

Living a higher Life

Recently I celebrated my 60th birthday. I received a number of gifts and since my relatives and friends knew that I love reading books, most of the gifts that were given were in the form of some lovely books.

A couple of days later, after the celebrations I was climbing up the staircase in our apartment building block with a book in hand, planning to sit in the terrace and read. One of my friends living in the floor above, saw me going up, asked me where i was going. I replied, " I am going up for higher studies !!"

We had a good laugh but that chance answer I gave then that day made me ponder about what is actually living a Higher Life, (I knew about higher studies and high living though !!) A high life indicates living an outside life which is exciting, luxurious way of living that involves great deal of entertainment, late night parties, entertainment and eating good food. A Higher Life means a Spiritual life and a High life is a materialistic life, I thought to myself. However we find that people are thronging and gravitate to be with people who are living a Spiritual or a Higher Life. Living a Higher Life is a way of life and is not about the way you dress or the way you walk or what you eat or the high places that you visit or your flashy business card or meeting the powerful contacts or the holiday destinations you go to.

A higher life indicates life living with discrimination and elevated, refined and sublime qualities like Love, Faith, Humility, Gratitude, Good conduct, Purity, Awareness, and integrity and simplicity. All the lofty characteristics make your character.

From the Big Bang through the mineral age through the vegetable age through the animal age to the human age, the age of this Universe is about 14 billion years. The humans evolved after the animal age with the power of discrimination that was the differentiating factor between the two. By discrimination, the human beings were endowed with the understanding the difference between Real and Unreal, Right and Wrong, Important and the Unimportant, the Useful and Useless, True and False, Selfish and Selfless. Knowing this is the first step to a higher life.

Of all the characteristics Love is the most important since Love encompasses all. The Theosophical Invocation written by Annie Besant reads,

O Hidden Light vibrant in every atom;

O Hidden Light shining in every creature;

O Hidden Love embracing all in Oneness;

May each who feels himself as one with Thee,

Know they are therefore one with every other.

In other words, everything is connected to everything in this world. This is called Spirituality. If one understands the interconnectedness of all the lives in this world one would treat everyone and everything with Love and this includes the people, the trees, the animals, the ecology and the earth, the violence would drastically come down. When you love everyone without bias you are already a pure person. Purity is the basis for Spirituality. Purity in thoughts, purity in feelings. When you are a pure person the thoughts you have would be positive and will be good for humanity. This is the second step to leading a higher life.

Mahatria says that in the progress of human growth and development - is knowledge. We go to schools, college to acquire knowledge. On the top of knowledge one needs skills and attitude. Your college education alone is not sufficient. On the top of this comes the next rung in the pyramid i.e the positive attributes in life like if you think you can, you can,. All these things work when ordinary challenges come. Ordinary wind it can withstand, cyclone.. it cannot. Then you begin to feel that you need to understand the philosophical understanding of life. It is not possible to peep into philosophy without peeping into Religion. It is not possible to peep into Religion without trying to understand God. Because the central pivot in Religion is God. What is the factor called God? Is there anything beyond God? Faith is even above God, for only to those who have Faith there is God. So God is delivered through your Faith. The top of the pyramid is actually Faith. Faith is the connecting power into the Spiritual Realm. Faith is the basic ingredient to begin a relationship with God. Faith is the light that leads you through the darkness. With Faith everything is possible. Having Faith is the next step to a higher life.

Nothing is more honorable than a grateful heart. Gratitude is a powerful catalyst for happiness. Gratitude is the healthiest of all the human emotions. Mahatria says that Gratitude is the mother of all emotions. Even without our asking there are so many things that are provided to us by Nature and through the relationships that we share with the world outside. The more you express gratitude for what you have, the more likely you will have even more to express gratitude for. Further, one of the fundamental qualities invariably found in a grateful person is humility. So, if one is grateful he is humble. Being Grateful is the next step to a higher life.

Good Conduct is another important ingredient for a higher life. From where you are to where you want to be you need the support of people. Good conduct is most important in any relationship. Human beings are creatures of emotion and not logic. So, sometimes when you

do not get what you wanted you should not get angry and conduct badly. You should always be calm and unruffled even when you are affected by sorrow, troubles, sickness, losses. All troubles are transitory and we should let that time pass, for in life - this too will pass. Bad weather will not last forever. Hold back from pride for pride comes from ignorance. Tolerance for all, cheerfulness at all times and One-pointedness to doing helpful, unselfish work, confidence and Trust in yourself would enable you to lead your life with Good conduct.

The real miracle in Life would be to awake during the present moment. Anyone who maintains awareness in the present moment becomes beautiful and radiates happiness, peace and inner joy. Being in the present moment means that we are aware and mindful of what is happening at this very moment. We are not distracted by the reflections of the past or anxieties of the future but centered in the present moment. It is quite simple to understand life if life is lived "in this moment." The past is history, the future is mystery and the only thing you can control is the present moment and that is why it is called a "Present !" Living life with heightened awareness is another very important aspect to a higher living.

Integrity is the quality of doing the right things even when no one is watching you. Adhering to strong morals and ethics. It means that you are true to yourself and would do nothing to dishonor you. Honesty and Trust are integral part of integrity. Integrity means having a moral compass that doesn't flicker at all weathers and it denotes a wholeness of character just as an integer without any fractions. Living life with integrity is another important aspect in living a higher life.

Life is very simple but we complicate it. Knowledge is a process of piling up facts, wisdom lies in the simplification. Simplicity boils down to two steps – Identify the essential and eliminate the rest. Remove the unwanted clutter from your life and keep it simple. In simplicity you will find the highest clarity and peace. Simplicity is another important aspect in living a higher life.

And finally one needs to listen to the nursery rhyme more times when you get busier

Row, row, row your boat

Gently down the stream

Merrily merrily, merrily, merrily

Life is but a dream.

Life is sometimes difficult but we should never give up, never quit until we reach where we wanted to reach – a higher life.

