

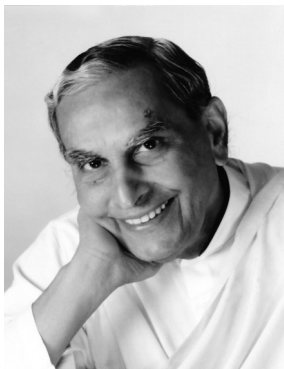


"To know God is to love"

How do we train our minds?

The mind is one of God's most amazing gifts to man. Scientists tell us that we use only one-fiftieth of the brainpower available to us. Let us train our minds and ourselves to use this fabulous power in the right way. Therefore, let us take care of our thoughts.

Thoughts have power. So let us be careful of our thoughts and utilise all the power available to us in the service of suffering humanity. The brain has been called a 'fabulous mechanism'. It is about the size of half a grapefruit but is truly a most wonderful tool. It is capable of recording eight hundred memories per second for 75 years without exhausting itself. It is a storehouse of between ten billion and one hundred billion pieces of information. Even the most powerful computers in the world have memories that hold only a few million items of accessible information. The human brain retains everything that it takes in and never forgets anything. Even though we don't recall all the information received, everything is on a permanent file in our brain.



INTRODUCING LIFE-
LINE, A NEW COLUMN
WHERE EXPERTS
ANSWER YOUR
QUESTIONS. WRITE IN
AND BE ENLIGHTENED

by **Dada J P Vaswani**

I have read many spiritual books but I get confused. What should I do?

Don't read many books – it can be confusing! It is like going to a new place and studying guidebooks. They will take you nowhere. You must have a guide to take you to a place. Likewise, in spiritual life you must have a guide, who for want of a better word we call the guru – who can take you to the goal. For that, it is necessary to have longing of the heart. Pray to the Lord to put you in touch with such a person.

What is Vedanta?

Vedanta is the culmination of all Vedic knowledge. This knowledge can be summed up briefly in these words; there is the One-in-all. The vision of the One-in-all is Vedanta. When I behold the One-in-all, the One whom for want of a better word we call God that is true Vedanta. When I see God not only in the good, but also in those whom

the world calls bad, evil, then I have attained to true knowledge.

Of Swami Vivekananda, it was asked, "Tell us what is Vedanta, in a few simple words." He replied, "In a few simple words, Vedanta is the knowledge that I and my brother are one." My brother – the beggar, the cripple, the blind man and the criminal – and I are one. That is Vedanta – beholding the One in all.

Can we really understand God?

God is the goal of life, and God is to be realised, not merely understood or talked about. Long have we chanted hymns and recited from the scriptures and rung temple bells and offered unending prayers, while our minds have strayed afar. For long we have kept God out of our lives. It is time to call him in.

There is a beautiful picture by a great artist, Holman Hunt. In the picture, Christ is seen standing in a garden holding a lantern in one hand and with the other, knocking on a door. A friend of the artist said to him, "Holman, you have made a mistake. The door you have painted does not have a handle."

"It is not a mistake," answered the artist, "for that is the door of the human heart and can only be opened from the inside."

To move towards God, we need to get up and open the door to let God in. This happens only when man realises the need for God. Out of the depths of his heart there is a cry "I have a need of you, God, and I cannot live without you."

This is now known as spiritual awakening. Something happens deep within you and your life becomes new. You are filled with light and warmth, joy and peace. You realise that the life you had lived till then, a life of creature comforts and of pride, self and power was not life at all. You then exclaim with Tolstoy, "to know God is to love." ☺

Dada J P Vaswani heads the Sadhu Vaswani Mission and is the author of over 50 books in English and many more in Sindhi with practical tips for happy, successful, spiritual, and non-violent living.
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We welcome your comments and suggestions on this article.
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"The reality of death gives perspective to life"

A face reader and a tarot reader both told me that I would die within five years. This thought troubles me. What should I do?

No matter who predicts what, always remember that it is only a possibility and not a fact. Ultimately, it is we who hold the strings to our destiny. Refuse to energise this possibility by fearing death. Affirm instead that you will have an auspicious and long life.

In the meantime, understand death. It will help you to heal your fears. The reality of death puts life into perspective. Death in some way gives meaning to life. Death opens our eyes to what we are doing with our lives. Petty quarrels, long drawn-out conflicts, resentments, and ego clashes, suddenly seem so futile. If your perspective towards death still remains unchanged, meet a psychotherapist for a one-on-one consultation.

I come from a broken family and therefore feel inferior. I have been in love with a beautiful girl right from schooldays, though she does not love me. I feel uneasy and sad. What should I do?

It is clear that you are looking for a 'home away from home', which is why you are in need of an emotional relationship. Since the girl is not responding to your overtures pursuing her in reality or in fantasy will get you nowhere. Let her go! It is now imperative that you create a life for yourself based on who you are, which will empower you with a sense of self-worth. Every person is endowed with unique qualities, which need to be fully utilised to make a unique contribution to society. You are no exception. Therefore, get going and be the best of what you can be. Educate yourself, identify your talents and get training to exploit them to the maximum. Remain socially active by taking some courses, doing some community work, and participating in group activities at college and outside. In this way you will bounce out of feelings of inadequacy.

Also, try to understand and forgive your parents for the family atmosphere during your growing years, because though it was

definitely agonising for you, they were living in the only way they knew how to live.

As Jesus said, "Forgive them, they know not what they do." Remember that forgiveness frees the forgiver. Also remember, that their conduct, choices and decisions are theirs alone, and in no way make you inadequate or define your worth as a person.

Don't be in a hurry. Wait for the one who likes you for what you are. In the meantime, move towards being the best of what you can be.

My dilemma is that every time there is a problem in the family, I get nervous and think about the world in general, and what might happen after death. I cannot focus on solving the problem at hand.

You are saying that extreme stress externally (problems in the family), precipitates an inner crisis in the form of repetitive thoughts about life, death, after-death, etc. I would strongly advise you to see a psychotherapist, who can help you by teaching you healthy life-coping skills. You can then deal with external problems/stressors in an effective manner. Also while seeing a psychotherapist, it would be a good idea for you to learn relaxation techniques such as yoga or any other breathing technique.

By the way, would it not be more useful to focus on living the best life possible today, rather than deliberating on afterlife? Through psychotherapy, you will be able to discover your inner potential and the true purpose of your life. You are a unique person with special gifts and have the ability to make a contribution to society during your life. Once you are able to discover and start fulfilling this purpose of your life, you will find tremendous fulfilment, harmony and peace within yourself. This will empower you to cope with any external ups and downs, and keep you in a healthy problem-solving mode, so that you can take appropriate action at all times

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We welcome your comments and suggestions on this article. Mail us at editor@lifepositive.net



DR MINNU BHONSLE

OFFERS PRACTICAL

ADVICE FOR

RELATIONSHIP AND

MIND-RELATED

PROBLEMS

by Dr Minnu R Bhonsle, PhD

“Let the cow feed her young”

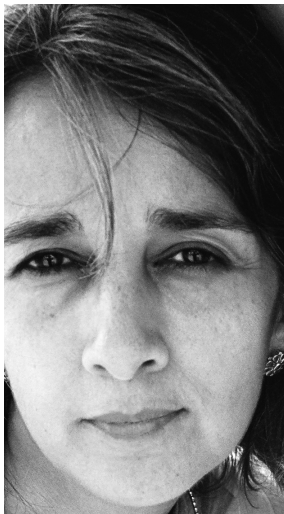
Why have people begun eating fruit on an empty stomach rather than after meals, as has been the practice in the past?

Most people still eat fruit after meals. I feel this is because in spite of all kinds of foods being eaten at meal time, few really supply the body with what it needs. So the instinct is to get some pure direct nutrients in the form of fruit sugars into the body.

However, this does not happen because fruits need quick digestion in the intestine. When the rest of the meal is sitting in the stomach being digested with much heat generated, the fruit putrefies and causes the whole meal to be a waste of time, energy and nutrients.

Typically the full feeling after a meal like this is not of cells being satisfied, just the stomach being full.

If you haven't begun doing it already, try having fruits on an empty stomach. It is the simplest change you can make. You are not foregoing anything, simply rearranging the timing of your food. The benefit far outweighs the effort involved in this subtle change.



WHAT TO EAT AND
WHAT NOT TO EAT IS
A VEXED SUBJECT
THESE DAYS.
ASK THE EXPERT.
by Kavita Mukhi

I seem to have a lot of wind in my body. Help.

If you read the answer to the first question above, you will know one of the causes of wind. Then there are other similar causes like too many kinds of food at a single meal. The body does need a variety of foods but surely not at one meal. So if you have a regular Indian meal with a snack, dal, rice, vegetable, roti (maybe a non-veg dish too), dahi, fruit, dessert ... you are in for wind issues. Simplify meals.

Overeating and eating melons in the evening, non-seasonal foods, cold foods with hot foods, foods with lots of additives like baking soda will also cause this problem. If your digestion is weak then even otherwise healthy foods like chana will cause gas formation in the intestines. Those who are lactose intolerant will have wind with the intake of milk.

For some, cooked cabbage and cauliflower cause wind. However, the same two foods in

the raw form will not cause the same problem. Of cabbage, my teacher said, “Eat a tub of it.” You can never have enough of it. It is an excellent food.

What is your opinion on drinking milk for health?

Even if you were to consider milk to be the ultimate food, you must contend with the bad quality of commercial milk and the cruelty to animals in milk production.

Although making an attempt to find good organic milk is not a bad idea, eat calcium-rich foods if calcium is what you are worried about. Some of these foods are: all greens including leaves of most vegetables, whole Bengal gram, rajma, horse gram, amaranth, rajgira, dry lotus stem, dried coconut, palm jaggery, artichoke, almond, walnut, sesame, sunflower seed, watermelon seed, poppy seed, lime, apricot, fig, raisin, date, dried karonda, betel leaf, mango powder, roasted tamarind seed, most spices, tapioca and fish.

How much calcium you get from milk especially when sugar is added (which leaches calcium from your bones) is questionable.

The other fact is that most Asians lose the enzymes to digest milk after the age of three (upto which time humans are meant to drink mother's milk). Given these facts, you can decide for yourself whether it is worth drinking milk. There are so many natural foods to choose from, so why would one want to drink something that may contain urea; why would one want to create pain and harm to the beautiful cow? Let the cow feed her young, so we have better breeds of cows and bulls to plough our land and make it rich with their dung which is ABSOLUTELY indispensable for the soil of our land on which our food chain and security are dependent. On which our very being is dependent. So let's revere the cow, not the milk! ☺

Kavita Mukhi is an eco-nutritionist, lymphologist, and naturalist farmer who studied eco-nutrition and lymphology in USA over two decades ago. She pioneered the awareness of organic foods (Conscious Food), in India in 1990. Website: www.consciousfood.com

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