear in the flash we call a human lifetime. Focusing on the pleasures of the world keeps the mind too distracted to search for the inner Self".

Materialism influences and decides the course of the life of humans as major factor, force and in all ages other than baby and childhood ages. The ever increasing dependence on materialism takes away the finer aspects of independent existential mode of living of the humans and makes them more or less slaves to materialism. As materialism cause such enormous

damages to the life of humans, is it not time for humans to think before claiming that it is 'my life'? Also, ensure to bring more and more spiritual ways of life into their daily living.

CHAPTER 5

BEING SPIRITUAL IN LIFE

**We are not human beings
having a spiritual
experience. We are spiritual
beings having a human
experience.**

Pierre

Teilhard deChardin

The humans' life has three components i.e. the body, the mind and the spirit. The body and the mind without the spirit will not have the push, motivation and endurance to live a life. Also, the purpose and meaning of life and aspiration for higher levels of living other than simply physical existence will never be the part of living. The life therefore evolved over centuries of time with this component of spirit in the mind and heart. Although the spirit is invisible, it makes humans as spiritual beings. The spirit is common to all beings and it is there and through it, all

are interconnected. *“We are one, after all, you and I together we suffer, together exist and forever will recreate each other”*. This is what Pierre Teilhard de Chardin said.

The concept of spirituality is a multidimensional phenomenon. The term spirituality is loosely connected with spiritualism and closely connected with religion. It is important to understand that all of them are not the same and there are various differences between them and each one is exclusive in nature of the other.

All religious humans are spiritual in nature but all spiritual humans need not be religious in life. While the birth determines the religion of a human, the spirituality gets into the human along with the soul even before the birth takes place. A baby born into a Christian family becomes a Christian. Similarly, a baby born into a Jewish family becomes a Jew; a baby born into a Muslim family becomes a Muslim; and a baby born into a Hindu family becomes a Hindu. This is the way the religion is determined unless the parents desire to change the religion.

There is no choice left to the children and they are dependent on their parents as far as religion is concerned and it will continue till their last day of their life and generations to come unless anyone changes it in between. But all of them irrespective of religion are

spiritual in nature from the birth to death even when some of them may change the religion in between.

Till nineteenth century, spirituality was not seriously considered as an integral component of human life. In earlier times, much attention was paid to spiritualism based on contacts through mediums. Slowly, when scientific advancements took place in medicine, biology, neurology, physiology, and psychology along with rationalistic views gaining ground, the earlier beliefs of spiritualism were considered not rational and scientific and they were allowed to lose their mainstream importance.

The differences between spiritualism and spirituality were realised and focus on spirituality was given vital importance as the core aspect of human life in holistic health and well being. When more and more advancements take place in medical and health care, more and more researches are being made into the role of spirituality in providing medical, nursing, and healing care to the sick and old humans.

Spirituality provides a higher level of thinking, feelings, emotions, universal love, compassion, and belief in higher power which we may call God, Vital Energy, Creative Intelligence, Divine Spirit, Lord, and Inner Force.

The life as mentioned earlier has three different components: body, mind and spirit. Each one has its

own special aspects. The body is physical in nature and its aspects are five sensory facets of life i.e. seeing, hearing, tasting, feeling and smelling. The mind is invisible in nature and its aspects are consciousness, feelings, emotions, love, and compassion. The spirit is not only invisible in nature but also hidden vital force and its aspects are motivating, unifying, transcending and providing purpose and meaning to life.

The medical scientists for a very long time had not paid due attention to spirituality. But recent scientific studies made by various other disciplines such as sociology, psychology, neurology, biology, health care, and medical care made them slowly accept the usefulness of spirituality in providing medical treatment, healing, and nursing care for sick, terminally ill and very aged patients. Medical colleges have commenced providing courses in spirituality. Hospitals and doctors are now providing facilities to patients for yoga and meditative practices under the umbrella of spirituality. The shift and change in attitudes and help, in addition to treatment and medicine will go a long way in medical care for the various kinds of patients.

When you talk of spirituality people immediately connect it with religion. Both are different in content, nature and in practice. All religions believe in one or many Gods and Goddesses. Religions deeply depend on people's belief and faith systems. They also have

organised ways of prayer, rituals, festivals, and codes of conduct.

Some of the religions believe in re-birth, life after death, karma and reward and punishment for good and bad conducts respectively in this life or in the life after death. They also believe in heaven and hell in one form or other. But spirituality differs with the religions in these matters.

Attending and praying in the churches, temples, mosques, and other places of worship can be observed periodically in all faith and in reverence.

Spirituality believes in one higher power which may be called God, Goddesses, Divine Power, Creative Intelligence, Vital Energy, Divine Spirit, and Inner Self and so on. Accepting and surrendering to this higher power is the essence of spirituality.

Spirituality develops attitudes and becomes a way of living.

Spirituality is not spiritualism. It is a way of life to live one's life righteously.

“Spirituality is not some external goal that one must seek, but a part of the divine core of each of us, which we must reveal.” This is what B.K.S.Iyengar, the great Yoga Master said.

Being spiritual is to believe in God who is the supreme Divine Creator of everything and in the power of prayer.

Being spiritual is to be truthful in thoughts, words and deeds.

Being spiritual is to love oneself and love others as well.

Being spiritual is to think laterally and creatively.

Being spiritual is to look beyond physical and material worlds.

Being spiritual is to have higher level of thinking and connecting with other humans.

Being spiritual is to live a life with principles.

Being spiritual is to kindle the dormant power of consciousness and live with the conscience at all times.

Being spiritual is to keep in touch with inner self and listen to its voice and guidance.

Being spiritual is to inspire and get inspired in living a life of inspiration.

Being spiritual is to transcend from mundane matters and to reach out to lofty ideals and higher level of consciousness.

Being spiritual is to live in the present and not in the past or in the future.

Being spiritual is not to be judgemental even in day to day life.

Being spiritual is to live with mindfulness in every aspect of life commencing from eating, working and sleeping.

Being spiritual is to live with positive attitude negating the negativity in every walk of life.

Being spiritual is to practice yoga and meditation regularly so as to continuously learn to still the mind and achieve calmness, clarity, alertness in the mind and lightness and energy in the body.

Being spiritual is to develop self-awareness and learn to live with intuitive power.

Being spiritual is to awaken the hidden powers of intuition and synchronicity.

Being spiritual is to attract abundance of health, happiness, and well-being in life.

Being spiritual is to live a life without fear and anger as they are enemies of a life to live in peace.

Being spiritual is to practice intentionality to achieve what one wants to achieve in life.

Being spiritual is to live a life of sharing and giving joyfully.

Being spiritual is to enjoy peace and well-being.

Being spiritual is to practice forgiveness for the simple reason that no one is perfect in life including the human who forgives.

All religions with abundant holy commandments, scriptures, and noble sutras, verses, and stories etc. are not helping to lift the humanity from the insanity of killings, and the perpetuation of poverty and to a higher level of living with scientific temper and rationality.

In this Knowledge Age, when scientific advancement racing with extraordinary speed of sharing information and knowledge, the humanity is still struggling with the old modelled rituals and extravagant religious pyramidal and feudal systems of prayers and worship of God. These outmoded systems lead to disbelief of genuine faith, and belief in God. In this context, spirituality offers a royal path to salvation. Albert Einstein's statement reaffirms the present thinking on spirituality. *"The further the spiritual evolution of mankind advances, the more certain it seems to me that the path to genuine religiosity does not lie through the fear of life, and the fear of death, and blind faith, but through striving after rational knowledge"*.

The scientific studies prove the efficacy of the spiritual practices such as yoga and meditation in healing and patients' well being in respect of pre and post treatment periods. Dr. Dean Ornish was the pioneer who used yoga and meditation in his programmes of reversing heart diseases.

In health care, the importance of spiritual applications is increasingly being recognised by medical scientists. The connection between health, well-being and spirituality is widely being accepted by the health care providers. In recent times the medical care and health care have realised the valuable role played by spirituality and accordingly spirituality has come to occupy vital place in these areas.

These areas in human life require special attitudes like compassion, love and empathy in dealing with sick, old age and terminally ill humans. It is now recognised spirituality provides the required attitudes to deal with such people.

It is not enough if spirituality is discussed only as a theory in colleges and universities. In the present times, when science and technology are developing in more than geometrical and galloping speed, the practice of spirituality will have to be inculcated from the childhood onwards so as to ensure that every human embraces it truthfully to save humanity. There are three levels in which spirituality is to be inculcated and helped to be practiced in human life. They are: 1) parents, 2) schools, colleges, and universities 3) society.

Parents and Family

Parents are the starting points. Family is the first centre of learning. Learning will continue as long as children are dependent on parents and till such time they start

their own independent life. Parents have the primary responsibility to inculcate and practice spirituality in their children. Time has come to add spirituality along with milk, food, shelter and they as role models which they have to provide to their children. Home is still and will continue to remain as the fertile ground for the growth of spirituality in children. Parents will have to feed spirituality like food as a part of their duty as parents from childhood onwards. This will be a two way path both for the parents and children. One way, the parents will have to learn to be spiritual in their lives and the other way to inculcate spirituality in their children.

Non-resident parents, netizens, laptops', mobile phones' and iPods' addicts may have to surrender some of these addictions not only for their children's sake but for the humanity's future well-being. Parents' as some say, need not be equal friends to their children but by all means be friendly. Once they surrender the status of parents to be equal friends, then they will lose their status of leadership in the family. In such cases, educating and inculcating the principles and values to the children will slowly vanish from the scene of home. Here lies the responsibility and duty of the parents on which depends the future of the children and their life. One will have to keep remembering that the leadership of the parents with their responsibility and duty is the strong pillar of the family.

Schools, Colleges and Universities

Schools, colleges, and universities are the second important centres of learning. Whatever children learn in these centres provides knowledge which will be long lasting. The knowledge which they acquire shapes their character, enlarges their perceptions, prepares them to face the world, makes them to plan their path for individual or family life, and helps them to adopt certain values for living the life.

These centres generally impart knowledge in traditional arts, science, and mathematics for a very long time. Changing times have changed their curriculums and also keep on adding new and hitherto unknown disciplines. Now is the time to add spirituality as one of the subjects in the curriculums in every discipline form middle school onwards to the final year in universities without exception.

All of us know many schools and colleges have already adopted yoga and meditation in their curriculums. Similarly, many medical colleges and institutions who train nurses and conduct care-givers' courses introduced spirituality as one the disciplines in their curriculums. This will have to be ensured globally, through UNESCO and UNO's initiatives. Recognising its universal appeal, on 11 December 2014, the United Nations proclaimed 21 June as International Day of Yoga by resolution 69/131 with the support of 170 member nations. Bank Ki-Moon, United Nations Secretary-General later declared that,

"By proclaiming 21 June as the International Day of Yoga, the General Assembly has recognized the holistic benefits of this timeless practice and its inherent compatibility with the principles and values of the United Nations."

The first International Day of Yoga was celebrated on 21 June 2015 with extraordinary enthusiasm and jubilant yoga practices across the world in more than 175 countries participating in the celebrations. Spirituality can also be propagated and practiced by the same way it was done for the international day of yoga which is one of the essentials of spirituality.

The schools, colleges and universities besides including spirituality in their regular curriculums, they should also provide space and facilities to practice spirituality not only by the student community but also by the teaching and other staff.

The reasons in nutshell are:

- 1) Spirituality has universal appeal.
- 2) Spirituality is secular in nature.
- 3) Spirituality helps humans to live a life of higher level of consciousness.
- 4) Spirituality provides the joy of giving and sharing.
- 5) Spirituality leads to peace and well-

being of all humans irrespective of nationality, race, religion, sect, and country.

Society

The role of society in the spread and development of spirituality among individuals, families, and schools, colleges, universities, and work places is of great importance. The lives of individuals, and families, are dependent on society in which they happen to live. They are part of the society individually and collectively they make the society. They contribute individually to the society and receive collectively from the society. This fact establishes how the life of the individual is dependent on and inter connected with the society.

The society makes or mars the development of individuals and families. Society sets the culture, habits, the standard of education and living. Society also lays the path to spirituality and decides the social norms, practices and codes of conduct. Therefore, if the society as a whole decide to spread and develop spirituality as a way of living of all people, then it will become easier for the individuals and families to embrace spirituality with unquestionable earnestness and sustainability.

CHAPTER 6

THREE PILLARS OF LIFE

***“If you nurture your mind,
body, and spirit,***

your time will expand. You will gain a new perspective that will allow you to accomplish much more.”

Brian Koslow

The living of life is designed by the master designer in a structural form. This structure depends on three pillars. They are pillar of physical aspect, pillar of mental aspect and pillar of spiritual aspect. The wellbeing of humans depends jointly on physical health, mental health and spiritual health. The life therefore rests on these three pillars.

Whether one lives one's life or allows the life to live the life depends mainly on physical health. In the same way, the living of life successfully depends on the mental health. Finally, the living of life peacefully depends decidedly on spiritual health. Each pillar has its own attributes and strengths which contribute for living the life. Also, each one is a world by itself.

All the three together contribute the necessary strength as pillars so as to help 'the life' to rest safely on them.

Each one independently cannot hold ‘the life’. This is the first lesson of life which highlights the dependence and joint contribution for the life to be lived by the humans.

How the life rests on three pillars is shown by way of a figure below:

THE LIFE		
		
PHYSICAL	MENTAL	SPIRITUAL
ATTRIBUTES	ATTRIBUTES	ATTRIBUTES
Food-Diet	Faith	Belief
Breathe	Alertness	Faith
Exercise	Active	Conscience
Sleep	Attitudes	Humility
Strong	Habits	Love
Powerful	Cognitive ability	Compassion
Energetic	Agility	Empathy
Free from sickness	Power	Tolerance
Fitness	Stability	Mindfulness
Free from infirmity	Confidence	Contentment
Longevity	Responsibility	Forgiveness
Productivity	Self-Awareness	Intuition
Agility	Reliable	Peacefulness
Lightness	Endurance	Self-control
	Knowledge	Simplicity

FIRST PILLAR—PHYSICAL

WHO defines health a “state of complete PHYSICAL, mental, and social well-being” highlighting the primary place of importance for physical body as a most important factor in human well-being.

The physical body is a scientific marvel and engineering classical structure which functions automatically day and night nonstop from birth to death. The architectural structure is complete in all respects. No addition, change, or even re-structure is possible at present unless evolutionary process intervenes to change; may be over billions of years.

Also, nothing is left undone; everything is done to ensure complete coordination for smooth functioning on the principle of inter dependence, intra dependence, and interactions between multi functional organs, limbs, such as respiratory, circulatory, digestive, excretory, muscular, nervous, immune, endocrine and reproductive systems with automatic work stations.

According to scientists and as per their latest count about 37.2 trillion cells, with nonstop transmissions of messages by neurons to and fro between them through nervous system connecting all organs and limbs with lightning speed provides inter-net system even before digital inter-net system was introduced by scientists in 1960s.

However, what our ancestors started as wanderers, gatherers and hunters for living the life still continues. Although the basic purpose, more or less remain the same we, by our growing intellect over time polished and call them as travellers instead of wanderers and as seekers instead of hunters. We are still wandering all over the world and hunting for jobs/works for our living the life. The present day hunters for jobs/works are using the system symbolically called ‘head hunters’!

Every human takes for granted the functioning of the physical body till some dislocation occurs in the smooth working system. On account of this tendency, many always disuse or misuse the body. Dislocation may either be minor or major. When in most of the cases, the causes for both are fully ascertained, and if they are treated or repaired, the humans are happy as ever. But they are up rooted when life threatening disease strikes on random basis without any known cause or reason. Why such occurrences take place is still unknown.

Normal circumstances, unless the humans themselves intervene either by overdoing or undergoing and disusing or misusing, the pyramidal system of life works systematically with automatic functionality till it is struck down by life threatening diseases at random or accidents. Till then living of life depends on the attributes of physical pillar.

SECOND PILLAR--MENTAL

This pillar being placed in the center of the other two is the CPU (Central Processing Unit) of the whole pyramidal system of life. The mental system operates individually and collectively on ongoing automatic functionality basis. The attributes are in-built in the mental system itself.

Its functions mainly depend upon the environmental, social, economic, and living conditions for living the life. Unless the system is disturbed either by life changing sickness, humans intervention or accidents it will function as per the design in a normal way.

However some of them may remain dormant in some humans and may require polishing. Can anyone say that this may confer ownership of life in humans? On the other hand the health of the humans mainly depends on the mental functioning of the body i.e. second pillar. WHO in their definition of health i.e. health is a “state of complete physical, MENTAL, and social well-being”, highlights this aspect along with other two aspects as an important factor for human well-being.

The mental system is the fulcrum on which the whole pyramidal system of life depends and functions to live the life. This system operates through the mind. If the mind is active, healthy, and alert with cognitive

abilities then the mental system functions automatically to live the life.

Historically and up to the present times, a large number of theories on mind have been developed by the philosophers like Aristotle, Plato, Descartes, Leibniz, Chalmers, Baruch Spinoza and Psychologists like Freud, James and Computer Scientists like Turing, and Putnam.

However, the generally accepted understanding of the mind is that *“The mind is a set of cognitive faculties including consciousness, perception, thinking, judgement, and memory. The mind is the faculty of a human being's reasoning and thoughts.”*

THIRD PILLAR—SPIRITUAL

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin said that *“You are not a human being in search of a spiritual experience. You are a spiritual being immersed in a human experience.”*

The role of the spirit in the system of life makes the humans different from other living species like birds and animals etc. Humans have emotions, feelings, passions, intuitions, conscience, enthusiasm and inspirations. Also, they have the capabilities of expressing, choosing and living the life of higher level of consciousness.

Humans' spirit is formless and invisible. The seat of the spirit is still not known to humans. It is believed that the heart is the seat. Some believe the brain is the seat. However, it is generally described as inner self, inner voice, true self, and higher self. Although every human is different from the other in physical and mental terms, every human has a spirit of his own with common attributes. Such spirit's purpose and meaning of living will always be different from one human to another. Each one is endowed with a purpose and with that purpose each one finds out the meaning of life and lives the life according to the silent direction of the spirit. The purpose varies from one human to another and depends on various factors such as age, family values, physical form, mental form, educational development, and environmental circumstances.

Each human finds his own spiritual calling in life. Whichever work/job in which one ends up for livelihood due to various circumstances, the calling of the spirit, although dormant for some time will come to occupy a place either concurrently with the routine work/job or after abandoning the current work/job. One may be a C.E.O of a company, the other may be a doctor, or lawyer, or professor, or scientist, or peasant, or industrialist, or professional politician, or mason, or carpenter, and plumber etc. According to the spiritual calling, irrespective of the regular profession or work, one may suddenly take up charity work, service to poor, volunteering work, painting, writing, and

meditating. Such kind of calling leads one to peace, love, joy, happiness, and fulfilment.

Spiritual awareness is defined as *“the process by which we begin to explore our own being in order to become whole and reunite our spirits with our physical bodies in a commonality of purpose”*.

When the spiritual awareness is realised the perennial questions of existence such as ‘who am I?’, ‘Why am I here?’ along with the questions of ‘the purpose of life’, and ‘the meaning of life’ will occupy the central stage and the humans will try to find answers to such questions. The mind’s preoccupation with the attitude of I, Mine, You, and Yours will vanish. Oneness with the Universe and wholeness with everything will be realised. This is what Rumi, the Persian mystic and the poet said that *“You are not a drop in the ocean. You are the entire ocean in a drop”*.

As one proceeds in the spiritual path, one will realise that ‘being is important’ and ‘being a normal human being’ is much more important. It will also help one to see and view things as they are and feel the connectivity between everything including every other human being. The realisation of ‘less is more’ will be felt and the burden of acquiring more and more bags of money and pots of gold will be lessened. The body will lose its heaviness and become light. The mind will become quite and stillness will bring peace, joy and happiness.

CHAPTER 7

HOLISTIC WAY OF LIFE

**Open your eyes and see that
you are far**

**more than you imagine. You
are the world, you are the
universe; you are yourself and
everyone else, too! It's all the
marvellous**

**Play of God. Wake up, regain
your**

**humour. Don't worry, just be
happy. You are already free!"**

Dan Millman .

**Holistic way of life is the natural way of living one's
life. The life itself is designed in such a way that
humans will have to naturally live the life in wholeness.
No single part of the body can function independently
of the wholeness of the body to live the life. We have
seen in earlier parts how every part of the body and**

everyone is interdependent and interconnected with each other and also with everything in the world.

This is what Dennis Kucinich said, *“My philosophy comes from a worldview that looks at the world as one. It's a holistic view that sees the world as interconnected and interdependent and integrated in so many different ways which informs my politics.”*

The word ‘holistic’ brings out the fact that everything in the world is interconnected with each other and to deal with the wholeness as such will bring out the desired results.

The Persian philosopher and poet Rumi once wrote that “You are not a drop in the ocean. You are the entire ocean in a drop.” This reinforces the truth that you are the Universe in a part and not a part in the Universe.

The understanding of interconnectedness of everything makes one realise the importance of the wholeness rather than the parts. This understanding is now catching up well in all disciplines such as biology, medicine, ecology, education, and environment.

The fundamental elements such as Earth, water, air, fire and ether exist in the Universe independent of each other. They have their own nature, power, attributes and existence.

But each one however powerful is dependent on the other to make it possible for each one of them to function and provide ecology for 'life' to exist in any form including the humans' life and sustain it for continuous existence. Also they are interconnected and integrated for 'life' to exist, nourish, and sustain.

The holistic way of life is closely connected with the Law of Nature and it looks at 'life' in wholeness. As in the case of nature, the human life is also interconnected, interdependent and integrated inside the body with every other part of the body, and every other human and everything outside in the Universe. As such the wholeness assumes more importance concerning the body.

Every human wants to keep good health and enjoy happiness. The health of the body depends on the health of the three major components of the body. They are physical health, mental health, and spiritual health. Each one is important in its own nature and also more important in wholeness as they are interconnected, interdependent, and integrated.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Physical health means the soundness of the body free from disease or infirmity. It means the optimum and normal level of functioning of the body as per the body's design by the nature. It also means the functioning of the organs and limbs in an un-

interrupted, self functional and self regulatory basis as per nature's creation.

The general physical health depends on geographical, environmental, climatic, social, economic, political, and genetic conditions. Majority of the humans do not have much to decide or to choose in the above factors. There are many other factors such as birth place/home country, nationality, statehood, family, children, and choiceless situations in some of the factors decide the way one will have to live the life whether one likes it or not.

On the other hand, the individual physical health depends on the food we take, the water we drink, the air we breathe, the light we absorb and the life-styles we adopt. In these matters the individual human has power to decide what to consume and what not to consume and also exercise choice of one's own in all of them.

When we take *food*, our ancestors did not have much choice. They had to live on meagre food and sometimes no food. Even today the poor having the majority status globally do not have the luxury of plenty and choices. Only the middle, upper, and the super upper rich classes have plenty to choose and waste.

While malnutrition strikes widely the poor, over and heavy eating strikes the rich even at young age by way of juvenile blood sugar, juvenile heart problems, and

obesity. Such adults too have much serious health issues. Humans living in towns and cities and happen to be rich indulge in heavy, fatty, oily, fast food, and over eating. The result is most of them ending up in diabetes, heart diseases, and obesity.

Humans are reaching a stage that no one will be spared from these diseases in the coming years unless they pay serious attention to natural, healthy, and nutritious food in small portions. When we talk of healthy food the humans are already in a bind. The grains, pulses, vegetables, fruits, sea and dairy products which are available in the markets are by and large genetically modified and highly polluted with pesticides, insecticides, colouring agents and chemical fertilizers. These are unhealthy food which will produce more and more toxins in human's body which is already overburdened with unwanted toxins.

Holistic way of life therefore stresses the need for organically produced grains, pulses, vegetables, fruits, and natural sea and dairy products. It highlights the importance of moderation, regular and balance in taking macronutrients such as carbohydrates, protein, and fat as well as in micronutrients such as vitamins, fibre and minerals. The main aspects of healthy food are high protein, low calorie, low carb, low salt, low fat and low sugar. However, it will all vary from one individual to another and also depend on individual needs and circumstances. Although there are

thousands of diet lists in every forum, articles, websites, or books there is no common universal formula as such applicable to all at all times.

Similarly clean and purified *water* is always needed for a healthy and strong physical body. The body weight contains sixty percent of water. The normal functioning of the body consumes and throws away a large quantity of water on a regular basis which will have to be replenished regularly by the humans. Now the question is how much water one will have to drink every day. It depends on the climatic conditions of the place of living, the activities of the individual, and the kind of food one eats. Although there are varied versions, the one which is commonly recommended by medical institutions say that 3 litres for men and 2.2 litres for women in temperate climate are necessary.

Fresh *air* without any kind of pollution will be necessary for a healthy and normal body. Breathing in and breathing out is one of the automatic functions of 'life' to exist. If the air is polluted, it not only affects the lungs but also carry infections to other organs and limbs resulting in ill health and diseases. Breathing is vital for life and it is live wire for good health. Therefore clean air purifies the systems and ensures healthy life.

Lastly, the *light* plays important role in human's life. The law of nature require the light as one of the ingredients for 'life' to blossom, grow, and sustain.

A plant sprouts and grows out of a tiny seed. A seed is a packaged form of nutrients to blossom into a plant. If a seed is planted in the soil it needs water, light and food to break the soil and sprout out to the open surface of the soil. Light is important requirement for the plant to grow. Some plants grow and bend towards the side from which the light comes to them. Some flowers do the same thing. Some plants do not yield flowers if there is no sun light on them. One type of flower blossoms in the morning facing the sun and slowly moves and bends along with the sun light. It is rightly named as sun flower. This shows the importance of the light in the life of the plants.

It is a single flower large in size and yellow in colour. Sixty percent of this flower is grown in Russia and Europe. It is the National Flower in Russia and State Flower in Kansas, U S A.

As in the case plants, animals, birds, the light is necessary for ‘life’ in any living organism. Humans too need sun light for life to exit and sustain. The skin plays a vital role in converting the sun light into energy for the body. Medical scientists now say that deprivation of sun light results in increasing the incidence of cancer in humans.

MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health is defined as “a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own

potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.” (W.H.O); It also further elaborates that mental health includes "subjective well-being, perceived self-efficacy, autonomy, competence, inter-generational dependence, and self-actualization of one's intellectual and emotional potential, among others."

The mind is the epic centre of mental health. Mental health therefore depends on the health of the mind. If the mind is healthy, then mental health will be on optimal level. Mental health can be classified into three areas i.e., emotional, psychological, and social well-being. While the first two are concerned with the internal matters, the last one is concerned with external matter.

Mental health can be maintained well when the following aspects grouped under each head are well taken care of by the humans in living the life:

EMOTIONAL	PSYCHOLOGICAL	SOCIAL
<u>Positive attitude</u>	<u>Self esteem</u>	<u>Maintaining-</u>
(to avoid worry & anxiety)	(to promote dignity)	<u>-contacts</u>
	<u>Being loved</u>	(to avoid seclusion)
<u>Productive work</u>	(to feel importance)	<u>Physical Health</u>
(to keep mind and	<u>Confidence</u>	(to have energy)

body engaged) (to cope with life) **Social activities**
Balanced approach **Good health** (to interconnect)
on-----thoughts (to face challenges) **Avoiding substance**
----behaviours **Avoid loneliness** **abuses**
--feelings (to escape depression) (to keep mental health-
 (to avoid depression, **Deal occupational Stress** -and fitness)
 stress, and anger) (to avoid mental agony)
Optimistic attitude **Relationships** **Education**
 (to maximize (to promote happiness) (to get work)
 intentionality) **Forgetting traumatic past** **Inequality**
Engaged mind (to live in the present) (to be eliminated)
 (to avoid chattering) **Happy disposition** **Relationships**
Relaxation (to promote mental health) (to be happy)
 (to help body and **Success attitude** **Opportunities**
 mind to rest) (to achieve optimal level) (to get work & job)
Exposure to sunlight **Self image** **Health care**
 (to obtain energy) (to create confidence) (to be provided)
Enough sleep **Eight hours sleep** **Genetics**
 (to acquire recuperation) (to rest the body and mind) (to be-
 --treated)

Self confidence **Self worth** **Social activities**

(to aim and achieve- (to feel importance) (to be cultivated)

-optimal results)

Elimination of-

Poverty

Enjoy nature **-Substance abuse** (to be eliminated)

(to relax the mind) (to prevent mental sickness)

Enjoy music **Education and work** **Homelessness**

(to touch Oneness) (to eliminate poverty) (to be eliminated)

SPIRITUAL HEALTH

Spiritual health is as important as the other three i.e. physical, mental, and social healths which we have seen earlier as far as the human well-being is concerned. Some Eastern and Mediterranean countries, in the year 1983, submitted a resolution to W.H.O. to include reference to spiritual health along with physical, mental, and social health as an important aspect of humans' well-being. In the year 1984, W.H.O. recognised spiritual health as one of four dimensions to well-being, the other three being physical, social, and mental health.

“By resolution WHA31.13 passed by the Thirty-seventh World Health Assembly, in 1984 called upon Member States to consider including in their **Health For All strategies, a spiritual dimension as defined in that resolution in accordance with their own social and cultural patterns recognizing that "the spiritual**

dimension plays a great role in motivating people's achievements in all aspects of life".

The complete description of the spiritual dimension as articulated by the Health Assembly is as follows:

“The spiritual dimension is understood to imply a phenomenon that is not material in nature, but belongs to the realm of ideas, beliefs, values and ethics that have arisen in the minds and conscience of human beings, particularly ennobling ideas. Ennobling ideas have given rise to health ideals, which have led to a practical strategy for Health for All that aims at attaining a goal that has both a material and non-material component. If the material component of the strategy can be provided to people, the non-material or spiritual one is something that has to arise within people and communities in keeping with their social and cultural patterns. The spiritual dimension plays a great role in motivating people’s achievement in all aspects of life.” (Wikipedia).

In living the life, humans realise that there is another element called spirit other than the body and mind which is playing an ennobling role in their well-being. Arising out of this realisation, the spiritual health assumes a greater importance than earlier days.

The spiritual health provides the understanding and realisation of the values in life, lofty ideas, principles in living, meaning of life, purpose of living, peace, harmony, and higher level of consciousness. It also helps to achieve humility, compassion, oneness, simplicity, love, and balance in life.

There are various means to achieve the above mentioned ways of living the life. They are: belief in supreme power, (creative intelligence, lord, and God) religions, prayer, faith, yoga and meditation.

Religions provide the platform to inculcate and promote belief in God, discipline, order, morals, duties, responsibilities, prayer, faith, hope, love, compassion peace, harmony, values in life, and noble qualities of life. All of these could be promoted and achieved provided the rituals do not take central stage of the religions.

Prayer and faith are the means to provide hope and confidence for the betterment of life. Concentrated and focussed prayer regularly and continuously will increase the optimistic power which will provide strength to multiply the efforts to reach optimal level of achievements in life. Faith on the other hand keeps the mind in peace and in harmony with the universe to achieve happiness in life.

Similarly, yoga and meditation will harmonise the body and mind so as to unite the spirit to produce stillness in the mind, lightness in the body and complete calmness in the wholeness of the mind, body and spirit.

“Yoga allows you to rediscover a sense of wholeness in your life, where you do not feel like you are constantly trying to fit broken pieces together.” Says B.K.S. Iyengar.

MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

Mindfulness Meditation is one of the best ways to enhance the spiritual health. Mindfulness Meditation is the practice to focus one’s awareness on the happenings inside the mind and outside at the present moment. In other words, it means to live in the present

focussing on the happenings in the mind and outside and also on the senses without any judgement.

The University of California Center for Mindfulness, part of the medical school's psychiatry department, defines Mindfulness Meditation this way: "Mindfulness is a quality, which human beings already have, but they have usually not been advised that they have it, that it is valuable, or that it can be cultivated. Mindfulness is the awareness that is not thinking but which is aware of thinking, as well as aware of each of the other ways we experience the sensory world, i.e., seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, feeling through the body.

Mindfulness is non-judgmental, open-hearted, friendly, and inviting of whatever arises in awareness. It is cultivated by paying attention on purpose, deeply, and without judgment to whatever arises in the present moment, either inside or outside of us. By intentionally practicing mindfulness, deliberately paying more careful moment-to-moment attention, individuals can live more fully and less on 'automatic pilot,' thus, being more present for their own lives.

Mindfulness Meditation is a practice of being fully and attentively present in the moment. In formal practice we use the breath as an object of awareness. We follow the physical sensations of the breath as it flows in and out of the body. We allow the breath to flow naturally without controlling it as you would in a breathing exercise. We simply hold the sensation of breath in our field of awareness."

Jon Kabat-Zinn, the Professor of Medicine Emeritus, Creator of the Stress Reduction Clinic, and the Centre

for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health care, and Society at the University of Massachusetts Medical School says that *“Mindfulness practice means that we commit fully in each moment to be present; inviting ourselves to interface with this moment in full awareness, with the intention to embody as best we can an orientation of calmness, mindfulness, and equanimity right here and rightnow”*

Since 1967, over 1500 studies have been conducted by over 250 independent research institutes showing Mindfulness Meditation to be clinically effective for the management of stress, anxiety and panic, chronic pain, depression, obsessive thinking, strong emotional reactivity, and a wide array of medical and mental health related conditions.

In fact, the UMass Medical School’s Center for Mindfulness Stress Reduction Program’s medical outcomes from 15,000 patients’ participation since 1979 have shown “a 35% reduction in the number of medical symptoms and a 40% reduction in psychological symptoms.

Mindfulness Meditation is mainly concerned with the mind body connection. To quote Kenneth Pelletier, PhD., of Stanford Medical School, *“Mind and body are inextricably linked, and their second-by-second interaction exerts a profound influence upon health and illness, life and death.”*

The various studies made by medical and other research institutions in U.S.A, and other countries proved that there are many benefits other than stress reduction benefit accrue to the humans who regularly

practice Mindfulness Meditation. Some of them are reduction in anxiety, irritability, and depression levels, improvement in mental functions, memory and intelligence, increase in energy, improvement in sleep and digestive functions, reduction in blood pressure, increased immune system and improvement in pain management.

Mindfulness Meditation programmes are being conducted in hundreds of hospitals, medical schools, health care facilities, schools, corporations, army, and prisons, in U.S.A, and many other parts of the world.

The practice of Mindfulness Meditation in a simple way can be explained as follows:

The fundamental three basic preparations involved in any kind of meditation are, relaxed body, relaxed mind and free flow of thoughts. The relaxed body means that the body should not be in a stiff and constrained condition. The relaxed mind means that the mind should not be in a conditioned state. The free flow of thoughts means that thoughts should be allowed as usual to appear and disappear freely. All these are important to ensure that the *state of being in the present* is achieved before commencing the meditation.

One may sit in a quiet room in a chair or on the floor in *padmasana* posture (lotus posture) cross legged with the hands resting downwards on the knees with the spine straight and with the shoulders relaxed. The breathing

should be allowed to be normal as usual. Now the attention of the mind should be focussed on the breath. Here the breath is the centre of attention to be in the present and the focus should follow the breath and feel the sensations at the time of inhaling and similarly at the time of exhaling. This will have to be done without any judgement. This can be repeated to start with for about ten to fifteen minutes.

There are advanced practices of Mindfulness Meditation. These advanced practices can be learned whenever one is ready for such advanced practices with the help of a learned and experienced teacher.

“The best way to capture moments is to pay attention. This is how we cultivate mindfulness. Mindfulness means being awake. It means knowing what you are doing.” This is what Jon Kabat-Zinn says.

When humans follow the holistic way of life, it will help them to have excellent physical, mental, spiritual and social health.

CHAPTER 8

CHARTER FOR BETTER WORLD

**“You are not here merely to
make a living.**

**You are here in order to
enable**

**the world to live more
amply, with greater vision,**

**with a finer spirit of hope and
achievement.**

**You are here to enrich
the world, and you**

**Impoverish yourself if you
forget the errand.**

T

.Woodrow Wilson

The humanity in our modern times is in the cross roads. United Nations Organisation and their various autonomous specialised agencies are working very hard with the cooperation and coordination of one hundred ninety three member countries to maintain peace and development in almost all the fields of human activities over a period of seventy decades.

In spite of their and other agencies' extraordinary efforts and work and also in spite of our enormous scientific development, unprecedented sporadic economic prosperity, explosive knowledge expansion and unprecedented inter-net connectivity, the humanity as a whole seriously suffer from many disorders.

The benefits derived from UNO and other agencies' work and contributions and other scientific, economic, and technological developments remain only in the hands of a few countries, a few societies, and a few individuals in the whole world. These disorders have not even spared the above mentioned few countries, societies, and individuals.

The main causes for the disorders not only in one country but in all countries covering the entire globe are non-sharing and non-inclusive behaviour of such entities. Any progress when looked at small parts and not as a whole, then the problems of disorders will not only manifest but also simply multiply. Similarly non-inclusive and non-sharing progress or development is leading to major disorders. This is happening within such countries and also in all other countries.

The living of life is not totally dependent only on individuals. If it is so, then there is no living of life but simply existence of life. Simply to exist is not the purpose of living the life. The living the life by individuals therefore depends on families, societies, states and nations. The non-inclusion and non-sharing are the main causes for four major disorders in the world. They are: wide spread poverty, deep rooted illiteracy, dehumanising homelessness, and debilitating diseases.

Even after living the life for billions of years by the humans in the planet and in the most advanced and

developed twenty first century, the majority of the population in the world is still could not get out of these four disorders. It is a sin and shame of the whole humanity.

Non-inclusion and non-sharing are the main contributing factors. Why these happen is only because of selfishness at all levels starting from individuals, families, societies, states and nations. Holistic way of life will help to eradicate these disorders if each individual human adopts the holistic way to live one's life. If extraordinary measures to introduce and inculcate holistic way of life at all levels are taken on the basis of number one priority among all other things, then all these disorders can be eliminated.

The problem is the humans are in the great habit of creating innumerable number of institutions every now and then as and when some problem arises. The result is enormous number of organisations with multiplicity of tasks. When millions of humans are dying of hunger, water, and homelessness in this planet, what is the use of going to moon and mars in search of space, food and air, water to live the life in those planets? If rich countries venture into these scientific adventures, why the poor countries where the humans' death rate on account of the above mentioned factors is very high rush into this kind of competitive adventurous races? Why not first save those humans from dying and thereafter pursue those races?

When illiteracy all over the world persists even in the twenty first century why the education from the basic level to higher levels is made year after year most expensive and not accessible to all humans? When education becomes the most attractive business in the world the educational institutions have become the store houses of wealth and investment banks at the cost growing illiteracy among the humans. Why this is happening when everyone knows about it?

The reasons are simple. One is non-sharing of income, wealth, and knowledge by individuals, societies, states and nations. Absence of priority adds enormous gaps. Second is the non-inclusiveness of the scientific, technological and economic developments so far happened or happening. Here again absence of priority adds enormous gaps.

Those individuals, societies, states, and nations, who are rich in wealth, knowledge, and development, are trustees of what they possess. All their possessions came to them not only by their work and effort but also by the contributions of other humans in the past as well as in the present. As trustees they are obligated to share with every other individuals, societies, states, and nations. If this holistic principle is practiced then most of the disorders will be eradicated.

The Charter for Better World therefore brings out the four major causes for disorders and demand that they should be eradicated on war footing.

ERADICATION

- 1) Eradication of poverty**
- 2) Eradication of illiteracy**
- 3) Eradication of homelessness**
- 4) Eradication of diseases**

The Charter For Better World identifies the following six essentials for living the life by all the humans and demand that they should be provided immediately without any exception on priority over any other activity of socio, economic or political nature.

PROVISION

- 1) Food for everyone**
- 2) Water for everyone**
- 3) Electricity for everyone**
- 4) Employment for everyone**
- 5) Health care for everyone**
- 6) Safety and security for everyone.**

Food for everyone should be made as the central and core policy of any nation. No one should be allowed to go even without a single meal in a day. There are two ways to eradicate this evil. One is to increase food products by giving priority for production and support for farmers.

Production can be increased by so many ways such as increasing irrigation facilities, providing fertilizers, insecticides, and other inputs. Every year seventy

percent of rain water is being allowed to flow into the sea. All the rivers should be inter-linked to save water for irrigation.

Support can be provided by making available timely finance, ensuring insurance for crops, making available good prices for agricultural products, and enhancing the status of the farmer in society.

Water for everyone is a necessity for living. It is happening in many countries, men and women have to walk some miles to get underground water for drinking. Lack of priority and insensitivity to the suffering are the causes for this kind of situation. It is a mockery that when humans do not get water to drink in this planet some humans of the same race are going to find water in other planets such as Mars.

Electricity for everyone is a must for living in this century. Out of all the scientific innovations, electricity is one the most rewarding and necessary finding without which the life cannot move. But it is quiet astonishing that the humans still allow millions of other humans live without electricity. This will have to be changed. Wherever there is will, there will always be a way.

Employment for everyone is the economic necessity for a living. Employment creation is by itself will keep the wheel of economic growth rolling which again increase the opportunity for more and more employment.

Health care provision is fundamental right for every human in every country. In present times the lifestyles of humans and environmental pollution of all kinds lead to increase in diseases. To ensure good health and longevity, health care assumes greater importance. Every human must have easily accessible and affordable health care to live a healthy life.

Safety and security for everyone should be made available at all times and at all places in every country. Law and order and justice for all on the basis of equality are the essence of living the life in peace and harmony. Each one should have the right to enjoy the safety and security without any kind of discrimination.

The responsibility of sharing and providing the kind of knowledge, wealth, lifestyles, education, employment, health care, and all other material comforts which the rich individuals, rich societies, rich states, and rich nations enjoy themselves at present, will have to be made to rest on them. This holistic way of living not only will help the less rich but also help rich as well.

CHAPTER 9

SAVING THE LIFE

Life is precious in any form. Humans cannot create the life of billions of humans, quintillions or more of life organisms, sustain and provide ingredients for living the life. But humans can destroy humans' life, other life organisms, and ingredients for living the life in our planet by their mindless and reckless activities. Unfortunately this is what happening in present times in large scale. Therefore the necessity of saving the life has now become the number one concern of humanity.

We cannot create life but at least we can save the life. Saving the life has now become the primary concern of the whole world as every part of the world is interlinked, interconnected and interdependent on each other. The realisation of this fact is paramount importance for the humanity as a whole. Holistic approach can alone save the humanity.

There are six natural elements which constantly and jointly provide ingredients for safe living of any life organisms and humans. They are: 1) the Earth, 2) the water, 3) the air, 4) the sky, 5) the food, and 6) the forests. Among the various planets in the cosmos, our Earth alone is capable of providing the necessary components for life to exist. Mother Earth is the only planet that has an atmosphere containing 21 percent oxygen. It is the only planet that has liquid water on its surface. It is the only planet in the solar system that has life. It is therefore fittingly called the lovely planet. Only now the scientists are trying to

explore whether life exists in other planets such as Mars, Venus and Moon.

All these years as and when the scientific developments and discovery of many ways and means to explore into the hitherto unknown areas have happened, the humans have interfered with the natural functions of these elements in the name of explorations, innovations, multiplying, and increasing the naturally available resources. These interferences led to extensive exploitations of the nature resulting in the glaciers' melting, increasing green gas effects in the atmosphere, and climatic changes of serious consequences.

The nature slowly started sending out serious warning signals in various forms. Repeatedly the signals such as heaviest down pour, severest storms, tornadoes, severe heat waves, hurricanes of very severe nature, coldest winters, heavy floods, famines in large parts, forests getting burn down, warming up of sea waters, raising of sea water level threatening the sinking of major cities in the world are happening with unheard of severity and frequency.

The world as a whole so far looked at the dangers only in parts. As long as each country take care of their country's interest they did not worry about the greatest threat of existence of the planet itself in which they are only a part. If every country like individual

and society look at these dangers holistically, then the problem of serious dangers could be tackled.

The dangers have assumed monstrous proportions crying for quick resolutions. Self interest of individuals, societies and countries has to be set aside for joint efforts, first to understand the magnitude of the dangers and put in place solutions to tackle these issues. The danger is no longer a single country's problem. It has now become the global problem.

Therefore global resolution can only be the answer to meet the situation. Holistic approach is the best way to eliminate the danger. The Paris Climate Agreement signed and ratified by 62 countries recently which will come into force in November 2016 is the best example of cooperative effort to tackle the danger.

The time has come now, for the whole world, rich or poor, big or small, developed or undeveloped to come together to face the reality as one entity to evolve systems, contribute, and implement the programmes of saving the planet Earth to save the life system and sustain it for the common benefit of all concerned particularly the entire humanity.

SAVE THE EARTH

Earth is the mother of all life. Life blossoms, grows, sustains, withers, and buries in the Earth and the cycle restarts and continues for ever. This is the magic of the mother earth.

The humans alone derive maximum benefits from the Earth. Nature and Earth no doubt infinite in their nature and abundance is the unmatched content of their functions. However, the humans in their quest for abundance for their existential requirements exploited and squandered the face and the wealth of the mother Earth without any concern for safety of their own existence.

Also the humans are going on polluting and defacing the Earth. In the name of scientific research and development the humans mindlessly and recklessly conducts on the ground and underground nuclear tests on ongoing basis which kill the live organisms and prevent any such organisms to grow and sustain in and around large surface areas and underground areas. These activities also stimulate earthquakes with increased frequencies.

It is time now to save the Earth from such activities which will in the long run make the Earth unliveable. All the Nations in the world start campaigning to save the Earth and ensure any activity to pollute or deface the Earth should be condemned and prohibited at least in the future.

SAVE THE WATER

Water is the life blood of human existence. Nature by its abundance of characteristic feature provides enormous unlimited quantities by means of yearly

seasonal rains. Still many countries starve for water and many parts of such countries buy water for a price from neighbouring parts other states.

This situation is sickening and happens mainly for known reasons. When rain water flows through the rivers during rainy seasons, the surplus water is being allowed to flow into the sea for want of sufficient dams to save and preserve the water. Secondly water is being wasted in surplus areas. Thirdly, even with many rivers these rivers are not linked with the result the water goes straight to the sea.

The only solution is to save water by a National policy which can take the responsibility of ensuring the above mentioned factors are judiciously implemented. Holistic water management is the best way of dealing with water scarcity in many countries.

SAVE THE AIR

Clean and fresh air makes breathing easy and keeps humans healthy. The nature provides in abundance various ways of producing clean, fresh and healthy air and also circulating it nonstop for the life to exist and sustain. Trees, plants, lakes, and free of factories, industries with clean environment are the nature's provisions for fresh and clean air. Unfortunately only the humans pollute the air by their various activities without any concern for the health and welfare of their own and others around.

The obvious and visible form of air pollution is generally seen when smog hanging over the cities and towns. Greenhouse gas called carbon dioxide is also a worst kind of air pollutant which is produced by all kinds of modern transportation vehicular traffic. Sulphur dioxide is another kind of air pollutant which causes acid rain and it can block sun light on the Earth.

Generally the air is polluted by the gases produced by the power plants, oil refineries, steel, cement, heavy metal industries, and factories. All kinds of vehicles such as heavy transportation vehicles, aeroplanes, cars, two wheelers, which are run on diesel and gasoline and trains which are run with coal fired engines, produce heavy greenhouse gases and pollute the air continuously.

Air pollution is the greatest menace in present times. The vehicular traffic pollutes the air heavily by the gasses they produce when running on roads. The more the number of vehicles on the roads, the more the amount of gasses they emit. Our modern life rotates around heavy vehicular traffic. W.H.O. estimates around two million people die of air pollution every year.

The humans in the present times are surrounded by various kinds of electronic gadgets, like T.V., music systems, home theatres, computers, iPods, cooking ranges of various kinds, microwaves, refrigerators, and

security systems, in addition to lights, and so on, run by electricity nonstop all of which not only emit slow radiation but also add to the problems of global warming and climate change. The energy the humans use which come from burning fossil fuel such as oil, coal and natural gas certainly add to the problems of global warming and climate change.

Unless alternate sources of energy are brought into use it becomes very difficult to tackle the huge problem in as much as the present and future lifestyles of the humans are going to be increasingly dependent on the use of energy of all kinds for daily existence. This will greatly impact the health and welfare of the humans. Therefore immediate holistic approach may be made from all levels starting from individuals, societies, states and nations to make the air pollution free to save millions of humans' lives.

SAVE THE SKY

The sky is the roof of the mother Earth. The sky is the significant proof of the infinite aspect of the Nature. As long as the sky is left undisturbed, unexploited and misused by the humans, it not only provides roof but also ensures the smooth and designated natural functioning and flow of the other Nature's elements such as light, rain, and air for the safe existence of the life on Earth.

Unfortunately, the humans are going on flooded the sky space with all kinds of traffic such as aeroplanes, helicopters, satellites, rockets, and experimental sky stations, and war flying machines. Like the traffic jams in the roads on the ground, the humans are creating traffic jams in the sky leading to air head on collisions of planes and other planned air attacks during war and terror attacks even in normal times. All these activities lead to pollute the sky which keeps on disturbing the normal flow and functioning of the other Nature's elements such as rain, light, and air.

It is time now that special efforts on the global basis will have to be made first to create awareness among the humans, and nations followed by series of actions to prevent the misuse and pollution of the sky.

SAVE THE FOOD

Food is the fundamental requirement of the human's life and existence. Grow more food and make available to All is still continues to be a dream of the humans.

It is an intolerable crime and sin of the humanity as a whole to see billions of their own sisters and brothers live in hunger in spite of our extraordinary achievements in science and technology and economic development. Knowingly, this is allowed to happen globally even in twenty first century only because of misplaced policies, mismanagement of production and

distribution of agricultural products added with low priority being given to it.

Enormous funds are being spent on research, innovation, and modernisation of war machines. Equal amounts of money is being spent on introduction of new models with additional features on mechanical devices such as T.Vs, music systems, cooking ranges, washing machines, air conditioners, micro wave ovens, mobile phones of all varieties.

The amount of investments which are being made to produce expensive cars of varieties of models with new and extravagant features and fittings year after year and motorbikes, and other vehicles, is no body's business.

Even if a portion of such mind boggling amounts are spent on agricultural research, innovation, modernisation, building of dams, and interlinking of rivers etc most of the hunger and malnutrition problems of the world will be solved.

The other important but neglected area is the huge wastages of food. If wastages of food are cut, millions of humans will at least get a full day's meal to start with. It is estimated that the rate of wastages of food is very high in rich countries followed by developing countries.

Wastages occur at the time of production, processing, preservation, distribution, and finally consumption. As

scant attention is being given by most of the developing and poor countries, the wastages mainly occur in production, processing, preservation and distribution. It is reported that “about one third of the food produced in the world for human consumption every year, which is 1.3 billion tonnes gets lost or wasted”.

But in the rich countries the wastages occur at the consumption level in higher rates. It is reported that “every year, consumers in rich countries waste almost as much food as 222 million tonnes. This amounts to the entire net food production of sub-Saharan Africa i.e. 230 million tonnes”. (Wikipedia)

CHAPTER 10

ROLE PLAYING GAME

**“All the world's a stage,And
all the men and women**

**merely players; They have
their exits**

**and their entrances, And
one man**

**in his time plays many
parts,**

**His acts being seven
ages.....**

**William
Shakespeare**

