

Value Insight

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Bi-Monthly

- **Duty Bound**
- **Responsibility to Self**
- **Actions and Decisions**



A bi-monthly magazine of
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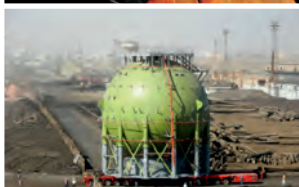
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Value Insight

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Content

- 04 Subscription**
- 06 Contributors**
- 07 Subscription**
- 08 Swami Bhoomananda Tirtha**
- 12 Subhashitam**
- 13 From the President's Desk**
- 14 Duty Bound**
Aruna Srinivasan
- 17 Secure Your Oxygen Mask First: Responsibility to Self**
Vikram Bhalla
- 20 Pillars of the Earth**
Man Mohan Kapur
- 22 Responsibility in Jainism**
Nandini Jain
- 25 In True Faith**
Moosa Raza
- 28 Actions and Decisions**
Shri S.L.Gangadharappa
- 31 Screening Responsibility**
Arun Sukumar
- 35 Telling Tales:
And Then What happened**
- 37 A Silent Revolution**
Prema Raghavan
- 40 Wisdom Waves:
Balancing Responsibility**
Bansi Mahajan
- 42 Book Review**
R. Dasarathy
- 45 Swami Vivekananda**
S. Regunathan
- 47 Children's Corner**
Gayatri.K.Diggi
- 51 FRNV News and Events**

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THEMES FOR THE NEXT ISSUES OF THE JOURNAL

Month	Theme	Deadline for articles
August 2025	Reason	June 1
October 2025	Mind and heart	August 1
December 2025	Non-Violence, Charity	October 1

BRIEF GUIDELINES FOR THE ARTICLES

1. Write up may include original articles / short stories. In case of extracts / excerpts / photographs, due credit by way of acknowledgment is to be given.
2. About 900-1400 words. 3. Not political and / or religious.
4. Student(s) are encouraged to send through their school(s).
5. Brief profile of about 70 words and a photograph along with the write up may be sent to frnv@valuefoundation.in and / or frnvindia@gmail.com
6. Honorarium, if any, may be considered by FRNV Editorial Board for articles published.
7. The decision of the FRNV Editorial Board shall be final and binding.

Śama The Quality of Avoiding Desires

Poojya Swami Bhoomananda Tirtha

Harih Om Tat Sat. Jai Guru!



We are discussing about the qualities or qualifications of a seeker of supreme truth. We spoke about *viveka*, particularly *nitya-anitya-vastu-vivekah*, the art and process of discriminating between the real and the unreal. When you apply this standard, you will find including our body the entire world, including the planet earth, everything is perishable. Naturally there must be something imperishable - what is that? So we locate there is something which is constantly and changelessly referred to as 'I' and that must be the substratum for all the changes. This is *viveka*.

Then as a result of *viveka* you grow dispassion towards everything in this world and the other world. The things in this world are the sensory delights, comforts, luxuries and what not. But all the comforts and glories we have, will stop when the body falls. So the one habituated to these comforts and delights will feel a sense of loss at least in his imagination now. He wants to be assured of something comfortable hereafter. Is there a way of achieving it? Then *mumukshutvam*, I said, a burning

aspiration for getting liberation, freeing the mind from its shackles, freeing the intelligence from its curiosity and doubt and have a very stable, clear, poised mind and intelligence. That mind and intelligence will start radiating, revealing the subject presence in this object body. At present, you don't have a revelation or radiation of the subject. Heat radiates from our body, maybe magnetism and other things also. Sound we constantly generate. What gets transmuted as sound and how do the sounds get ideas evolved elsewhere? So, there is an ideating source. What is that source?

Philosophy is a quest for knowledge and particularly philosophy aims at discovering or unraveling either the ultimate reality in the world or the source of knowledge. What is the source of knowledge?

The greatest statement that India has made is that the source of knowledge and the source of material universe, the Ultimate Reality are the same. When you probe into the source of material or energetic existence, we arrive at a stage where both matter and energy apparently

cease to be and the observing consciousness survives. So the source of everything that is perceived is within us. It is neither matter nor energy and that is what they call 'Brahman', the Supreme Reality. And what is Brahman? It is the Self. And what is the Self? The knowledge 'I'.

So, the knowledge is the ultimate reality. When you know that this is so, all our problems come to a cessation. To which extent you can make this knowledge functional and to which extent you can grow in your dimension is left to the individual seeker.

Now, we come to a set of six important virtues or traits. *Śama-damādi-ṣaṭka-sampattiḥ*. *Śaṭka* means an aggregate of six, *sampattiḥ* means enrichment. The first is *śama*. The word *śamaḥ* means:

सदैव वासनात्यागः शमोऽयमिति शब्दितः

Sadaiva vāsanā-tyāgaḥ śamo'yamiti śabditaḥ

(Aparokshānubhūtiḥ 6)

We generally have a number of desires, latent tendencies coiled up in the mind and these tendencies are at the back of all our activities and interactions and these tendencies are always focused on things other than ourselves. *Śama*, the quality means *sadāeva* - always, *vāsanā-tyāgaḥ*, you should be habitually and consistently eschewing, avoiding, abandoning the desires, not grow them or pursue them and try to fulfill them. “Swamiji, is it ever possible? Are not the things of the world to be desired? And

should we not have an enjoyment of these?” This is a question everyone will raise or want to raise. There is an answer to it provided you are sensitive and intelligent, you can understand it.

You may desire an external object like a set of sofa. You may possess it, quite all right, we have no objection. First of all, it is a desire and the desire is sprouting in the mind. You are following the desire in the external sphere, as a result of which you get the furniture and put it at home. Very good, I have no objection. Is it the arrival of the furniture that really counts or following the arrival whatever desire the mind had, that desire has become extinct? Suppose the desire continues to be there, then you would again run after the furniture and procure it. Mark my words very clearly, don't get confused. I want you to be bold, simple and upright. It is a desire of the mind that you pursued and after pursuit, it is the desire of the mind that becomes extinct.

So, when you pursue a desire and fulfill it, what happens? Where the desire originally began, there itself it becomes extinct. So, desire fulfillment means what - the absence of that desire, its extinction. When all the desires are fulfilled, what will happen? The desired objects may be around you, but so far as the mind is concerned, it is extinction of the desires that takes place.

Now interpret the whole process in your mind level. Mind produces a desire, the senses and the body pursue, finally get the desired object. Then what happens? That desire is no more in the mind. So, it

is desire extinction that we are seeking through desire fulfillment. If that is so, all desires when fulfilled, no desire will be there in your mind. So, why don't you directly attempt that no-desire state, the direct and wholesome extinction of desire itself, right from the beginning? Where is it to be attempted? In your mind. This is called *śama*. By so doing, do you lose anything? Not at all. Do you gain anything? Yes. That all-fulfilled state of the mind will continue without any external effort and without any external object.

Now, there are details you can discuss. But I would like you in a seed form to think about this fundamental truth. In *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, there is a verse which says:

ज्ञाते वस्तुन्यपि बलवती वासनाऽनादिरेषा
कर्ता भोक्ताप्यहमिति दृढा याऽस्य संसारहेतुः ।
प्रत्यग्दृष्ट्याऽऽत्मनि निवसता सापनेया प्रयत्नात्-
मुक्तिं प्राहुस्तदिह मुनयो वासनातानवं यत् ॥

— विवेकचूडामणिः २६७

jñāte vastuny-api balavatī vāsanā
nādir-eṣā
kartā bhoktāpy-aham-iti dṛḍhā yāsya
saṃsāra-hetuḥ |
Pratyag-dṛṣṭyā”tmani nivasatā sāpaneyā
prayatnāt-Muktim prāhus-tad-īha
munayo vāsanātānavam yat ||

(Vivekacūḍāmaṇi 267)

You are after all an aggregate. In the aggregate, some psycho-physical factors and constituents are there. Mind is there, intelligence is there; they have their own hereditary traits. So even when

the supreme truth of self is explained to you, the latent tendencies or desires will continue very strongly and these desires make you think that 'I am a doer', 'I am an enjoyer', 'I am a sufferer'. These are very strong.

These agitations in the mind, these notions in the mind will have to be treated and set right by what process? *Pratyag-dṛṣṭyātmani nivasatā sāpaneyā prayatnāt* - By your inner inward absorption, by abiding in the self repeatedly, you will understand that to desire is redundant, to desire is irksome, to desire is unnecessary. When you know it, automatically the desires will fall. Such falling of the desire is called attenuation or extinction of desires and that is real *mukti* or freedom.

So, there is a lot of gap between getting exposed to the self, knowing it and then reaching a state of redemption characterized by the extinction of desires. *Muktim prāhuḥ tadiha munayo vāsanā-tānavam yat*. Who can question and invalidate this proposition? Desire sprouts in the mind and fulfillment of desire is a requirement of the mind. When the desire is fulfilled, necessarily the desire should become extinct. So, what is it in the language of the mind that we are attempting? Is it not desire extinction means no desire? Why don't you try it right from the beginning? It is a safe, inner, sublime pursuit. This is called *śamaḥ*.

So, if a man practices *śamo-guṇa*, don't think he is a fool; he is most wise. That is why he attempts it. When the mind is

fully desire-free, it is free to bring out the best of creative thoughts, the best of imaginations. It is from such a desire-extinct state that Sage Valmiki wrote a 24,000-verse scripture called Ramayana, Veda Vyasa wrote all that he wrote including Mahabharatam of 1,25,000 verses. A desire-full mind will not be able to write it. When the mind is desiring, it is under tension, agitation and stress. When the mind becomes free, transparent and spatial, that is the time when all the universe, good things will enter it and you will have the best of motivation, the best of persuasion, inspiration, enthusiasm, fervor and perseverance. What is there for you to

lose ? Nothing! And what is there for you to gain? Many things. This is how the mechanism works. This śama-guṇa is one of the six traits which a seeker has to cultivate, grow, evaluate and then be nourished by.

Harih Om Tat Sat. Jai Guru. Jai Guru!

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SUBHASHITAM

कर्तव्यस्यावसाने हि नरः संतोषमृच्छति।
तृष्णां विनापि सन्तुष्टो नोपभोगैरलंकृतः॥

On the completion of one's duty, a person finds contentment. True satisfaction comes not from desires or luxuries, but from fulfilling responsibilities.

अपने कर्तव्य को पूरा करने पर व्यक्ति को संतुष्टि मिलती है। सच्ची संतुष्टि इच्छाओं या विलासिता से नहीं, बल्कि दायित्वों को पूरा करने से मिलती है।

(Hitopadesha)

From the President's Desk



I was reflecting on two separate incidents, both heinous.

**A man accused of many crimes including murder and rape was appointed minister. The nation watched quietly, not to say that they had even voted for him, or else how would he be there?*

**Tourists were gunned down in Pahalgam and all of us rose horror stricken and united in Operation Sindur against terrorism and its perpetrators.*

I am glad we still retain the sensitivity to express our sorrow over the Pahalgam terrorist attack. We seem to have lost that for our home-grown criminals.

While I am all for jail reforms and humane attitude towards those who commit crimes, hoping and seeking transformation of mind and intent, allowing them to become minister and wield power over policy making issues, is too much to accept. When will we become aware of how we are allowing our nation and environs to be bereft of any values and ethics? We are eroding the value system both by the example the leader is setting and by our own choice of the leader.

It is to ask such questions and more that FRNV organized a seminar in April on the appointment of criminals in the legislative assembly and the Parliament. There were skeptics who advised FRNV to support causes that can be resolved more easily. And there was Swamiji who at the age of 92, implored the audience to rise, to mobilize public opinion and not accept injustice. In a charged address he said only numbers will bring about electoral reforms. Like the contagious cold or 'flu, this too should become a movement which unites people in its march.

In keeping with times, FRNV has entered the social media with this message. Now the ball is in your court. Come on, it has never been easier to mobilize public opinion and perhaps the opportunity to better our nation has also not been so great as it is now. Begin your effort now and look through the pages of the magazine to find the twitter handle or the insta account of FRNV and just click and share...surely that is not so difficult?

We can change the world...at least the one around us.

S. Regunathan
President (FRNV)

Duty Bound by Constituion

Aruna Srinivasan finds that the Indian Constitution assumes that our elegant and intrinsic nature would ensure that responsible behaviour as a people.



One question has often come to my mind, when I see our garbage dumps, when my car bumps up and down in a pothole or when some work does not get done because I do not understand that I have to pay a bribe, is that are our duties spelt out just as our rights are? Are we as a nation more concerned on our rights than on our duties – as responsible citizens – human beings? I decided to explore through the pages of our Constitution to find out. Seventy five years ago, we gave ourselves, a constitution - a rule book - to rule ourselves. There were many

discussions in the Parliament on how we wanted to rule ourselves. Several drafts were drawn up before the final version came into shape. Many prominent and sincere members were part of the drafting community. During the process of drafting the constitution for our Free India, the 299 Constituent Assembly members, headed by Dr Ambedkar, debated and discussed the draft for 165 days.

And finally, we got the version that begins with the Preamble “We the people of India, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into....” But

we didn't stop with that blue print. As we grew up as a young nation.... and as we and the world kept changing, we introduced several amendments to the constitution and today we have a framework that has about 448 articles in 400 plus pages to guide us. Among these 448 articles, there are roughly 40 or 50 articles, under many headings, that talk about our fundamental rights. We have so many rights enshrined in the constitution.

In comparison to the section on Rights, the section on Fundamental Duties as a citizen is very small. They are mentioned in section Part 4, in article 51 A. Even this section, 51 A, was added later in an amendment – in 42nd amendment in 1976. The Fundamental Duties didn't have any mention in the original Constitution.

Among this list of 11 duties, 9th article - or the article "i"- that talks about our duty " to safeguard public property" holds the key to the entire gamut of our civic sense and environment care.

With due respects to our forefathers, why weren't our duties – our responsibilities as citizens –get as much importance as our "Rights" in our constitution? My assumption is that they would have thought that we were more deprived of our rights for centuries. Therefore, focus should be on our fundamental rights. Or they would have thought that citizens would inherently follow their duties.

A cursory perusal of the draft discussions – Constituent Assembly Debates - reveals that there indeed was a discussion on including fundamental

duties in the constitution. But many members of the draft committee felt that an evolved society would adhere to the fundamental duties and responsibilities without any external compulsion. Responsibilities should be voluntary and not compulsory was the elegant thinking at that time.

In fact, Mahatma Gandhi felt that duties should be enshrined in the Constitution. Though there is no clear evidence that he voiced out this thought to the draft committee, many of his writings and discussions show that he believed that individual rights will follow if we adhered to our moral and ethical duties. In "Harijan", where most of his thoughts were expressed, he wrote in July 1947, "Begin with a Charter of Duties of Man and Rights will follow as spring follows winter."

Duties and Rights are two sides of the same coin. We must uphold our duties as much as we claim our rights.

Duties are varied. Duty towards me - my personal well-being - body and mind etc, duty towards my family and home, towards my street/ my community, my constituency, my city....and so on. We build our duty/ responsibility circles around us, spreading our interests and concerns. And the outermost circle would be the global interest – for many of us civic sense and environment, perhaps, comes in that last circle of responsibility. "It shall be the duty of every citizen of India— (a) to abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the National Flag and the National Anthem; (b) to cherish and follow the noble ideals which inspired

our national struggle for freedom; (c) to uphold and protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India; (d) to defend the country and render national service when called upon to do so; (e) to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities; to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women; (f) to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture; (g) to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wild life, and to have compassion for living creatures; (h) to develop the scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform; (i) to safeguard public property and to abjure violence;

(j) to strive towards excellence in all spheres of individual and collective activity so that the nation constantly rises to higher levels of endeavour and achievement;] 2 [(k) who is a parent or guardian to provide opportunities for education to his child or, as the case may be, ward between the age of six and fourteen years.]

Perhaps the members of the drafting committee of the Constitution honoured us by taking it for granted that we are responsible people and independence would bring out our patriotism and national pride. Let us not let their expectations down. Let us be duty bound without having to be compelled to be so by articles of the Constitution. That is our responsibility.

Today, captioned “FUNDAMENTAL DUTIES” under section - 51A, the list of 11 articles on our duties read thus:

“It shall be the duty of every citizen of India— (a) to abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the National Flag and the National Anthem; (b) to cherish and follow the noble ideals which inspired our national struggle for freedom; (c) to uphold and protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India; (d) to defend the country and render national service when called upon to do so; (e) to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities; to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women; (f) to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture; (g) to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wild life, and to have compassion for living creatures; (h) to develop the scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform; (i) to safeguard public property and to abjure violence; (j) to strive towards excellence in all spheres of individual and collective activity so that the nation constantly rises to higher levels of endeavour and achievement;] 2 [(k) who is a parent or guardian to provide opportunities for education to his child or, as the case may be, ward between the age of six and fourteen years.]

Secure Your Oxygen Mask First

Responsibility to Self



*Life is a complex mosaic of interconnections where our actions ripple across other's lives. Yet, writes **Vikram Bhalla**, amidst our roles as friends, siblings, children or mentors, there lies a profound truth: we can only uplift others if we ourselves are secure and thriving.*

Great wisdom does not always come from scholars and philosophers sometimes, one can get it from somewhere as innocuous as an inflight announcement.” *In the event of a sudden loss of cabin pressure, oxygen masks will deploy from the ceiling. Please ensure you secure your own oxygen mask before assisting others”.*

Most of us live in an interconnected world woven into the lives of countless others - we are someone's sibling, someone's child, someone's friend. We all have a footprint, and regardless of our journey, we impact others.

If we are secure or insecure, that is the energy we will spread to the world.

While the magnitude of the impact may vary, the fact that we will influence others is unmistakable. This power of impact creates a responsibility. We need to ensure that we are what we want the world to be, to take accountability, to create the best versions of ourselves, to be worthy of being a rock, a beacon or just a shoulder for someone to lean on.

When we look back in history, we see the strides humankind has made. We live longer, we live better, we are more aware of our privileges and are cognizant of the rights and wrongs that shape the world. This collective progress is the result of countless individuals who challenged the status quo, took responsibility for themselves and worked towards change.

This 'we' when we speak of humankind is a result of numerous I's ... It is people. If individuals had not taken responsibility for their own growth, they would not have had the ability, courage or determination to drive transformation. These individuals chipped away at the preset constructs to bring this change ... they took the responsibility to be better, to do better and the cumulative effort is there for all and sundry to see.

If individuals had not taken responsibility for themselves they would not have had the ability, the courage and the gumption to be the change. We are programmed to look for heroes and I admit that we need them to create a narrative but real change happens when millions bear personal responsibility... they be the change they want.

We cannot all be heroes of the world, but we can be heroes to people around us and more importantly, we can be heroes for ourselves. We need to nurture the inherent responsibilities to self that we all have ... the need state which has brought us from the caves to the age of Teslas.

So what does it take to be responsible for ourselves? What do we need to be aware of ... what can we do every day to ensure that we are constantly evolving ... making the world better for ourselves and those around us?

I have broken down my life into a few key pillars - practices, that, I believe, would work for most. To be truthful I have not achieved all of them ... some

are still work in progress but awareness is half the work done. So here is how I divide.

To be all of the above we need to break down what we need to be responsible for, because to achieve success we need to have bite-sized actionable practices we imbibe in our lives that take us to our destination.

Health

The concept of *quality of life* is simple - it requires creating harmony between both ourselves and the social familial networks we are connected to. When we are free from mental or physical issues, we channel our energy towards creating happiness. We owe it to ourselves to continuously strive for better health. A fit person does more than just survive; they aspire to create and inspire joy and vitality in those around them.

Passion

The defining difference between evolved beings and the rest of the animal kingdom is our ability to seek more than just basic physiological needs ... Being passionate about anything brings immense happiness and gives a purpose to life ... This passion is contagious and carries a profound and social impact. So find something that moves you, dedicate time and energy to it, and witness how it transforms your life.

Skill

Modern society often reduces individuals to mere cogs in a vast machine, leading many to question their place and value in the world. In the world. Even outside professional

endeavors, learning a skill is a great way to gain some lost territory. The process of learning a skill, practising it or teaching it does wonders for one's self-confidence, it improves one's ability to focus and generally makes us more productive human beings.

Discipline

This word is very maligned. It is often misunderstood. It is not about restriction but rather about structuring tasks into a daily routine while detaching from immediate gratification. It sounds easy, but it is not, and we all struggle with it in many ways ... I personally strive to win more battles than I lose creating hierarchies based on my life's priorities. . Discipline gets easier with age as we learn from the past successes and failures of past efforts. The key is to establish routines that align with our goals. Allow yourself space to breathe, and always get back on track when you falter.

Financial Well Being

This one is a tricky one some people live entirely in the present while others sacrifice joy for an uncertain future. Both extremes lead to loss. Fortunately we have countless resources to help us plan for tomorrow while enjoying today. Financial security is crucial, as money-related stress can overshadow all other aspects of life. That said, #YOLO which

is you only live once ... and even if you believe in reincarnation, the money you have now won't carry over to your next life.... so live a little, indulge yourself, but do so wisely. Treat yourself while ensuring that when the next rainy day arrives, you are still standing.

Stand Up for Yourself

Be heard. You have thoughts, beliefs, and perspectives – make sure they are heard. If you find yourself surrounded by people who refuse to listen, reconsider your circle. But before making changes, ensure that you have truly voiced your stance.

The Ultimate Responsibility

Above all, never lose the ability to learn. We are all products of accumulation – our experiences, emotions, and life events shape who we are. We have a responsibility to be a little better every day – more aware, more compassionate, more evolved.

With each passing day, we gain new experiences. Make them count. Strive for more, and in doing so, you will uplift those around you. That is my goal in life.

The responsibility to oneself is paramount. It's not a selfish act - it's the foundation for creating a better world, starting from within. By embracing self-awareness and action, we become our own heroes and, in turn, inspire others to do the same.

Pillars of the Earth

Is it enough to lead a happy, well-adjusted life? Should one not attempt the extra mile, put in the last mite of one's effort to achieve beyond the ordinary and the normal? Writes Man Mohan Kapur.

Am I my brother's keeper?" asked Cain of the Lord, when the Lord asked him where Abel was. He had, of course, spoken the most evasive words ever, as he was in fact avoiding answering. He was not even recognising his responsibility.

The question of taking responsibility is so important to us as human beings. It is one of the bases of man's recognition of his role in the scheme of things. Willingness to do what is right, to do more than what is necessary, is the one endeavour in which we all find our own level.

Any group, be it a business organisation, a government or a team, can be successful only if its individual members are responsible, diligent and perform their functions effectively and with enthusiasm.

For example, we praise the success of the Japanese management system, but what does it really involve? The real success of businesses of Japan are not so much the superb system of management, but the devotion, dedication and diligence of the ordinary worker, ably



backed by others at all levels.

Around the year 1890, Benjamin Kidd in his *Social Evolution*, came to the conclusion that England was a great country, and it was at the height of its power at that time, not because of the depth of its philosophers, or the brilliance of its scientists, but because every one did their duty. Whether it was an administrator, a cleaner or a Minister, all did their job diligently.

So, the secret of the greatness of a nation or the success of a society lies, not so much in the brilliance of individuals, but in the collective performance of their allotted functions.

Thus, one Indian executive today spends twelve to sixteen hours on the job.

A Japanese executive goes out to work, dines with business related contacts, and continues working late 12-14 hours a day, spending something like extreme dedication and commitment.

The costs of responsibility are quite high. Stress, tensions, short tempers are one beginning. Nervous breakdowns can also be expected in some extreme cases. So if one wishes to lead a normal life,

one must strike a balance between a sense of responsibility towards one's work on the one hand and the rest of one's life. Whether one is a housewife, a scientist or another professional, one must learn to relax, take exercise and not be totally absorbed in work. One must not neglect areas of life outside one's profession. So, the key to a happy and well-adjusted life is to strike a balance, paying adequate attention to all areas of life, without neglect.

One needs to display an almost *manic* involvement to reach out of the way levels of attainment, and for making *lasting contributions* to organisational advancement and human welfare.

But is it enough to lead a happy, well-adjusted life? Should one not attempt the extra mile, put in the last mite of one's effort to achieve beyond the ordinary and the normal? I am sure anybody would say yes to this.

Hold it! Before we attempt this, let us examine the process and what it involves.

How does it affect the life of the one involved? It is, more than time, it is total attention that one has to devote. When a person totally dedicated to his work, returns home, his wife may complain that he does not listen to what she has to say, or ignores her, or does not respond to

what the children have to say. Such a person is wedded to his work; he is likely to be a high achiever and a good provider. But he may not be good company to the family, because he cannot devote quality time to them.

Viewed from the point of view of the family, this is a sad situation, but from the profession point of view, it is fine. Is such high devotion to one's profession justified? So, the answer depends on from whose point of view one looks at it.

Another take on this is:

Great things are not achieved by devotion, but by extraordinary devotion. One needs to put in extraordinary effort and to display an almost manic involvement to reach out of the way levels of attainment.

Quantum advancements in social welfare are attained when the dedicated and selfless work by

individuals are willing to make a contribution and not just perform their current duties adequately. That is what will make the difference.



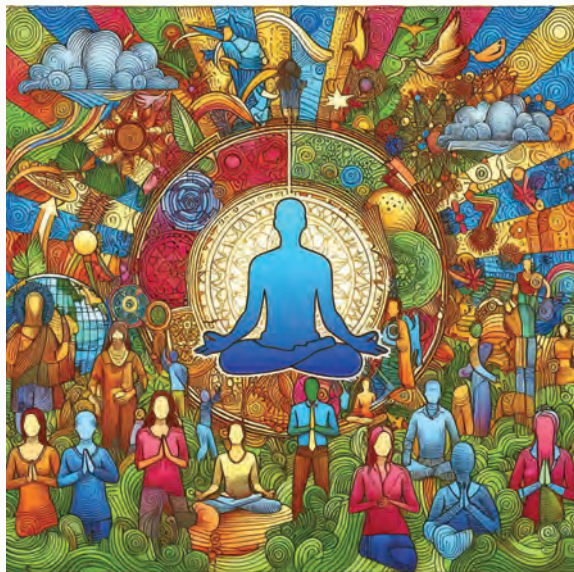
Unable to bear the burden of his responsibilities, a man drops to his knees in prayer:
“Oh God! I cannot go on! I have too heavy a cross to bear.”

The Lord replies, “My son, open this door, place your cross down in this room and pick up any other cross you wish.” With a sigh of relief the man lowers his cross and looks around the room. There were so many crosses. Some were so large that their tops were not visible. He selects a tiny cross leaning against a far wall. “I’d like that one,” he says. The Lord replies, “My son, that’s the cross you brought in.”

Responsibility in Jainism

A Path to Self-Realization and Universal Well-being

Responsibility goes beyond individual behavior to social obligation writes Nandini Jain



Jainism, one of the ancient religions originating from India lays profound emphasis on personal responsibility as the stepping stone to spiritual development and liberation. It is firmly believed that each soul is responsible for its own actions (Karma) and the consequent journey towards liberation (Moksha). Every act, thought and word conditions our 'Karma' and decides our spiritual path. Responsibility in Jainism is not only an obligation but also a deep and conscious process of self-control, non-violence, honesty, and eventually, spiritual liberation. Through a deliberate

selection of responsibility in day-to-day life, we accumulate good karma and progress towards liberation and we make the world a more harmonious place to live in.

In contrast to belief systems that hold fate outside of oneself, Jainism practices self-effort in determining the life of a person. Every soul has its own destiny for which it is solely accountable. No external deity or force can intervene in the purification of one's soul. It is through personal effort, self-restraint, and ethical conduct that liberation is attainable. This self-reliant approach fosters a deep sense of responsibility as

each person must consciously navigate their actions to avoid the accumulation of negative karma.

Jain ethics are encapsulated in the five great vows namely non-violence(Ahimsa), truthfulness(Satya), non-stealing(Asteya), self-control(Brahmacharya), and non-possessiveness(Aparigraha) which serve as guidelines for responsible and righteous living. These vows are not merely external observances but require internal commitments, guiding them to live responsibly with mindfulness and integrity.

Transcending the self, there is responsibility towards others. Jains recognize the interconnectedness of all life forms and the impact of human actions on the ecosystem. This awareness translates into practices that minimize harm to the environment such as vegetarianism, sustainable living, and active participation in conservation efforts. The ultimate form of responsibility in Jainism is non-violence, extending not just to physical injury but to mental, verbal, and environmental injury. Kind words, refraining from gossip, being patient, and forgiving lead to a harmonious and empathetic society. Truthfulness is not only about avoiding lies but also about performing one's actions according to moral principles. Speaking the truth with kindness, being honest in one's words and actions, and refraining from deceit or manipulation help build trust and righteousness in human relationships. A responsible life is one that reflects these values in all relationships, without

causing harm through words or actions.

Responsibility goes beyond individual behavior to social obligation. Jainism advocates that overindulgence in worldly goods leads to greed, misery, and coercion. By embracing non-possessiveness, one becomes accustomed to living modestly and ethically, avoiding unwanted consumption and wastage. Generosity and alms-giving, born out of detachment from material riches, create an unbiased and equitable society. A responsible person distributes resources among needy people and is happy without frills. Excess and greed breed social inequality, but simplicity helps build equality and peace.

Respecting the rights of others is a crucial aspect of responsibility. Non-stealing extends beyond material possessions to include intellectual, emotional, and environmental integrity. Taking credit for another's work, infringing on intellectual property, or being unfair in business or personal dealings are forms of theft. Even wasting time and energy—valuable resources in life—goes against the principle of responsible living. A fair and ethical approach to personal and professional conduct contributes to social justice, strengthening the moral fabric of society.

Jainism also emphasizes one's duty towards nature. All forms of life, right from plants and animals or even microorganisms, have a soul. Plundering nature for individual benefits is an act of violence. A responsible person practices an environment-friendly way of life,

conserving waste, favoring organic and cruelty-free items, and safeguarding natural reserves. Small conscious steps like tree plantation, limiting plastic usage, and utilizing resources responsibly contribute towards building a sustainable world. By giving the same respect to nature as other living things, one is adhering to the Jain principle of non-violence on a larger scale.

Spiritual development is another critical aspect of responsibility. A responsible individual gives top priority to self-realization and spiritual development. Jainism teaches that meditation and detachment purify the soul of 'karma'. Daily meditation brings inner peace and consciousness, and silence and fasting foster self-control. Jain scriptures and adhering to the Three Jewels of Right Faith(Samyak Darshan), Right Knowledge(Samyak Gyaan), and Right Conduct(Samyak Charitra) offer direction in the journey to liberation. Ownership of one's spiritual development culminates in profound satisfaction and finally, Moksha, the ultimate aspiration of life.

Contemporary life offers numerous challenges to accountable living. Temptations of materialism, emotional responses, and a lack of discipline are common obstacles in following the Jain doctrine. To be committed to responsibility, it is necessary to surround oneself with individuals who believe in ethical living. Small habits practiced every day as per Jain principles slowly strengthen discipline. Consulting

spiritual guides and books keeps one grounded. Patience and perseverance are the keys, as improvement of oneself is an ongoing process. Responsibility entails embracing the fact that change is gradual.

The virtue of forgiveness is another indispensable component of responsibility. 'Kshama', or forgiveness, in Jainism is regarded as a virtue that releases the soul from the weight of resentment and anger. Forgiveness by others and the seeking of forgiveness for one's own actions cleanse one's conscience and create an environment of peace. Annual festivals, like Paryushana, help bring to mind one's past actions, which inspires humility and penance. Assuming responsibility for one's emotions and conflicts is the key to living responsibly.

Thus responsibility in Jainism is not a mere duty but a voluntary choice - a choice to live ethically, responsibly, and compassionately. For this one has to take ownership of one's thoughts, actions, and their implications. By accepting responsibility in every walk of life - personal, social, environmental, and spiritual not only cleanses karma but also make the world a better place to live in. For sure, this path demands great responsibility, awareness, discipline, and compassion. This sense of responsibility not only leads an individual to achieve liberation but also towards the well-being of society and the conservation of the natural world.

In True Faith

Drawing from the Quran, Moosa Raza explores humanity's ability to choose the responsibilities that come with it.

When God created the free will to choose, man accepted it on the very day of creation. While the Creator knew his strengths and his weaknesses, man did not. In his arrogance and ignorance man voluntarily accepted the trust to run the affairs of the world...It was Omar



Khayyam, that great Persian poet, who spread the canard that all Muslims in the world believed in the inexorable operations of a Fate from which no man had any recourse. His famous quatrain, beautifully mistranslated by Fitzgerald, went a long way in confirming this mis-belief:

The Moving Finger writes and having writ Moves on; nor all thy piety nor wit Shall lure it back to cancel half a line Nor all thy tears wash out a word of it.

If man's destiny is written, obviously he has no responsibility for his actions. If he is not responsible for his actions, he cannot be held accountable.

But the reality of Islamic belief as regards Fate, Destiny, Predestination, Karma, or Responsibility - or whatever one wants to call it - is very different.

In a beautiful passage in the Quran, Allah announces to the assembled angels:

“Verily I propose to set in the earth a vice-agent.”

Uncharacteristically enough, the angels protest. Man is a sinful creature, they say, given to corruption and bloodshed. Can such a creature act as God's representative on earth? God brushes aside their protests:

“I know that which you know not.”

(Q 2:30)

What was it that God knew which the angels knew not? Because He was the Creator, He knew that in man, He was creating a creature in the best of moulds, endowing him with knowledge -“taught

him by the pen, taught him what he knew not” - blessing him with all faculties, and right guidance.

Once Ali, the fourth Caliph, was asked about free will and predestination by a desert dweller. He asked the Bedouin to raise his left foot. The man did so. Then Ali asked him to raise the second foot also. The man protested “How can I lift my right foot with my left already raised?” Ali said “You left foot was your free choice. By doing so, you have predetermined the lifting of the other foot. Faith therefore lies between free choice and predetermination.”

Yet within this frame work, man has infinite capacity of choice. He may be born a German, but he may choose to be an Einstein or an Ariel Sharon. He may be born an Indian, but he may choose to be a Gandhi or a Godse.

The responsibility God cast on man which he voluntarily assumed at the very beginning of creation related first to his own self. For the doing of good or evil by man did not affect God. Man's actions affect him alone. As the Quran says “And if any strive, they so do for their own sakes; for Allah is above all needs from the creation” (Q. 29: 7).

“Surely, we have revealed to you a book with the truth for the sake of man; so whoever follows the right way, it is for his own soul, and whoever errs he errs so only to his own detriment; and you are a custodian over them” (Q 39: 41).

Man's responsibility is to his Creator - to submit to him in faith, to accept and acknowledge suzerainty over himself

and over all creation and render obedience to Him and Him alone. But faith in God and his Unity alone does not absolve man of his responsibility to the rest of God's creatures.

In the Quran, good deeds are always linked with faith in God. The exhortation is to believe and perform good deeds. “As for those who believe and do right, joy is theirs and goodly return” (Q 13: 31). ***“And it was said to those who act rightly: What was it that your Lord revealed? They said: Goodness. For those who do good in this world receive good; and certainly the Home of the Hereafter will be good, and certainly from and freedom for. We want freedom from injustice and oppression, we want freedom to speak our minds, and freedom to enjoy the things we desire.

However, in human affairs, these freedoms often conflict. When we have freedom to acquire and enjoy a wealth of consumer goods, we may bring about terrible oppression for people in other parts of the world, who have to suffer exploitation and ecological devastation to supply us the goods that we enjoy. What is good for you may be evil for somebody else. Your freedom may be my slavery. Therefore the Quran says that God raised the heavens and established a balance in the universe. “Set up the standards with equity and transgress not the balance,” says the Quran. Standards of production and consumption, of justice and regulation, of war and peace, of pollution and protection—all of them have to be set up

with equity. If you transgress the balance, you do so at your own peril.

The Quran goes beyond this narrow band of individual responsibility to the much larger responsibility of maintaining balance in the universe.

In Islam, “freedom from” is to be free from the constraints placed on us by the created beings, to serve God and God alone. “Freedom for” is to choose the Real (*Haq*) over the Unreal (*Batil*) in every case. As another writer puts it, people should desire to be free for knowledge, for desire, for power, for good and for everything that is positive and real.


It is reported that Umar, the second Caliph of Islam, was adjudicating a case of theft. He asked the thief, “Why did you commit the offence?” The thief replied, “It was God's will.” Umar ordered an additional number of lashes to the prescribed penalty for theft on account of the misguided remark-a

remark that absolves man of his responsibility for his actions.

Quran calls every action, good or bad, *kasab* and the ability to perform that act is *iktisab*. Kasab means what one earns or the result of one's action. Iktisab also is what one has to enjoy or bear in consequence. The responsibility is to choose the right action and avoid the evil.

Finally, God's mercy is infinite. When man chooses the right action, God's help is always there to support and sustain him.

Every step that man takes towards the right direction has God's support behind it. While the burden of responsibility on man is heavy, God's mercy is infinite. While fulfilling the responsibilities laid on him, if man constantly calls on God for support, he will surely get it, as God himself says: “I answer the call of the caller when he calls upon me.”



The Smallest seed of
faith is better
than the largest fruit
of happiness

Henry David Thoreau

Actions and Decisions

The Responsible Way

Shri S.L. Gangadharappa explores three dimensions of responsibility to find it is the single most important factor for a just, ethical and sustainable world.



The word responsibility has a far broader connotation and a much deeper meaning than it is usually understood. It means, at once, a duty,

obligation and a commitment to universally accepted norms and values. As far as I understand the word means “Uttara Dayitwa” or accountability for

once decisions and actions. Responsibility is a duty to do something that is expected of a person towards something or someone to whom he owes a duty he is expected to perform that duty to be fully responsible for the outcome of such performance or non-performance. As a concept responsibility has three facets – in Public Responsibility, Private Responsibility and Social Responsibility.

Public Responsibility

It means that you are accountable and answerable for the consequences of your decisions. It enjoins that you perform your public duties in such a way that interests of the Public Organization or Government or Society are not adversely affected in anyway. It means being honest, sincere and dependable.

Responsibility in public life enjoins a person to discharge his duties as a citizen to promote public good, encompassing the community and the society. It can cover civic duties such as keeping your surroundings clean, maintaining ethical standards and upholding standards in one's profession. It extends to being accountable to employees, colleagues and general public too.

Public responsibility also includes moral responsibility involving questions of right and wrong and the capacity to make right moral judgments. Besides individuals have responsibilities towards each other based on social norms and implicit agreements within the society.

Persons dealing with matters like public policy will have a greater responsibility in formulating and implementing policies, that promote welfare of citizen and greater good of the society as a whole, key parameter for such public policy will be accountability and transparency in decision making. It covers areas of social equity and ethical integrity.

This responsibility is a multi faced concept that encompasses various aspects of life – social harmony and well being of communities which, in turn, ensures well being of the nation itself. A persons sense and level of responsibility is influenced by cultural, institutional and socio economic factors. These factors provide a frame work within which individuals learn, internalise and behave in a responsible manner.

Private Responsibility

While the public responsibility extends to behaviour in matters relating to Government, Institution and broader community, private responsibility relates to societal activities such as obeying laws, paying taxes, engaging in community service and working for the common good. It extends to areas like maintaining ethical standards, integrity and reasonable competence. Philosophically it extends to areas like moral responsibility involving capacity to make right moral judgements.

When we talk of private responsibility it is implicit that individuals in a society have unwritten code of conduct and are

responsible to each other. It emphasises mutual rights, and obligations which are the very bedrock of an orderly and healthy society. Thus, our social structure, cultural environment and socio economic factors shape our understanding and practice of responsibility.

Social Responsibility

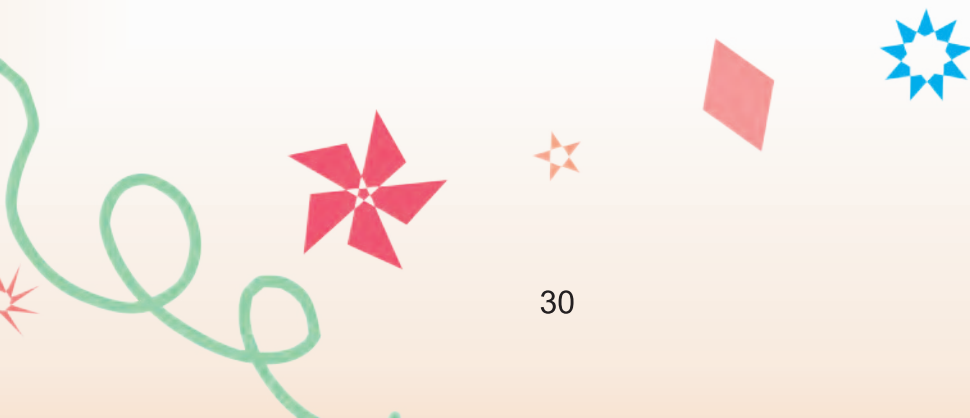
All human beings live in a society – assemblage of human beings having a common history, common language and generally a common way of life. Here every individual owes a duty and a obligation to their individuals to behave in a particular manner guaranteeing the same freedom to other members of the society. Family is the unit of the society and it is here that individuals learn about responsibility. Parents and other senior members of the family instill values, discipline and accountability in children. It is here attitudes and behaviour of an individual is shaped and reflected in his conduct with other individuals and society at large. Religious environment in the family and the society has a great influence on the sense of responsibility of an individual. Religious institution

often impact moral obligations, community service, mutual respect and compassion.

In addition, economic conditions of the family and the society can influence an individual's ability to fulfil his social responsibilities. Those with better economic conditions can contribute positively to the society and those with less opportunities behave in a different manner. Those with better economic opportunities can participate more actively in community service and enhance a greater sense of responsibility. Thus, engaging with others in collective efforts, fosters a sense of belonging and promotes shared accountability.

Conclusion

Responsibility is a multi faceted concept that permeates into every aspect of life. It is essential for personal growth of an individual, social harmony and a general well being of the society as a whole. Observing and practicing responsibility in public life, private life, and social life will lead to an orderly way of life and can lead to a just, ethical and sustainable world.



Screening Responsibility

*Through the eye of the camera,
script writer, Arun Sukumar, finds the meaning of responsibility.*



Growing up, Oscar Wilde was (and still is) one of my favourite writers—his profound observations on society and morality, wrapped in scathing sarcasm and wit, left a lasting impact on me.

I first read *The Picture of Dorian Gray* in my early teens. Expecting a conventional prologue, I was instead met with a manifesto on art and the artist. It was simple yet confounding. Was Wilde mocking art or praising it? What was he trying to say?!

The book itself was a brilliant, witty read, but the prologue lingered in my mind, especially the line: '*All art is quite useless.*'

I remember thinking how liberating it would be to express oneself honestly and uninhibitedly, without the burden of meaning, profundity, or world-changing intent. Art, in its purest form, has only one purpose: to be beautiful. Its only duty is to evoke feeling, whether joy, sorrow, or even fear. To move someone through beauty—that is the artist's aim.

True art should have no other functionality or intent.

I was sold on the idea of becoming an artist. I first gravitated towards music - who wouldn't want to be a rock star? Unfortunately, after struggling with the guitar and veena, I realized my desire far outpaced my talent. I just didn't have the ear for it.

That realization led me to a crucial truth: before becoming an artist, I needed to find the right medium. Art is not just about creating beauty; it is about mastering a medium—understanding its strengths and weaknesses. No medium is perfect. Every medium is unique.

This search ultimately led me to the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), where I formally began my journey as a screenwriter and director. At FTII, I learned that film, at its core, is a recording medium, but it can be elevated to an art form. It is a unique blend of all other arts—music, literature, painting, theatre—woven together to tell stories in a highly visual and auditory way. I fell in love with the medium and have never looked back.

Naturally, in film school, debates about art were constant. What is art? Is film art? What is the purpose of art? Does the artist have a responsibility? These questions made me return to Wilde's prologue time and again, watching its meaning evolve with my understanding of film and my own purpose as an artist. So, what do I see as the purpose of art? To evoke emotion. To say beautiful things in a beautiful way.

In this sense, music remains the purest form of art. Especially instrumental music, which evokes emotion unencumbered by message or function. Film, for all its strengths, is not a perfect art form. Its greatest strength is storytelling, yet this is also its weakness. Every story has a moral, an underlying philosophy or world view. *Romeo and Juliet* either overcome the hatred between their families or are destroyed by it. The storyteller doesn't necessarily mean to impose morality. They let characters act within their nature, and yet the characters' fates inevitably impart a message.

This makes film, more than any other art form, inherently political. James Monaco, in *How to Read a Film*, outlines three layers of politics in cinema:

- 1. Inherent Politics** – Art is inherently political because it is an act of expression. Artists infuse their work with their thoughts, opinions, beliefs, and biases—sometimes intentionally, sometimes unconsciously. This could be as overt as a filmmaker's ideological stance or as subtle as a patriarchal or feminist gaze towards women in a narrative. Even the choice of what to depict (or omit) is political.
- 2. Mimetic Politics** – Art mirrors its world: its norms, cultures, histories, and socio-political realities. This is the argument filmmakers use to justify violence and gore: '*We show it as we see it.*' A notable example in mainstream Bollywood is how

villains are often depicted with vices like smoking, drugs, and womanizing, while heroes can be portrayed drinking copious alcohol— or, surprisingly, consuming *bhaang* (notably Amitabh Bachchan and Rajesh Khanna). This subtly mirrors Indian society's attitude toward alcohol and cannabis, even if it is not openly acknowledged.

3. **Ontological Politics** – Art doesn't just reflect reality; it shapes it. Film, more than any other medium, influences how people think, behave, and desire. Audiences walk out of a film wanting to dress, talk, and act like the characters they admire. This is the very foundation of advertising—convincing people they

lack something and showing them what to desire. History has seen this weaponized, from Leni Riefenstahl's Nazi propaganda films to modern political cinema. (Literature has had its moments of ontological influence—Charles Dickens's *Nicholas Nickleby* and *Oliver Twist* contributed to social reform—but such instances are rare and far between.)

As an artist, therefore, it matters not only *what* I say (inherent politics) but *how* I say it (mimetic and ontological politics). As Slavoj Žižek put it, '*Film doesn't just teach you what to desire. It teaches you how to desire.*'

All this makes film a truly powerful medium of communication. And as we all know, '*with great power comes great*



responsibility.' (Incidentally, even this phrase is an example of cinema's ontological power.)

So, over the years I have asked myself, what are my responsibilities as an artist, specifically as a filmmaker? And this is where I am at so far...

To the Medium – To push its boundaries and use it as an art form, not just a recording device.

To the Story – To explore morality rather than dictate it. Art reduced to propaganda is no longer art.

To the Audience – To move them. Whether they enjoy the emotions evoked is subjective. My duty is to make them *feel*, whether by holding up a mirror that reveals their inner monster or one that makes them more beautiful than they are. Both have their critics.

To Myself – To express my thoughts and emotions honestly. I am not the audience's teacher, preacher, or nanny. My responsibility is to tell my story as sincerely as possible. I am an artist. The artist can talk about anything and everything. Nothing is taboo, nothing is sacrosanct. The only measure of the artist is how well the story is presented.

And what about an artist's responsibility to patrons, you may ask? After all, can art survive without patronage? Can the artist? Film, more than any other art, involves large amounts of technology, resources, and manpower. It is a commercial art, requiring capital, and therefore, inevitably, demands profit to be viable.

So, it is a fair question to ask. But the

answer is - no. The artist does not owe patrons. Instead, I would argue, it is the patrons that have a responsibility to art. Patrons support art to serve their own desires—be it a love of art, desire for prestige, furthering an ideology, or making profit. The church, the state, and the wealthy have always funded art, not out of altruism, but because they recognize its power. It is no coincidence that some of the best film schools in the world (VGIK, Moscow and FTII, Pune) are government-funded. A government promotes and sustains art—whether to harness its power or let it bloom varies from government to government.

So, any collaboration between an artist and a patron is based on a mutual agreement—on what the art is meant to be and what is to be gained from its creation. Whether either party honors or subverts this agreement (as seen done intelligently in the case of Iranian cinema) is a matter of personal integrity, not artistic principle.

Some people are responsible human beings, and some are not. This has nothing to do with being an artist. However, I would rather people express their ideologies and politics through art than through violence. Let them pick up a camera, not a gun.

Because at the end of the day, *'all art is quite useless.'* And that is its highest praise.

Photos: Arun Sukumar

Telling Tales...

And then what happened...?

I was travelling in Arunachal Pradesh. The roads were undulated and the vehicle old. My back was hurting. "Do not think about it, ma'am," said my guide helpfully. "How can I not? My back is hurting. My head is hurting....how irresponsible of the administration, I raved. "What is responsibility, ma'am?" asked my guide's calm voice. "Let me tell you a story," he said.

"Once a bird was flying across the skies, when it saw a gourd lying on the ground. She loved the taste of gourd and was also hungry. She swooped down and picked it



up. She then flew up to a tree, sat comfortably on a branch and thought she would have a restful afternoon eating her gourd. Just then a partridge called as it always did, at noon. The call was so sharp and loud that it startled the bird holding the gourd. The gourd

slipped from its grasp. It fell down with a thud. A deer was sleeping beneath the tree. When it heard the thud, it got scared. It thought some danger was afoot and so started running frantically to get deep into the forest where no one would find him. She had to run through fields and mountains to reach the forest. While doing so he accidentally kicked a boulder which went rolling down the hill. It made such a noise and raised so much dust! But on the way it also hit a banana plant which broke and crashed straight on to a crab sleeping by a pond. The crab was sun bathing."

I could see all this being enacted in the landscape around me. The hilly terrain, the greenery, the banana trees. "And then what happened...?" I asked amused and entertained by the story.

The banana stem fell straight on its face. The crab woke up angry and upset, "You have deformed me. I had such beautiful eyes and now you have squashed them and my face is flat. You must apologise to me and pay me compensation," said the crab to the banana stem.

"Oh dear! I Am sorry," said the banana stem remorsefully. "I was standing happily swinging with the winds when this boulder came crashing on to me and broke my stem, " said the banana stem. "You should ask the boulder for compensation."

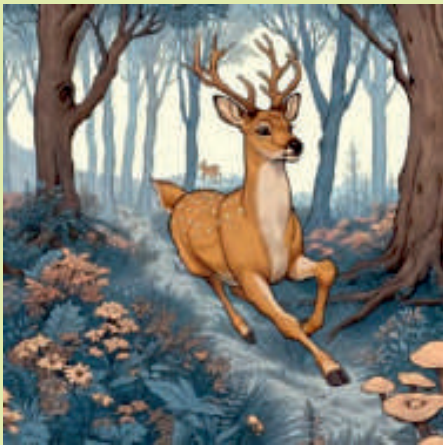
So, the crab and the banana stem went downhill to where the boulder was lying and said, "Boulder, boulder, you broke

the banana stem and squashed the face and eyes of the crab, you have to apologise and pay compensation."

The boulder was so sorry. "Oh! I was resting on the hilltop with my friends when a deer kicked me down. You must ask the deer for apology and compensation," said the rock.

"Hmm," I said. Whose fault was it anyway? Would the deer accept? My guide laughed and took his time to reply. He told me that the rock, the crab and the banana stem went to the deer which was hiding in the forest and asked the deer to apologise. "And did the deer apologise?" I asked. 'The deer should not...after all he ran because he was scared.

"I ran because I heard a big thud when I was sleeping. I thought a hunter or a lion was coming that way. So I ran in fear." So, the deer, the rock, the banana stem and the crab went to where the deer had been sleeping. They found a gourd lying



there. "Did you get scared of this?" they asked the deer. Then the bird sitting on the tree explained how the partridge called and the gourd had slipped from its claws. The bird, the deer, the rock, the banana stem and the crab went to the partridge and demanded an apology and compensation.

The partridge had nothing to give. "What shall I give?" he asked. "And I always call at noon."

They all had a discussion. What was the partridge to give? And he did not mean any harm, he was calling as was his nature. "Give me your tail," said the crab. And that is what the partridge readily gave. "Also," said the bird. "Can you stop calling at lunch time? Call early in the morning and at sunset. At noon time, let people eat in peace." The partridge agreed.

That is why the partridge has no tail and always calls at sunrise and sunset, not at noon.

"Like that ma'am, sometimes no one is responsible...it is the way of things. The government lays the roads, landslides and rain lashes over them and we are back to square one. We can suggest improvements and like the partridge gave its tail and fixed its time of call, can come to some agreement, but we can never prevent this situation from happening again with some other characters. "My guide was right. The story had made my back ache disappear and livened up my mood. I also learnt that to fix responsibility does not mean to blame.

A Silent Revolution

*As individuals, we are an integral part of the society we live in. Our actions, decisions, and behaviors have a significant impact on the world around us. Therefore, it is essential to recognize our responsibility towards society and strive to make a positive difference. In this article **Prema Raghavan** explores the concept of social responsibility and provides real-life examples of individuals and organizations making a positive impact.*



Leadng a moral and ethical life is crucial, as it lays the foundation for a strong family and, subsequently, a better society. In this article, we will explore the responsibilities of an individual at

Different stages of life, highlighting good and bad behaviors.

KPR Mills: Empowering Women through Education

A remarkable example of social responsibility is KP Ramaswamy, the

A vibrant, circular illustration featuring a central globe showing the Americas. Surrounding the globe are numerous stylized figures of people in business attire, some standing and some interacting with various technological and business symbols. These symbols include laptops, tablets, smartphones, gears, lightbulbs, and documents. The entire scene is set against a background of soft, colorful clouds, creating a sense of global unity and digital innovation.

Responsibility towards the Nation

Patriotism is not just about love for one's country; it involves active participation in its growth and development. Being a responsible citizen means abiding by laws, voting, paying taxes, and contributing to national progress. National responsibility also includes upholding cultural heritage and fostering unity among diverse communities.

Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, former President of India, embodied national responsibility. His contributions to India's defense and space programs, along with his emphasis on education and youth development, made him a role model. He consistently urged young people to contribute positively to the nation's development.

Responsibility at a Global Level

In an interconnected world, global responsibility has become more significant than ever. Climate change, poverty, health crises, and conflicts require collective efforts beyond national boundaries. Each person contributes to the global ecosystem through their actions, whether by reducing their carbon footprint, supporting humanitarian causes, or advocating for world peace.

Similarly, climate activists like Greta Thunberg emphasize the need for sustainable living. Businesses and governments must also shoulder responsibility by ensuring ethical practices, reducing pollution, and addressing global issues. These examples demonstrate that social responsibility is not just a moral obligation, but a practical way to create positive change in the world. By embracing our responsibility towards society, we can work together to build a more just, equitable and sustainable world for all.

In conclusion, individual and social responsibility towards society are intertwined. By leading a moral and ethical life, individuals can create a positive impact on their families, communities, and society as a whole. It is essential to recognize and fulfill responsibilities at different stages of life, making conscious choices to exhibit good behaviors and avoid bad ones. By doing so, we can build a better world for ourselves and future generations. Responsibility is a virtue that defines the strength of individuals and civilizations. Whether towards family, society, the nation, or the world, responsible actions shape a just and progressive society. History has shown that those who take responsibility create lasting change and inspire future generations. A Call to Awakening

As the world rapidly evolves, we are witnessing a profound revolution in the very fabric of our society. The structures of family and community, the modes of production, social relations, and employment are all undergoing a seismic shift in this digital era.

Yet, amidst this transformation, we are losing sight of the sacred: family, nature, and religion are being exploited and disrespected. The relentless pursuit of self-interest has led humanity to a nadir of violence, injustice, and cultural dislocation.

It is imperative that we awaken to our responsibility toward society and the universe at large. We must recognize the intrinsic value of our interconnectedness and the delicate balance of the ecosystem. Only through a collective awakening can we hope to mitigate the damage and forge a more compassionate, equitable, and sustainable world."

As individuals, we must recognize our duties and act with integrity. Small acts—helping a family member, following societal norms, serving the nation, or making environmentally friendly choices—contribute to a better world. As Mahatma Gandhi said, "Be the change that you wish to see in the world." By embracing responsibility at every level, we pave the way for a brighter, more compassionate future.

Wisdom Waves : Navigating Spiritual Realms



Balancing Freedom and Responsibility

*Drawing insights from the Bhagavad Gita **Bansi Mahajan** explores balance between freedom and responsibility. Freedom and responsibilities are the two sides of the same coin. One has to accept both.*

Krishna says in the Gita, 6:17: *Yuktaharaviharasya yukta cheshtasya karmasu, yuktasvapnava bodhasya yogo bhavati duhkhaha—'*

The yoga which frees someone from all troubles and miseries, is achieved only by the one who upholds moderation in food and recreation, in his actions and in sleep or wakefulness.'

Until there is a balance between food and sleep, in all movements and actions, no civilization can evolve and even function

anywhere. Buddha also emphasized *madhyamarg*, middle path for the ideal living. Middle-path or the way is the key to *enlightenment*, nirvana, success, happiness and freedom.

In the same manner, when we talk of freedom, it is always attached with some responsibilities, too. Freedom and responsibilities are the two sides of the same coin. One has to accept both. Some spiritual and social masters speak persistently for freedom only. Sometimes, they are so enthusiastic that



they go to the extent of talking against prime social institutions.

Krishna says perform your duties without the attachment for its fruits and keep even-mindedness in success or failure. If our eyes are on the results, we cannot perform well.

When our mind is in conflict of success and failure, then we will not be able to do justice to our job. Equanimity and evenness of mind is called yoga. Yoga itself is a middle path, and is a psychosynthesis of physical, mental and spiritual elevation.

No society can evolve until there is a

balance of duties and rights. It is applicable to all, from family unit to institutions, societies, nations and entire civilization. The lack of balance between duties and rights, freedom and responsibilities, trigger many chaotic conditions.

Several people including leaders tend to harp on only one aspect, the freedom or rights. They scarcely speak of responsibilities or duties for the fear of becoming unpopular. It is a leader's moral duty to make followers aware of their duties.

Freedom is the basic human right and intrinsic privilege for any society. But it should be necessarily followed with self-control, discipline and obligations, which are a must for the growth of any civilisation. If anyone intends to excel in any field, it may be science, music, medicine, or sports, one has to imbibe the traits of self-control, discipline and the essential requirements of the job too, to reach the destination. These are essential for complete freedom. Middle path and moderation is the fundamental stratum for sublimation.

Courtesy: Speaking Tree TOI

Until the great mass of the people shall be filled with the sense of responsibility for each other's welfare, social justice can never be attained.

Helen Keller

Book Review

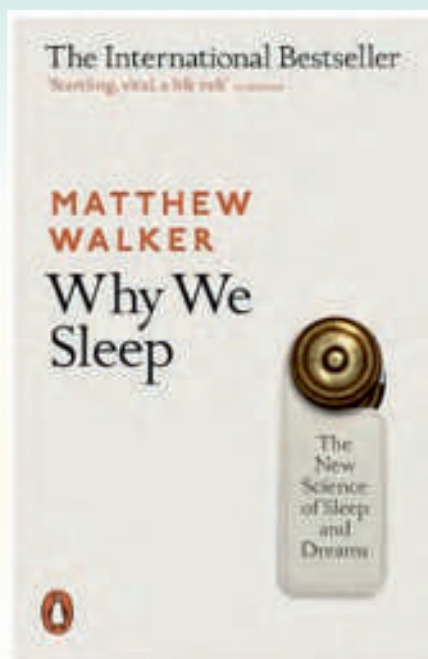
Why We Sleep

*There is a reason behind everything, even activities like sleep which we have for long dismissed as a waste of time or a symbol of lethargy, writes **R Dasarathy***

It is one of the many ironies of modern life – that in an age, where there are so many gadgets for saving manual labour and time, the time saved is not being used for relaxing and resting. And on the contrary, “sleep deprivation” is a common experience. The human being is probably the only animal who intentionally delays his sleep. Margaret Thatcher is reported to have said “Sleep is for wimps” and Ronald Reagan had a similar attitude – both suffered from dementia towards the end of their lives. On the other hand, we understand that elite athletes like Roger Federer and Usain Bolt sleep between 10-12 hours a day. The author who also counsels high-profile sports teams, suggests that they should get adequate rest/ sleep before a game and equally importantly after a game (only then is the learning established in the body of the player).

Increasingly the boundaries between workplace and home have blurred. During student life and subsequently during one's working years there is no limit for the number of working and waking hours, and if one does not listen to the wake-up call to proportion the day sensibly (actually call to 'sleep') – this may become even more difficult for coming generations.

Accordingly this book by a Sleep



scientist, Matthew Walker is a topical book to discuss at this stage.

The author of “Why we Sleep” Matthew Walker is a British scientist, currently a professor of neuro science and psychology at Univ. of California, Berkley. This is the first book of Matthew Walker and was published in 2017. He also has a regular Podcast.

The book is divided into four parts:

In Part 1, the book demystifies the enigma of Sleep and explains the components of the same. The simple point is: Sleep is the most effective thing we can do to recharge our brain and body each day. Hence the traditional wisdom that the shorter your sleep, the shorter your life span.

While many aspects with respect to the stages of sleep are by now familiar (Deep Sleep, NREM sleep and REM

sleep), the following model is new and useful in understanding the role of sleep in the cognition process:

- the wake state principally as reception (experiencing and constantly learning the world around you),

- Non-REM sleep as reflection (storing and strengthening those raw ingredients of new facts and skills), and

- REM sleep as integration (interconnecting these raw ingredients with each other, with all past experiences, and, in doing so, building an ever more accurate model of how the world works, including innovative insights and problem-solving abilities).

This reminds you probably of the three-step process of learning in the traditional Indian system of learning – *shravana*, *manana* and *nidhidhyasa*.

Probably one the most important takeaways from the book is that once sleep is lost, it is lost forever- one cannot recoup it. The sad consequences of this on mental health are detailed in the book. The least that we can do is to ensure 7-9 hours of sleep from today ! That older adults need less sleep is a myth. Though older we get, the more frequently we wake up throughout the night – this results in sleep “fragmentation.”

Of the many advantages conferred by sleep on the brain, that of memory is especially impressive, and particularly well understood. Sleep has proven itself time and again as a memory aid: both before learning, to prepare your brain for initially making new memories, and after learning, to cement those memories and prevent forgetting. The other nuanced discovery is that sleep responsible for the overnight motor-skill enhancement. The increases in speed

and accuracy, were directly related to the amount of stage 2 Non-REM, especially in the last two hours of an eight-hour night of sleep. Another important discovery - less than eight hours of sleep a night, and especially less than six hours a night, and the following happens: time to physical exhaustion drops by 10 to 30 percent, and aerobic output is significantly reduced. impairments in cardiovascular, metabolic, and respiratory capabilities hamper an under slept body.

Sport teams that are aware of sleep's importance before a game are surprised that equally essential need for sleep in the days after a game. Post-performance sleep accelerates physical recovery from common inflammation, stimulates muscle repair, and helps restock cellular energy in the form of glucose and glycogen. A final benefit of sleep for memory is arguably the most remarkable of all: creativity

Sleep Deprivation: serious consequences of which are fairly well-known - It affects the Immune system, the Brain, Blood Sugar, cardiovascular system, Obesity It may be mentioned here that Meditation is not a substitute for Sleep, but yoga nidra can help power-nap

Part 3 offers safe passage from sleep to the fantastical world of dreams scientifically explained. From peering into the brains of dreaming individuals, and precisely how dreams inspire ideas that transform the world.

The author dismisses Freud's theories of the origin of dreams ('suppressed desires') as 'un-scientific' Emotional concerns are what have been found to correlate most with our dreams.

Factoid: In fact, REM sleep is the only time during the twenty-four-hour period when your brain is completely devoid of the anxiety-triggering molecule.

Part 4 seats us first at the bedside, explaining numerous sleep disorders, including insomnia. The book explains obvious and not-so-obvious reasons for why so many of us find it difficult to get a good night's sleep, night after night. A frank discussion of sleeping pills then follows, based on scientific and clinical data rather than hearsay or branding messages.

Insomnia is one of the most pressing and prevalent medical issues facing modern society. Besides stress, there are new competitors to sleep e.g. Netflix.

There is no reference or mention of yoga and meditation, to enhance deep sleep – probably because the title of the book is about “the science of sleeping” and yoga is not a 'science'! Though one has

personally seen it to be very effective.

Concluding the book with genuine optimistic hope, the author lays out a road map of ideas that can reconnect humanity with sleep—a new vision for sleep in the twenty-first century.

conclude, “Why We Sleep” is an important book. If you're sleeping for less than seven hours a night you're doing yourself a disservice as grave as that of smoking. Sleep is the “foundation” for good health. Besides healing and re-charging the body and the brain, Sleep also has a crucial role in learning – which is necessary for our survival in the Information Age.

Name: Why We Sleep Unlocking the power of sleep and dreams

Author: Mathew Walker

Pages: 368

Publisher: Penguin Books Ltd.

Price: Rs. 190

Twelve Tips for Healthy Sleep

1. Stick to a sleep schedule
2. Exercise is great, but not too late in the day. Try to exercise at least thirty minutes on most days but not later than two to three hours before your bedtime.
3. Avoid caffeine and nicotine.
4. Avoid alcoholic drinks before bed.
5. Avoid large meals and beverages late at night.
6. If possible, avoid medicines that delay or disrupt your sleep.
7. Don't take naps after 3 p.m.
8. Relax before bed. Don't over schedule your day so that no time is left for unwinding. A relaxing activity, such as reading or listening to music, should be part of your bedtime ritual.
9. Take a hot bath before bed.
10. Dark bedroom, cool bedroom, gadget-free bedroom.
11. Have the right sunlight exposure. Daylight is key to regulating daily sleep patterns. Try to get outside in natural sunlight for at least thirty minutes each day. If possible, wake up with the sun or use very bright lights in the morning.
12. Don't lie in

Swami Vivekananda

“Just a Little”

S. Regunathan

Thus far: The story is of an ardent disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, who, emerged as a leader after his master left his bodily abode. He Institutionalized his master's legacy by setting up a Mutt while continuing his own spiritual quest. He could feel the presence and guidance of his master or the divine, close to him, always. When he decided to head for the Himalayas, two of the Mutt's benefactors passed away and his sister committed suicide. The three tragic events were a setback, but still his steps did not falter. Now read on...



Swami Vivekananda set out for the Himalayas in July 1890. The plan was to go on foot, begging for alms in the traditional way of sanyasis. He had to stop enroute at several places. He met many interesting people. Everyone who interacted with him was impressed with his knowledge of the scriptures and his clear understanding of Vedanta. He was travelling with his guru bhैया Swami Akhandananda. Their first halt

was at Bhagalpur, in the house of one Manmatha Nath Choudhary who did not think highly of Swamiji. One morning Manmatha Nath was reading a book on Buddhism. The book was in English. Swamiji enquired about the book, “What is its title? Who is the author?” Manmatha Nath turned to look towards Swamiji with an expression of surprise and asked rather casually, “Do you know English?” Swamiji replied that he knew a little. There was a pause.

And then Swamiji seeing the cover of the book started talking about Buddhism, also quoting from many English works. Now Manmatha Nath Choudhary's expression changed from a surprise born of a superiority complex to Astonishment. However, he was still in the clutches of disbelief and in the same casual manner asked Swamiji if he knew Sanskrit and had read any Upanishad. Swamiji said with a smile that he knew a little. There was a pause. And then Swamiji engaged in a discussion on the Upanishads, quoting Upanishadic verses in Sanskrit and explaining even some difficult passages. Manmatha Nath was now getting impressed. He requested Swamiji to stay in his house.

One day he heard Swamiji humming some song. Once again curiosity got the better of him. He asked Swamiji if he could sing. Swamiji with the same smile replied that he could sing a little. Manmatha Nath had now started understanding what knowing a little meant in Vivekananda's dictionary. He sat down to listen, requesting him to sing. Such an elevating experience it was that soon Manmatha Nath invited some of the famous singers and ustads for a baithak (a musical Evening). A short programme was planned. But the music was so intoxicating and fulfilling that it went on into the wee hours of the morning. The guests had not been served dinner, but that did not bother them. In fact the music stopped only because the table player could play no more as his fingers has swollen with so many hours of playing.

The following evening there was a big crowd at Manmatha Nath's house.

Everyone wanted to hear more. There were the previous night's guests and newcomers. But Swamiji did not sing that evening. Later on, Manmatha Nath wrote to his friend that he had never had such an experience before. In the company of Swamiji he felt intense feeling of spirituality.

Now Manmatha Nath was devoted to Swamiji. He pleaded with Swamiji to stay a few more days but Swamiji refused saying he was on his way to the Himalayas. The next halt was at Baidyanath where he met one Babu Raj Narain Bose, who was a respected, highly regarded old Brahmo preacher, a social reformist and a national leader. He later started the national movement in Bengal, especially among the educated. No one could speak to him in English as he prohibited it to be spoken in his presence. He had other eccentricities too and yet Swamiji was keen to meet him. When Swamiji did meet him, he spoke for many hours without uttering even a word in English. Bose took it for granted that Swamiji did not know English. His guru bhaiya Swami Akhandanatha wanted to blurt out that Swamiji was just avoiding the language, but was gestured to keep quiet.

Many years later when Swami Vivekananda became famous and everyone was talking of him, Bose is said to have remarked, "I thought he did not know English, he spoke in such pure Bengali to me. Indeed he is a great man."

Children's Corner

Kiki Learns Responsibility

Story and Illustration by Gayatri K .Diggi

The cool river shimmered under the golden sunlight in a dense part of an African jungle, where there lived Mama Hippo called Bono and her little playful calf called Kiki.

Little Kiki was always curious and mischievous. He loved to splash in the river, frightening the fish, chasing butterflies and teasing and tossing the turtles up in the air with her nose and then swimming away happily. Everyone complained to Mama Bobo and said little Kiki was very naughty and had no sense of responsibility and should be punished. Mama Bobo said "Scolding and punishing will only make her more aggressive. I will talk to little Kiki kindly and explain to her gently"


They reached the river where the water was cool and many animals and birds were drinking the water and enjoying themselves. Mama Bobo said, "See, Kiki, the river gives us water to drink and swim in. Many fish live in these waters



and the tall grass grows along the river and we munch the soft grass and enjoy it. But look here, see what the naughty monkeys have thrown in the river." Kiki looked and said, "Plenty of leaves and fruits half peeled."

"Yes my dear," said Mama Bobo, and then she added, "This will spoil the water and make it murky and dirty, go into the water and push all that dirt away."

Kiki jumped into the water and pushed



all the leaves and dirt with his nose to one side of the bank of the river. Mama Bobo said, "This was a good job and now the water will be clean."

Then they saw the old tortoise trying so hard to climb up a bank but slipped several times in spite of its tiny legs.

Kiki quickly went near the old tortoise who thought Kiki would again toss him around in the air and so he tried to move away but Kiki said, "Uncle Tutu the tortoise don't be scared I will help you" and he pushed the tortoise over the bank and the tortoise was able to reach the dried spot. The old tortoise Tutu smiled at Mama Bobo and said, "Well done Mama Bobo, you taught the little mischievous Kiki to be kind and responsible."

Kiki asked, "Is my lesson over now, can I play?" No let's sit for a while. I have one last third lesson to teach my little Kiki which is very important for you to know and understand."

They sat under the shade of the trees and then Mama Bobo said, "Listen and learn carefully and this lesson will keep you safe. Now, do you remember the time I told you to stay nearby but you wandered away. You did not listen to me and you walked away. And not far from you a lion

was by the river drinking water and when he saw you he roared angrily." Kiki nodded and said, "Mama Bobo he scared me."

Her mother said, "Yes and I had to jump in and chase him away from you and what if I was not there in time to do so? Then Mama said, "Remember the time you again wandered off and got lost in the tall grass?"

Kiki said, "I could not find my way then I saw two mean eyes looking at me from the water."

Mama said, "The crocodile was patient and waited and if I had not found you and rescued you would have had to face the crocodile alone, that's why when I say something you must listen and obey this will keep you safe."

Kiki nodded and said "I will listen Mama Bobo and be more responsible in future and help the birds, animals and the river to be clean." Mama Bobo hugged Kiki and they quietly went into the clean river water to swim happily

From far, one could hear Kiki singing:

*"Oh! I am a Hip Hip Hippopotamus!
I swim and play in the river because I am
a Hip Hip Hippopotamuses."*

Children's Corner

Sowing Seeds of Responsibility



Ayla was a bright, curious girl who loved playing in her grandmother's garden. The flowers smelled sweet, the butterflies danced in the air, and the trees whispered secrets to the wind.

One afternoon, Ayla's grandmother

handed her a small pouch. Inside were tiny golden seeds.

"These are magic seeds, Ayla," her grandmother said with a smile. "If you plant them and take care of them, something wonderful will grow."

Ayla's eyes sparkled with excitement.



She ran to the garden and planted the seeds carefully in a neat row. "I can't wait to see the magic!" she thought.

But soon, Ayla became busy with her toys and games. She forgot to water the seeds. Days passed, and the soil became dry.

One morning, her grandmother found her playing with her dolls. "Ayla," she said gently, "have you checked on your magic seeds?"

Ayla gasped. She ran to the garden. The soil was cracked, and no sprouts had appeared.

Tears filled her eyes. "Grandma, I think I ruined the magic."

Her grandmother knelt beside her. "Magic needs care, Ayla. The seeds can only grow if you water them and protect them."

Determined to make things right, Ayla

fetches her watering can and gently sprinkled water over the soil. Every morning, she checked on the seeds, removing weeds and making sure they had sunlight.

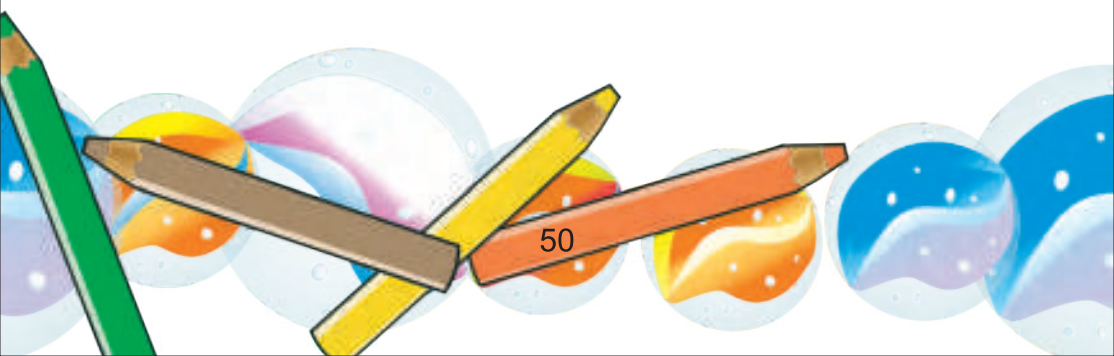
Then, one day, tiny green sprouts peeked out of the earth.

Ayla jumped with joy. "They're growing!"

Her grandmother nodded. "You took responsibility, Ayla. When you care for something, it flourishes."

As weeks passed, the sprouts grew into beautiful, golden flowers. Butterflies came to visit, and the garden glowed with warmth.

Ayla beamed with pride. She had learned something important: when we take responsibility, wonderful things can happen.



FRNV NEWS AND EVENTS

NATIONAL SEMINAR ON CRIMINALITY AND CANDIDATURE

A wake-up call to the people of India came from a seminar held in India International Centre, Delhi, on Criminality and Candidature: Prohibiting Criminals from being approved as Ministers. It saw overwhelming response from the people. “We invite your views and seek your participation in taking the movement forward,” said the President, Shri S Regunathan (former Chief Secretary, Delhi) of the Foundation for Restoration of National Values.

Retired judges, administrative officers, police officers, members of the election commission, media persons, members of the Association of Democratic Reforms, corporate leaders and businessmen came together for the first time in the capital to raise their voice against criminalisation of politics. Speakers highlighted the percentage increase of criminals in politics over the past 20 years. Additionally, they laid figures of the number of crorepatis who were members of Parliament; 46% of MPs



have criminal cases against them and 90% of them are crorepatis as of today.

The seminar was inaugurated by Swami Bhoomananda Tirtha ji who said, “We tell our children that they are ours, that they belong to this state, this caste, this religion and this community. We should first and foremost tell them they are Indians. I speak before you as an Indian. Only second to that am I a sanyasi.” He also said that the base for attracting the masses to participate in governance lies in the inculcation of eternal values and making them an integral part of the movement.



The seminar was addressed by the eminent speakers like, Justice M Grover, Former Judge of Punjab and Haryana High Court, Sri Trilochan Sastry, Founder Member, Association for Democratic Reforms, Shri S M Sahai, IPS (Retd.), Shri Rama Nath Jha, Advocate, Supreme Court of India, Smt. Anubhuti Vishnoi, Senior Journalist, Shri M L Sharma, Former. Information Commissioner & former Special Director/CBI, Sri Akshay Rout, former Director General, Election Commission of India and Sri. Aakarshan Aditya, Advocate on Record.

Corporate leader, Shri Anand Krishnan, Vice President FRNV concluded with the gist of all the speakers that people's participation was essential to the success of this

mission. Any number of reforms alone will not help. Shri Ashwini Kumar, General Secretary of the Foundation said that a Task force is being constituted by FRNV to take the matter to the relevant authorities.

Name	Membership No.	From
Shri Madhusudan Mishra Odisha	FRNV/LM/102	29.03.2025
Prof. (Dr.) Amarendra Narayan Misra Odisha	FRNV/LM/103	03.04.2025
Shri Balaram Mahapatra Odisha	FRNV/LM/104	21.04.2025

FRNV SOCIAL MEDIA OUTREACH

Subsequent to National Seminar held on 12th April 2025, FRNV has begun its social media outreach. All are requested to visit the following sites, subscribe and offer your comments/suggestions to frnvindia@gmail.com

A photograph of a waterfall cascading down a dark, mossy cliff. The water is white and turbulent as it falls, creating a misty spray at the base. The surrounding area is lush with green vegetation. In the foreground, the river flows over a rocky bed, with large boulders visible on either side.

**It is easy to dodge our responsibilities,
but we cannot dodge the consequences
of dodging our responsibilities.**

— Josiah Stamp



Your unwavering support will motivate us to strive harder.

Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals emerges as Delhi's No.1 Private Multi-specialty Hospital in The Week-Hansa Research Survey 2022. It's a testimony of the trust placed in us by you, the people of Delhi. Thank you for your faith and support. We reaffirm our commitment to provide you the best medical care, along with our tender, loving care.

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