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IC Centre for Governance



Ethics and Values in Public Governance

INDIA FLAG - SHORT HISTORY AND MEANING OF TRICOLOUR IN INDIAN FLAG

- Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan

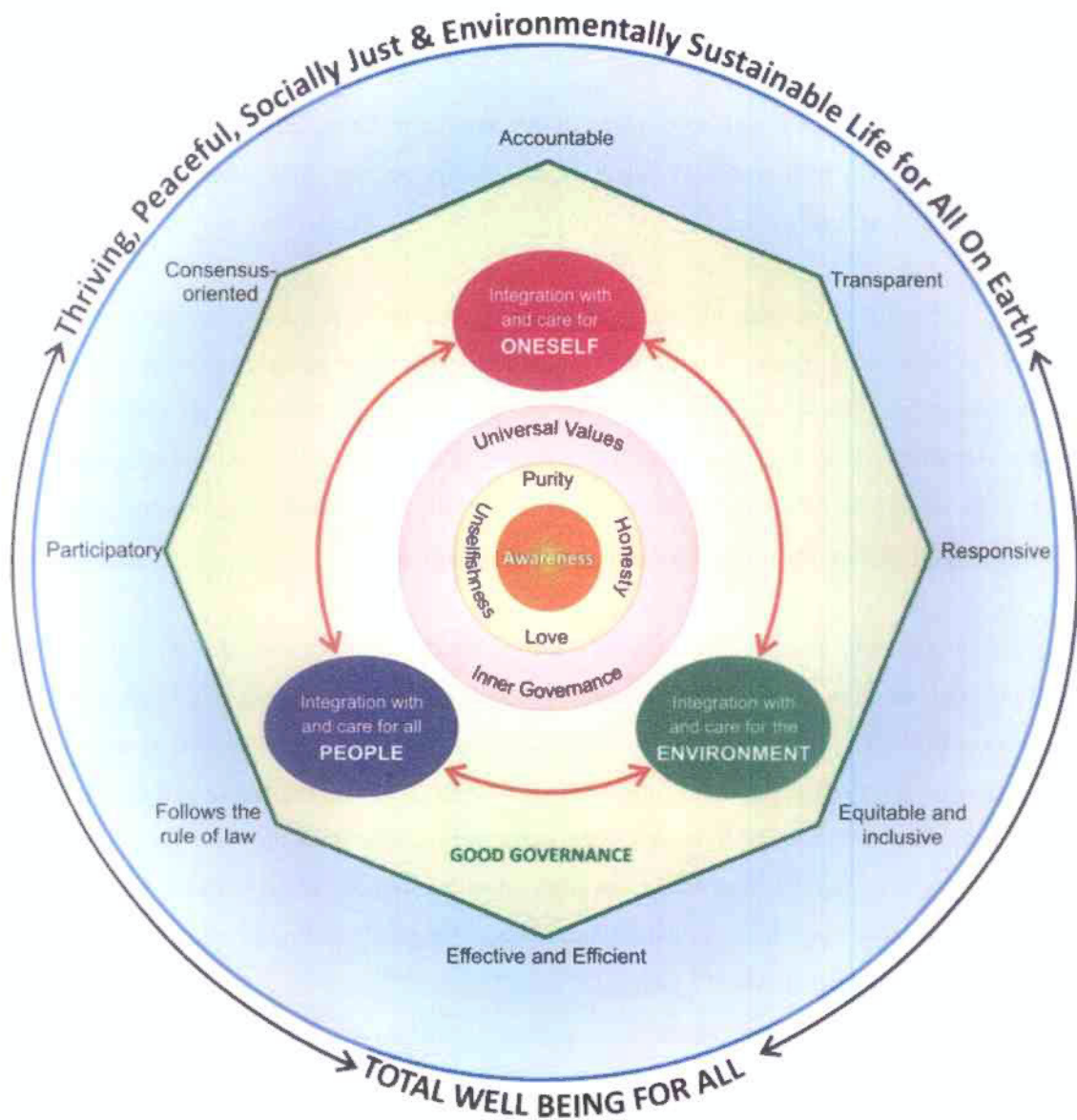
The National Flag of India was adopted in its present form during an ad hoc meeting of the Constituent Assembly held on the 22 July 1947, a few days before India's independence from the British on 15 August, 1947.

The flag is a horizontal tricolour of "deep saffron" at the top, white in the middle, and green at the bottom. In the centre, there is a navy blue wheel with twenty-four spokes, known as the Ashoka Chakra, taken from the Ashoka pillar at Sarnath. The diameter of this Chakra is three-fourths of the height of the white strip. The ratio of the width of the flag to its length is 2:3 each colour in the flag represents something different the saffron stands for purity and spirituality, white for peace and truth, green for fertility and prosperity and the wheel for justice.

"Bhagwa or the saffron colour denotes renunciation of disinterestedness. Our leaders must be indifferent to material gains and dedicate themselves to their work. The white in the centre is light, the path of truth to guide our conduct. The green shows our relation to (the) soil, our relation to the plant life here, on which all other life depends. The "Ashoka Chakra" in the centre of the white is the wheel of the law of dharma. Truth or satya, dharma or virtue ought to be the controlling principle of those who work under this flag. Again, the wheel denotes motion. There is death in stagnation. There is life in movement. India should no more resist change, it must move and go forward. The wheel represents the dynamism of a peaceful change."



FRAMEWORK OF ETHICAL GOVERNANCE



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3. The Pachamama Alliance - <http://www.pachamama.org/about/mission-and-vision>

ADMINISTRATIVE ETHICS

Ethics, as far as administration is concerned, shall mean when a civil servant pledges himself to:-

- Uphold the rule of law
- Promote an open and transparent administration
- Promote clean administration
- Promote accountability for actions
- Observe complete political neutrality
- Give free, frank, objective and unbiased advise
- Uphold, preserve and strengthen the interests of the weaker sections of society
- Uphold and strengthen human rights
- Adhere to and encourage secularism; gratification
- Not to accept or give any money to other allurements as illegal gratification
- Uphold the integrity not only of self but also of the system as a whole
- Scrupulously observe standards of rectitude and undertake not to approach any politician, industrialist or any outside the normal hierarchy for obtaining any postings, transfers and personal benefits of any kind
- Strive to be a role model for others



INNER TRANSFORMATION FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE

By Arun Wakhlu

Chairperson

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At the opening of the 21st Century, India is often described as a living paradox. On the one hand, we have the distinction of emerging as the world's superpower in IT and Service. On the other hand, we find vast populations reeling under the misery caused by poor governance. If India has to fulfil her destiny, she will need to transform herself quickly in many dimensions and at many levels: social, cultural, educational, rural, infrastructure, etc.

Good Governance showing measurable impacts can play a vital role in this process. To bring about the deeper changes required for India to rise to her next level of evolution, we need to unfold a new capacity for individual and collective leadership. Governance, based on inspired leadership, will allow people across institutions and social levels to sense, seize and actualize their highest potential.

The equation of India's Transformation (IT) through Good Governance (1) can be summarized in the form given below:

India's Transformation (IT) will be a function of three other ITs:

- **Information Technology;**
- **Inspired Training; and**
- **Inner Transformation.**

In this article, we will focus on only one of these ITs, namely, **Inner Transformation**.

In it we propose that a shift in consciousness is fundamental to a shift in Governance. The article looks at the need for good Governance, the elements of good Governance, the underlying bottlenecks and problems which come in the way of good Governance and finally the common roots of these problems. The author concludes with practical tips for action which administrators and leaders in the public space can easily implement.



1. The Need for Good Governance

Today, although man possesses the resources and the technology to create a poverty-free world in the period of one generation, about a quarter of the human population on earth continue to live in extreme poverty (2).

According to the UNDP, Human Development Report, 2002, 20% of the richest people in the world receive 82.7% of the Global Income.

Nobel laureate Amartya Sen has said: "Poverty is not simply the lack of income. It is also the lack of a voice, of a responsive local administration that can redress local needs; the lack of a system of governance that is transparent and accountable to people it supposedly exists to serve".

Among the many crises engulfing India, and similarly placed countries of Asia, Africa and the Pacific Region, the one that is most palpable is the crisis of Governance. It affects the life and working environment of millions, who consider themselves free citizens of welfare states. In the last fifty years, we have witnessed a growing restlessness with the systems and instruments of Governance. Available evidence suggests a continuous decline in the quality of governance in most developing countries.

Some of the obvious elements of this crisis are: -

- Inefficient delivery of services
- Dichotomy between the political and executive wings of governance.
- Breaking down of existing institutions
- Corruption in the polity and economy
- Lack of societal involvement in governance

In a recent World Bank draft paper*(3), Daniel Kaufmann, Aart Kraay and Massimo Mastruzzi have estimated six dimensions of governance for 199 countries for 1996, 1998, 2000 and 2002 centered around three key reference points:

- One is the "process by which governments are selected, monitored and replaced"
- The second is the "capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement sound policies"; and
- The third is the "respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them".

From this, the authors go on to devise the key indicators of governance. These are:

- **Voice and accountability**, which includes a number of indicators that measure various aspects of the political process, civil liberties and political rights.
- **Political stability and absence of violence**, which consists of several indicators that measure the chances that a government will be overthrown by unconstitutional means.
- **Government effectiveness** is about the quality of public service provision, the bureaucracy and its competence and independence and, most critically, the credibility of the government's commitment to policies.
- **Rule of law** includes several indicators that "measure the extent to which agents have confidence in and abide by the rules of society. These include perceptions of the incidence of crime, the effectiveness and predictability of the judiciary, and the enforceability of contracts.", and
- **Control of corruption** which is about all the things we know and could set up world-class universities in. It includes the tendency of the elite to engage in "state capture".

And what do they conclude? Just this: "Interpreting these trends is difficult, but we can state with some confidence that there is little, if any, evidence of improvements in global governance over the period we consider." (4)

2. The Elements Of Good Governance

"Good Governance means eliminating poverty by empowering the poor, unprivileged and the exploited. Good Governance means a system and a structure that are democratic, transparent, clean, efficient, equitable, sensitive and accountable.

Good Governance requires, "not so much additional resources as better personnel policies and sound delivery mechanism. Unless teachers attend schools and teach, unless doctors attend health centres and provide health care, and subsidies reach the poor, mere increase in the social sector expenditure would only result in further leakage..." (5)

To understand the roots of governance we need to first look at the elements of excellent service oriented governance (6). If we treat the recipients of the service (i.e., citizens) as customers, and also look at the state as another stake holder, the dimension of Good Governance could be listed as under:



Empathetic orientation towards citizens / customers:

The Administrators' ability to understand the customers' need and requirements, from their perspective, and realistically appraise whether or not something is doable.

Commitment to excellence:

Individual commitment to help citizens in achieving their goals / objectives within the given resources.

Responsiveness:

Administrators taking responsibility for creating a delightful experience for citizens / customers and solving their problems.

Reliability and trustworthiness:

The administrators ability to generate trust and win the confidence of customers / citizens.

Creative problem solving ability:

The administrator's ability to come up with innovative solutions to customer problems within the given constraints.

Timeliness:

An administrator's ability to accomplish things within time constraints and deadlines.

Tolerance for pressure:

An administrator's ability to maintain control and poise in the face of adversity and political pressures.

Service recovery mind-set:

An administrator's ability to undo the bad service experience of a citizen / customer by taking the required corrective action there and then itself.

In a nutshell, good Governance is all about:

1. Accurate and sensitive understanding of peoples' needs, and
2. Creative responses to these needs with a resourceful mind.

3. The Underlying Problems

While the elements required for good Governance are clear, why is it so rare? What are the underlying bottlenecks and problems which keep administrators from giving their very best to the public? In the past ten years, whenever the author has encountered senior government officials in different forums, the following bottlenecks to Good Governance have emerged:

- Conflicts between one's duties in the public domain and one's personal life,
- Inability to respond speedily because of the fear of rapid change and chaos all around,
- Inter-personal conflicts between people (e.g. from IAS & IPS) because of egos,
- An inner conflict between one's values and professional ethics on the one hand, verses "the pressures" of political bosses and public expectations on the other. These conflicts were cited as affecting issues like postings / transfers / appointments and even normal professional functioning,
- Problems arising from a lack of inter-departmental co-operation and teamwork,
- Dealing with immature and arrogant bosses,
- Feelings of helplessness and powerlessness in the face of the above issues,
- Problems of low morale of staff due to low wages and low opportunities for promotion,

A concrete experience of an NGO (with which the author is connected) regarding the unfolding of employment opportunities in Jammu and Kashmir state shows the following:

- A lack of co-ordination between different departments connected with the issue;
- An inability amongst officials to see the opportunities in the state as a whole;
- Slow or absent response to help offered by competent members of the public to work on the problem;
- The absence of bold leadership to resolve the problem by inspiring a shared vision and mobilizing people and resources.

4. The Roots Of These Problems

All that we are is the result of what we have thought. The mind is everything. What we think, we become.

~~~ Buddha

Everything that an administrator does originates from his / her mind. The view that s/he holds, and the underlying beliefs and paradigms from which s/he operates affects the administrator's

thoughts, words and actions. His/ her effectiveness is a direct function of the kind of consciousness, which underlies the person's work and life.

Just as the wise gardener does not expect his garden to thrive on the basis of fragmented attention to the different parts of his plants - the leaves, roots, bark, or flowers, but rather accomplishes the good of the whole by attending to the roots, we need to focus our attention on the underlying roots of everything. (7)

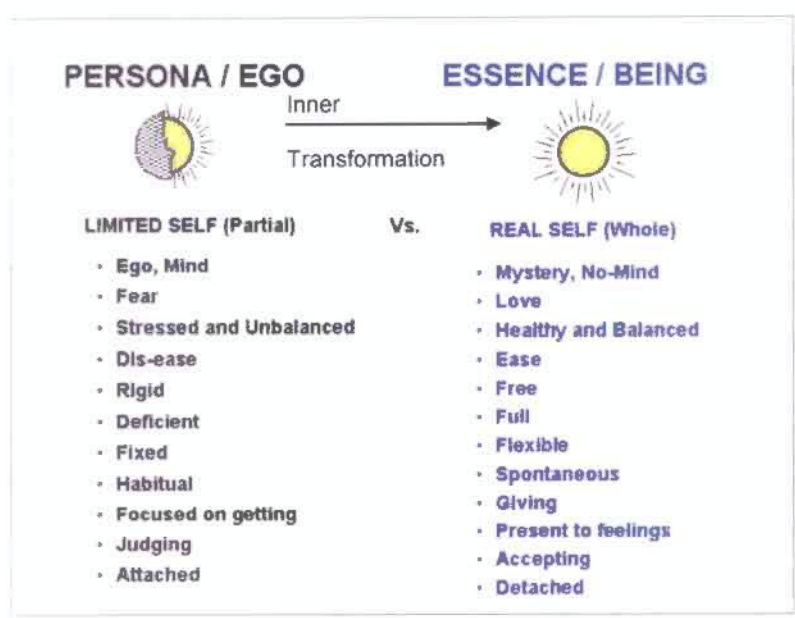
Another way of looking at what is happening at the roots is to use the analogy of a bright light (our unbounded awareness) getting slowly covered by soot. As long as the soot is covering the bulb, it will not be able to radiate light. To regain the light, the soot has to be cleaned away.

This is exactly what happens to the human experience. The infinite creative and positive power that is naturally present in each and every one of us by virtue of our own consciousness can be rendered ineffective if not tended to properly. The stress of our lifestyle, the pollution of our environment, and the collective stress of our world keeps us from functioning at our full potential.

Building on the above, we can think of an administrator as having infinite potential, which is temporarily covered up. When it is covered up, the administrator operates in a limited way. When it is open, and functioning freely, the administrator is a creative force for positive change. Inner Transformation is simply the process of shedding our illusions, limiting beliefs, negative thoughts and ideas of lack, which block the glory and abundance of the real Self. It is awakening to our Essence, which is always there, but which we are not conscious of.

In the examples cited above, Inner Transformation is like cleaning the soot from the bulb. My favourite analogy of Inner Transformation is that of the dispelling of clouds covering up the Sun. The diagram below captures the shifts that occur through Inner Transformation:

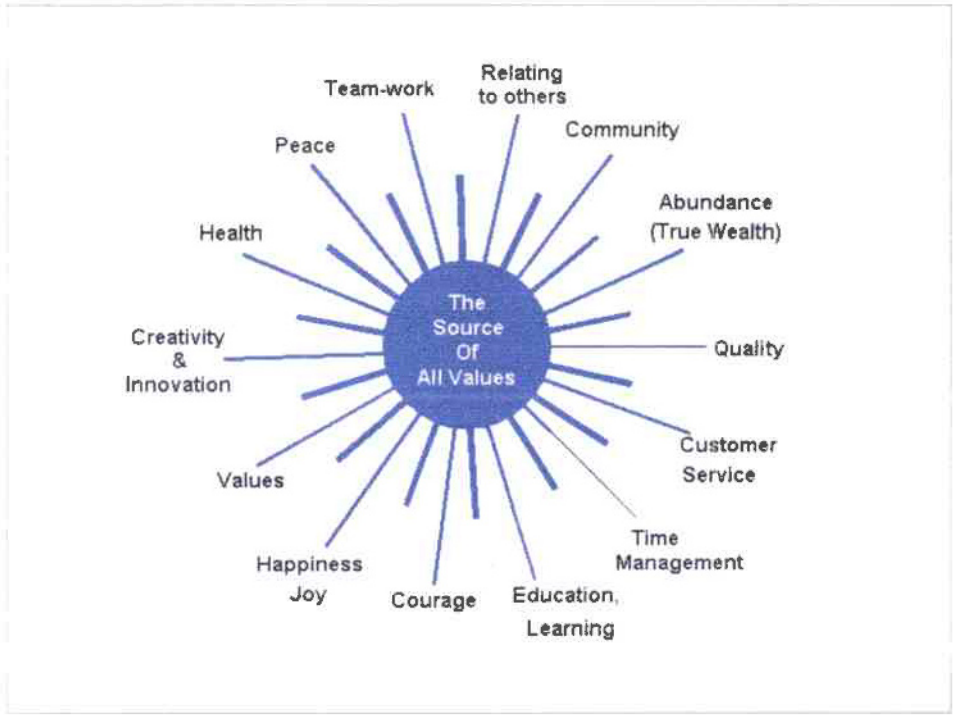




The table above gives the consequences of operating from these two different perspectives. Identifying with a false notion of who we are (the ego) leads to a sense of deficiency and fear. It leads our actions into all kinds of dysfunctionalities. Comparison, greed, boredom, controlling behaviour, a focus on 'getting', corruption, violence, conflict and a host of other reactions and problems in individuals, organizations and societies arise from this basic misunderstanding about who we are.

On the other hand, waking up to our real Self, which is love, spontaneously leads to creative action, compassion, sharing, a focus on 'giving', gratitude and celebrating whatever life brings forth. Love is nothing more than deep caring in action. It is the selfless promotion of the growth of the other. You can share love with others only when you love yourself. This leads us to a sense of oneness with life and to inner and outer abundance born out of creative action. Operating from the space beyond the mind, (i.e., anchored in one's Essence) creates an all-round positivity. This has implications on all aspects of the administrators work.





As is evident from the above diagram, almost all the road blocks to Good Governance and good leadership can be dissolved if more and more government officials learn to operate from the space of unbounded Creative Intelligence which is our own Real Self.

The payoff of being rooted in the Essence and operating from this unbounded space is that positive impacts happen on all dimensions relevant to Good Governance. Everything of value to human life begins to spontaneously manifest in the life of the administrator and also the people whom his / her work touches. As people begin to experience the fullness of inner abundance, and the joy of loving service, corruption and other addictions begin to spontaneously drop off. One does not need to legislate for ethical behaviour, or police the people in the department. They spontaneously operate in ways that are life affirming and creative.

We all know that ethical behaviour forced onto people does not lead to wholeness and love. Returning to the intrinsic wholeness and love, which is our own innermost essence, spontaneously lead to ethical behaviour. (8)



## 5. Ideas for Action

At this point, the practical reader of this article would be wondering how we can get people to make this Inner Transformation.

There are many practical ways to awaken people to this Essence. In our work at Pragati Leadership Institute & Pragati Foundation, Pune, India we have refined the art of awakening people to their Essence and showing how this links to excellence at work. Below, I will share a few simple methods to give you a feel of how it works:

- Do things every day that touches your heart that you really love / care about. E.g. If you love listening to music, ensure that it is part of your everyday time table.
  - While speaking, listening to people, ensure that you look at them deep in the eyes. Remember that when you make eye contact you connect with the essence in people.
  - While greeting people and saying "Namaste", keep in mind its true meaning. When I am my essence meet you the same essence, I salute the essence that is one. This will also ensure that you will never feel either superior or inferior to the other because the same essence that is in you is present in the other.
  - Before eating, remember in gratitude the food prepared lovingly for you. Thank existence for it. Say to yourself, "I am feeding the Source". You will never overeat / under-eat.
  - Walk in mindfulness. Every day, slow down your pace for a few minutes and be conscious of how you walk.
  - While having a bath, be grateful for your body and body parts.
  - Make music / dance / exercise a part of your daily ritual.
  - Explore a date with yourself – 2 hrs / week solely and wholly for what you love doing, by yourself.
  - Keep a journal in which you can regularly pen your feelings, and thoughts experiences.
  - Meditate, Meditate and Meditate. Have fixed points of reference E.g. Sunrise, sunset, full moon, new moon.
  - Listen to inner guidance regularly. Whenever you have a problem or are confused, rather than consult the outer guide, refer to the inner guide. (9)
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- Discern between pleasure and happiness and joy and bliss. Pleasure is eating a bar of chocolate or buying a new dress. It is short-term and short-lived. Bliss and joy is a continuous state and is not affected by events / people. It is who you really are.
- Have a set of regular affirmations that will help you to remain aware and conscious of the self.
- Exercise regularly.
- Laugh a lot. Laughter releases endorphines that help our immune system and give us a feeling of wellness.
- Remember that life is a Cinema. "I am the screen of awareness". Different images are played on it, bomb blasts, love scenes. I am anitya. All that happens are images. Nothing happens to our essence.
- Be aware of what you eat, and what you use - both on yourself, and in your environment. Choose natural, organic products.
- Live a life of kindness, compassion, and charity - it keeps you connected to your center, your source, that infinite reservoir within you that is your powerhouse.
- Don't judge people, or situations - approach each moment with the knowledge that it contains within it the potential of any number of possibilities.
- Once you are in touch with your true nature, then nothing is beyond your means - you are truly empowered. And THAT is an accurate definition of YOU!

#### 6. Conclusion – The last verse of the Gita sums up good Governance:

*Yatra Yogesvarah Krsna*

*yatra Partho dhanur-dharah;*

*Tatra srih, vijayo, bhutih,*

*dhruva nitih matir mama –*

'Whatever (there is the spirit) of Krsna, the master of yoga (The master of vision), (and) wherever (there is the spirit of) Arjuna, the wielder of the bow (the hero of action), there, I am convinced, wealth, victory, welfare, and unshakable justice (shall prevail)' . (10)

As Swami Vivekananda has said:

“Arise, Awake! Awake from this hypnotism of weakness. None is really weak; the soul is infinite, omnipotent, and omniscient. Stand up, assert yourself, proclaim the God within you. Teach yourselves; teach everyone, his real nature. Call upon the sleeping soul and see how it awakes. Power will come, glory will come, goodness will come, purity will come and everything that is excellent will come, when this sleeping soul is roused to self-conscious activity”.

In the same light, Swami Paramhansa Yogananda’s call would be an inspiring reminder for the administrator:

“Heavenly Father, I am no longer surrounded by barriers of ‘I can’t’. I have within Thy great explosive power of ‘I can!’ Lord, bless me that I develop that power, so that I may destroy all my barriers and expand my territory beyond the limitations of my existence until I conquer the forces of this earth and of Thy cosmos by being one with Thee.”

The more administrators can expand their understanding and consciousness, through Inner Transformation, and be more present to the here and now, the more they will become instruments of life’s positive forces. They will become a blessing, not only to themselves, but to the millions of our country people who today cry for clean, compassionate and competent governance.

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## LISTENING TO THE INNER VOICE

*'Silence is both a physical and a spiritual necessity for me...*

*In the attitude of silence, the soul finds the path in a clearer light...*

*For me the voice of God, of conscience, of Truth or the "still small voice" means the one and the same thing...*

*The Inner Voice defies description. It has been increasingly audible as years have rolled by.'*

.....Mahatma Gandhi

### **Why Is Inner Listening Needed?**

*Modern man lacks silence. He doesn't lead his life, he is led by events. It is a race against the clock. Even God Himself can't get anything else in. It is vital to make space somewhere.*

### **From Fear to Love**

*This is what we are called to do, to become listeners to a voice of love. That is why we often say, 'Well, I am not so sure that I really want to listen because I might not like what I'm going to hear.'*

*'Fear makes us deaf. I see the spiritual life as one in which we have to move out of the house of fear into the house of love.'*

### **The Practice of Inner Listening:**

In our busy, frenetic lives, we can choose to live reactively or reflectively. It means 'making space for grace and reflection for direction'.

Take time every day to sit in silence to listen to the voice of love and truth that speaks in your heart. Early morning is best. To open your heart and mind without pretences or defences.

It also helps to write the thoughts down. These thoughts can be measured against the absolute principles that follow – common to all religious traditions.





The daily practice: Inner listening has three components:

1. **Connection:** It is good to get into a peaceful, reflective and prayerful mood to seek inspiration. Reading something inspiring, like a holy book from your or any tradition that you find appealing or a speech that has inspired you or an article in a magazine or a newspaper that has lifted your spirits. This helps to establish a connection with your inner Self or Higher Wisdom or the Divine (what you call it is not as important as knowing it inspires).
2. **Correction:** The first time you try the Quiet Time, review your life as you have lived so far. "A life not examined is not worth living!" said Aristotle. See where you have fallen short of your own values and convictions -write them down. Reflect on how you can make amends for things you have done wrong. It often helps to share these with a trusted friend. The four absolute moral standards of **i) Honesty ii) Purity iii) Unselfishness and iv) Love** serve as good measuring tools. You start comparing your life against these standards, writing down where you have fallen short of each standard and putting right what can be put right. This may need to be a daily process to review the previous day to see what could have been different and take corrective steps. This leaves you free to seek inspiration for the task ahead.
3. **Direction:** Turn your attention outward and see what you feel you need to change and if you have a role in it. It could be in your locality or community or you may get a thought to speak to someone who can bring far reaching changes on a large scale to benefit a lot of people. Remember it needs to be done with inspiration and humility.

It has become abundantly obvious through recent history that peace cannot be achieved by war or violence, which only seek to impose one's will, however well intended, on the reluctant other who is weak for the time being. It seeks to build bridges of trust where transformed individuals, thinking beyond national or sectional interests, consider what is good and viable for the larger whole.

This by no means is an easy task. Yet it is impossible to hope for solutions to the planet's problems without this factor. Human intellect has failed to provide lasting solutions for problems which arise out of deeper layers of human nature. A fundamental shift in approach is the only hope for the future

Source: Initiates of Change, Asia Plateau,  
View from the Plateau' compiled by Shri Bhanu Kale

## THE WORKING PRINCIPLES OF MORAL ABSOLUTES

### 1. Absolute Honesty

*The freedom of being a fully authentic person; revealing ourselves to ourselves and others.*

### 2. Absolute Purity (complete non-attachment)

*The freedom of real intimacy without manipulating people for their money, sex, power or for self-gratification.*

### 3. Absolute Unselfishness

*The freedom to find your true Self through having a heart and concern for others. The art of lateral living.*

### 4. Absolute Love

*The freedom to give and to care without the limitations of bitterness and blame.*

Unchanging values of honesty, purity, unselfishness and love offer a practical framework for introspection.

1. **Honesty:** Stealing, bribery, tax evasion, cheating in examinations, preparing inflated expense vouchers are obvious instances of dishonesty. But there are many-more subtle ones. Like, pretending to be what we are not; not doing our duty. Honesty means saying what we think and doing what we say.

2. **Purity:** Purity of body. Personal cleanliness. '*Shariramadyam khalu dhramaadhanam.*' Body is the first true path to religion. Purity of environment. What about smoking? There we are polluting both - body and environment. Then there is purity of our inner world. What about faithfulness to one's spouse?

Adultery in mind is as bad as actually committing it. Purity also means having no mixed motives and not manipulating others.

3. **Unselfishness:** Selfishness makes us insensitive to others. Unselfishness means an attitude of caring and sharing. It brings genuine simplicity in our living. It means not hogging the limelight, giving credit to others.

4. **Love:** The opposite of love is not always hate, it is often indifference. Distances are often created in relationships because no one wants to take the first step to bridge them. *'Humse aya na gaya, tumse bulaya na gaya'* (I couldn't get around to coming and you couldn't get around to calling). Stephen Covey, management consultant, points out, on a deathbed one seldom thinks of a promotion or a bigger car; one thinks of close ones. Do we give them enough time and care?

Some may value other values like courage, freedom, humility, justice or peace. That is okay. But the main thing is to ensure that the values one expects in others are followed in one's own life.

A commitment to live by such values is not easy. But then nothing worthwhile can be achieved cheap. And in the long run this integrity becomes a person's greatest asset. A person with integrity is generally trusted. Not cutting corners makes one a conscientious worker. Excellence comes easier to that person.

Integrity, far from being a hindrance, advances one's career prospects.

Source: Initiates of Change, Asia Plateau,  
'View from the Plateau' compiled by Shri Bhanu Kale

## CAP MODEL



**C**reative

**A**ccountable

**P**ositive

Source: Pragati Leadership Institute ©

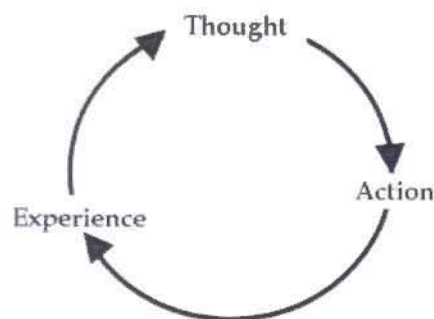


## ACCOUNTABILITY: TAKING CHARGE OF YOUR THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS

The outlook associated with accountability is something like this:

Ultimately, you're the one who's responsible for yourself. You play a part in every situation in your life. What you are today is a result of your choices. This is Accountability. **It is taking charge. Not blaming others, not blaming circumstances.** It is nothing short of mastering your own fate. . . being the one person who decides how you are going to live, react and feel in almost every situation that life presents to you.

What we are today is the outcome of our own thought and action choices. It is the result of the ongoing cycle of creation:



Let us take a look at two aspects of accountability which have to do with thinking.

- One is the power to choose the way you think and feel;
- The second has to do with focusing attention in a situation on those factors over which you have control.

The entire process of becoming the creator of what you are, rather than the result of what others have programmed for you, begins with your own willingness to look at your personal thinking habits. Work at rising above any thinking which gets in the way of your becoming an effective person.

You are responsible for the thoughts you have in your mind at any given time. You have to accept that human emotions don't 'just happen'; human actions don't just 'take place'. All your feelings and



actions are preceded by those mysterious mental phenomena we call thoughts, and no one can make you think something you don't want to think. Your unassailable corner of freedom, even if others are forcibly enslaving you, remains in your ability to choose the thoughts you have within your own mind.

If you can appreciate the statement that your attitudes, affect your whole life and remind yourself that you can choose any attitude you would like to have under virtually any circumstances, it will be the first step on the bridge of thought that leads to effective living.

### Focusing Attention on the 'I' Factors

In every situation, there are some factors that you (I) could change, and some factors that others (They) do. When I am not pleased with a situation, we often focus on what "They" did and blame them for our condition. When I am not pleased with a situation, and I focus on what I did or can do, I hold myself accountable.

| I                  | They                |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| <b>ACCOUNTABLE</b> | <b>VICTIM</b>       |
| 'I' Factor Focus   | 'They' Factor Focus |
| - In control       | - Powerless         |
| - Powerful         | - Angry             |
| - Lighter          | - Resentful         |
| - Results          | - Blame             |

To bring yourself to accountability, ask these two questions:

1. What can I do now? (Sometimes the only alternative is to manage your attitude).
2. What could I have done to prevent the situation?

The only place worth looking for in the accountability rectangle is in the "I" zone, if your purpose is to achieve results and/or become more powerful yourself. Whichever part of the rectangle you focus your attention on will grow. The 'they' factors may all be true! If you concentrate on "Them", your experience will be powerless, frustrated, angry, etc.

### **Accountability Rule**

*You will gain in personal power and the ability to get results if you assume accountability in all situations, even if you don't immediately see how.*

Complain only to the person who can do something about it. Concentrating on the "They" factors leads to complaining. It reduces your energy and the energy of people around you. Venting your feelings once or twice is a good stress management technique. Repeating your criticisms of "Them" has no positive outcome.

*"Focus on action and not on blame"*

*"If it is to be, it is up to me"*

*"Light a candle instead of cursing the darkness"*

Source: Pragati Leadership Institute ©

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## POSITIVE THINKING

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*"Great men are those who see that thoughts rule the world."*

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Positive Thinking is thinking which expands one's own and the other person's sense of well-being, energy, joy, strength, satisfaction, creativity and achievement of results. It empowers - and gives you and the other person a feeling of goodness and inner power...the power to do more, give more, share more, enjoy and achieve more. It helps to expand boundaries of limitation and your concept of yourself.

Conversely, negative thinking contracts, decreases or blocks good feelings and useful behavior. It spreads a feeling of helplessness, anger and decreases action. Positive feelings, positive communication and positive actions are happily infectious!

### Becoming Positive

- **Choice:** The most important step in becoming more positive is to recognize that YOU HAVE THE POWER TO CHOOSE AND CONTROL YOUR THOUGHTS. It's up to you and it's possible. You can use this power of choice. Inspiring thoughts, good thoughts, power thoughts and possibility thoughts can be chosen. You can ACT, rather than only REACT.
- **Vision:** Think big! It helps to expand the boundaries of what is possible, and this empowers. Focus your vision on a large worthwhile possibility, develop a strong determination and then notice how the other matters fall into place. As far as obstacles go, someone had defined them as *"those terrifying things we see when we take our eyes off our goals."* See problems as challenges to be overcome by action, as opportunities in work clothes.




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### *Great men make molehills out of mountains!*

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- **Acting from the plus points and strengths:** Before giving constructive criticism, first offer genuine appreciation. There are always some plus points in all people. Appreciate people. Criticizing is so easy to do! It doesn't take much brain-power to find fault. Solving problems by working on strengths is the only way to really help. Build on people's strengths. Changing one thing for the better is worth more than providing a thousand things are wrong.



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*Lighting one small candle is better than wrestling with the darkness.*

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- **Give Vs. Get:** One of the greatest contributors to positivity is a spirit of giving, a spirit of service. This attitude makes one positive because it takes attention away from the "I" . . . it helps in the expansion of the boundaries and limitation we associate with our "limited" concept of ourselves. Think about this Paradox: The more you **GIVE** and **SERVE**, the more abundant becomes your energy, joy, sense of power and well-being, the amount and quality of work you get done. The attitude you give will be reflected in the attitude others show you.

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*Give to the world the best you have and the best will come back to you.*

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- **Belief in People:** To influence people, be generous in your positive belief in them. Treat people as if they were what they ought to be and you help them to become what they are capable of being. Your positive expectations and thoughts about other people will make them that way.
- **Thinking well of yourselves:** Count your blessings . . . they are many! You have an array of unique strengths. Above all, you have the power to tap the tremendous source of love, joy, achievement, energy and well-being within your control.

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*You have the power to give and transform.*

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#### **Becoming positive will help you to:**

- Enjoy your life and work more,
- Develop, inspire and lead people better,
- Achieve more results more effectively,
- See more opportunities clearly,
- Be more relaxed and healthy,
- Be more innovative,
- Improve communication, inter-personal relations and team-work, and
- Bring about lasting changes around you.

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*Thinking positively is obviously a very valuable skill to develop!*

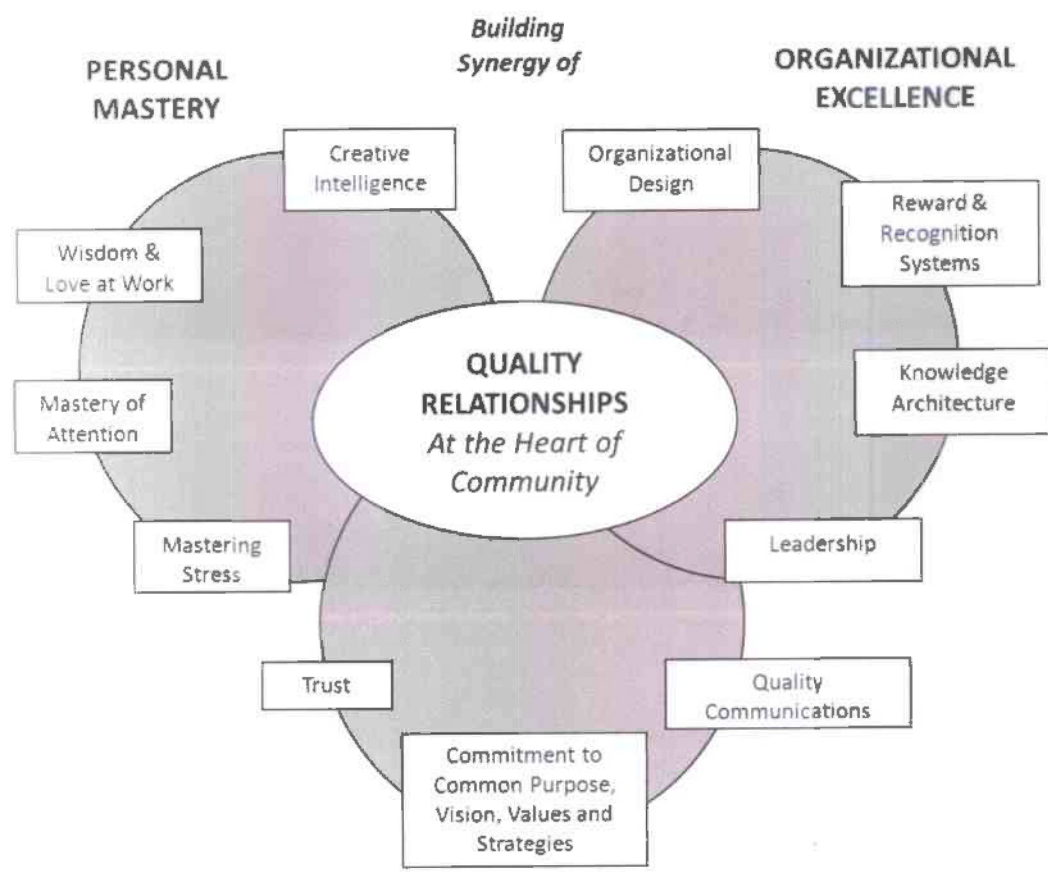
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**But putting it into Practice is the KEY:**

Someone has observed that our life is enriched not by what we eat but by what we digest; **NOT BY WHAT WE LEARN BUT BY WHAT WE PUT INTO PRACTICE.**



# QUALITY RELATIONSHIPS



## HIGH PERFORMANCE TEAM WORK

Source: Community Building Renewing Spirit and Learning in Business  
Edited by Kazimierz Gozdz.  
© Joel Levey, Inner Work Technologies Inc. 1992



## TEAM

**T**OGETHER  
**E**ACH  
**A**CHIEVES  
**M**ORE



Working Together for a Common Goal



## COMMUNICATING RESPECT THROUGH BODY LANGUAGE

An art to be acquired by all of us



*"Learning is acquired by reading books, but the much more necessary learning, the knowledge of the world is only to be acquired by reading men and studying all the various editions of them."*

Lord Chesterfield, "Letters To His Son"

All of us are constantly communicating some kind of message, whether we are saying something or not. Our body communicates constantly. But the *understanding of gestures of non-verbal communication* is very difficult when the various elements are separated from their context.

However, when gestures are fitted together into the content of an entire communication process, a complete picture evolves. By mentally *matching congruent gestures* that form clusters, we can understand the *attitudes* expressed and discover some meaning. We must look for similar attitudinal gestures that can endorse one another to make a cluster.

Understanding congruency of gestures serves as a monitoring device for discovering a person's attitude and then giving his/her actions meaning. Observing and becoming aware of gestures is fairly simple, but interpreting them is something else.

### Four Key Communication Basics:

1. We *communicate with somebody*, not to someone. Communication is not necessarily taking place just because one person is talking to another.
2. Communication is *separate* from information. Communication is an act; information is the content. The medium is not the message and expression of a message should not be confused with the message itself.
3. *Communication is non-repeatable*. There is never a chance for an identical first exchange after the second attempt.
4. Consider the *total message* when we speak.

Consequently, non-verbal communication consists of 3 steps: *reading, evaluating* and *controlling body signals*. Accurate and timely reading of non-verbal language is necessary because of the non-repeatability of the communication process. There is no second chance.

***“OUR FEELINGS OF SELF-CONFIDENCE ARE  
BEST TRANSMITTED BY OUR BODY LANGUAGE.”***

The phrase “Action speaks louder than words” is certainly right when we refer to self-confidence! Your body language, more than your words, will be able to transmit a message of self-confidence. It almost does not matter what you say!

Remember, whenever there is a discrepancy between the words being said and the person’s body language, people will believe in the body language first, and not in the words. What is this teaching you? It implies that your attitudes are communicated silently. Therefore, if you feel negative or inferior, even though you do not communicate the message verbally, people will pick it up, because it will be communicated by your non-verbal language.

The message here is that in many instances, the non-verbal aspects of your behaviour say more than do the words themselves.

Instinctively, you tend to analyze and to respond to the other’s non-verbal communication. It is human nature. Whether you want to admit it or not, your positive or negative attitudes towards another person will mainly be influenced by that person’s body language and by how *effectively you read and interpret* the particular message being put across to you.

It then follows that, if you unconsciously judge or evaluate other people accordingly to their non-verbal communication, other people will be doing the same with you; won’t they? That is, people will also be unconsciously evaluating you according to the messages that you are putting across. ***That is why it is so important that the messages that you will be communicating through your body language convey confidence!*** That, as you already know by now, is the meaning of success! Presidents of countries, politicians and successful business leaders are trained to become consciously aware of reading and interpreting body language. *And if they can do it, so can you!*

Here are some of the **non-verbal behavioural aspects** that you should be paying extra attention to:

- 1. **Eye Contact** : Looking directly at another person to whom you are speaking is an effective way of declaring that you are sincere about what you are saying and that it is directed to that person.
- 2. **Handshake** : A firm handshake conveys confidence and professionalism.
- 3. **Environment** : People react emotionally to the surroundings. Environment can affect how people feel, ranging from pleasure to dominance.
- 4. **Body Space** : All of us can identify with an area that indicates ownership and defence of our territory against those who may "invade it". What is your "comfort zone"?
- 5. **Body Posture** : The 'weight' of your messages to others will be increased if you face the person, stand or sit appropriately close, lean towards him/her, and hold your head erect.
- 6. **Facial Expressions** : Expression of the appropriate feelings on your face. Ever seen someone trying to express anger while smiling or laughing? It just doesn't come across. Effective assertions require facial expressions that agree with the message you want to convey.
- 7. **Gestures** : Hand and arm gestures to describe and emphasize your message takes on an added emphasis. But remember, being over enthusiastic in your gestures can be a distraction!
- 8. **Voice Characteristics** : Volume, tone and inflection - rate of speech evenly paced, not slow or too fast; pitch of the words and stress on different syllables.
- 9. **Timing** : Judgement is necessary as when to say something or act in a particular situation.



## ACTIVE LISTENING

*"Nature has given to man one tongue, but two ears, so that we may hear from others twice as much as we speak"*

Research has shown that people spend nearly 45% of their communication time on Listening. Sounds incredible doesn't it! Do we really listen actively or are we just 'hearing' sounds? Let's take a closer look at the definitions of listening to understand it fully.

**Active Listening = Hearing + Total Understanding**

Active Listening is the process of receiving, interpreting and responding to a message.

When we listen, we are totally in the "here and now". We are concentrating fully with our mind, heart and soul on what is being said. The difference between listening and hearing is best captured in the table below:

| Hearing                              | Vs. | Active Listening                                  |
|--------------------------------------|-----|---------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Passive: We only "receive sounds" |     | Active " We hear, see and understand              |
| 2. Uses only the ears                |     | Uses the ears, eyes, heart and the mind           |
| 3. Forced, have to                   |     | Choice is ours. We "choose" to listen             |
| 4. We don't necessarily benefit      |     | We understand and benefit because of our "choice" |

Active Listening goes beyond the mechanical process of mere hearing. It involves total receptivity and understanding. It is the process of using the ears, eyes, brain and the heart not only to hear but to seek out the **meanings and feelings** behind what the speaker is saying.

The Secret Formulae for Good Listening is:  $E^2 H^2$

**E** = Ears (to hear the sounds)

**E** = Eyes (to see the non - verbal cues)

**H** = Head (to understand and interpret the message)

**H** = Heart (the romantic one to understand the "feelings" of the speaker)



## BLOCKS TO LISTENING



- Pre - occupation / Distractions
- Prejudices and closed mind
- Evaluation
- Emotional filters / Blocks
- Advising
- Problem Solving
- Listening = Assuming to be acceptance



## WHY SHOULD YOU LISTEN?

Some of the benefits of Listening are listed below.

- Reduces Tension
- Learn by Listening
- Win Friends
- Solve Problems
- Resolve Disagreements
- Better Work and Co-operation
- Helps in making better decisions
- Help You Sell...
- Can Prevent Trouble
- Time to Think
- Conveys ...
  - I Respect You
  - I Love You
  - You are Important



**Listening is Powerful**

## TIPS TO EFFECTIVE LISTENING

### Non - Verbal

1. Maintain Eye Contact.
2. Sit in a receptive position, lean forward.
3. Look and be interested.
4. Remove Distractions.
5. Understand the non-verbal signals.
6. Make the environment and timing conducive to listening.



### Others

7. Be Courteous. Make the environment and timings conducive to listening.
8. Stop Talking! No interruptions.
9. Give time for listening and make it known to the speaker.
10. Encourage the speaker by positive gestures and words.
11. Don't pass judgements, criticism mid-way.
12. Reflect the feelings and paraphrase what has been heard.
13. Have patience.



## THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS

Only after the last tree has been cut down,  
only after the last river has been poisoned,  
only after the last fish has been caught,  
only then will you find that money cannot be eaten.

Native American Prophecy  
Crisis: Desperate District - Kalahandi

The monsoon has rarely failed this area. It gets an average annual rainfall of 1250 mm, more than what Punjab receives. The water table in some places is very high. Yet, Kalahandi in western Orissa is frequently in the news for its extreme poverty and deprivation. Often it is under drought and sometimes it has floods.

Kalahandi, however, was not always a place of hunger and deprivation. Nineteenth century travellers have talked about a mass of jungles and hills in the region. Just a few decades ago, it was all green here. With a large diversity of crops, it was one of the richest areas in eastern India. How did things change?

In the past, there was a network of about 30,000 traditional water-harvesting structures in the area. They included ponds, lakes, check-dams, and even tanks within paddy fields. The whole system was designed to suit the topography of the land so that no part of the rainwater went waste. What is more, the system was under the control of the community, which ensured proper maintenance and water-sharing through jal-sabhas (water councils).

Many tanks were built with the free labour given by the people. There was also a social system to protect the forests in the catchment areas. About 50 per cent of the cultivated land was irrigated using the water bodies. Failure of rainfall did occur, but there was never any scarcity of water.

Came Independence and the troubles started. First, the government took over many of the structures, but did not maintain them properly. In other cases, fearing a takeover, the owners converted the tanks into croplands. The focus shifted to large irrigation projects like the Hirakud Dam, though the canal system often did not suit the local topography.

Concurrently, the forests were being cut down for timber and the resulting erosion of the soil dumped a lot of silt on the catchment areas. Riverbeds also silted up, leading to floods downstream.

A large amount of water was being lost as run-off. From then on, even a slight shortfall in rain brought water scarcity and a large-scale crop failure. Agriculture became a difficult proposition and people started migrating in large numbers, affecting community life and preventing any revival of the water harvesting system. Kalahandi thus slid into a vicious circle, from which it has never recovered.

**Is there a global environmental crisis?**

Is Kalahandi a rare case or is it a typical one? Is there really a global environmental crisis? If there is a crisis, what is the cure?

What is the state of the world today? The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) produces periodically a comprehensive global state of the environment report, called the Global Environment Outlook (GEO). The latest was GEO-4 published in 2007. The Worldwatch Institute, an independent research organization, also publishes an annual State of the World report listing the significant events of the previous year. The Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), New Delhi, a public interest research and advocacy organisation, issues periodically reports on the state of India's environment.

Based on such reports and data from several other sources, here are some indicators of the current global and Indian situation:

**Water:**

- One fourth of the world's population, or about 1.5 billion people, have no access to safe drinking water and half the population lacks sanitation facilities. Some 80 countries are suffering from serious water shortages.
- In India, more than 60,000 villages are without a single source of drinking water. Diarrhoea, brought on by contaminated water, claims the lives of one million children every year. In addition 45 million people are affected annually by the poor quality of water.



**Biodiversity:**

- Worldwide, 24 per cent of mammals, 12 per cent of birds, 25 per cent of reptiles and 30 per cent of fish species are threatened or endangered; this is 100 to 1000 times the rate at which species naturally disappear.
- More than 10 per cent of India's recorded wild flora and fauna are threatened and many are on the verge of extinction.

**Forests:**

- The net loss in global forest area during the 1990s was about 94 million ha. Tropical forests are being cleared at the rate of one hectare every second.
- India's forest cover declined from 40 per cent a century ago to 22 per cent in 1951 and to 19 per cent in 1997. The quantitative decline is supposed to have been arrested since 1991, but the qualitative decline persists.

**Land:**

- Each year, six million hectares of agricultural land are lost due to desertification and soil degradation. This process affects about 250 million people in the world.
- India has nearly 130 million ha of wasteland compared to 305 million ha of biomass producing area.

**Pollution:**

- At least one billion people in the world breathe unhealthy air and three million die annually due to air pollution.
- The World Health Organization consistently rates New Delhi and Kolkata as being among the most polluted megacities of the world.

**Coastal and marine areas:**

- Worldwide, 50 per cent of mangroves and wetlands that perform vital ecological functions have been destroyed.
- Over the past 40 years, India too has lost more than 50 per cent of its mangrove forests. The absence of mangroves on the Orissa coast accentuated the damage to life and habitation when the super cyclone struck in 1999.

**Energy:**

- Two billion people in the world go without adequate energy supplies.
- India imports more than 50 per cent of its oil needs, primarily for the transportation sector.

**Global warming:**

- There are clear signs of global warming: The quarter September to November 2003 was the warmest such period in recorded history; permafrost and glaciers in the polar and other regions are melting; the very existence of many small islands is being threatened by sea level rise.
- In May 2002, temperatures in Andhra Pradesh rose to 49°C, resulting in the highest one-week death toll on record. Glaciers in the Himalayas are retreating at an average rate of 15 m per year, consistent with the rapid warming.

**Urbanisation:**

- About half the world's population now lives in urban areas, compared to little more than one-third in 1972. About one-quarter of the urban population lives below the poverty line.
- About 23 per cent of the population in India's million-plus cities lives in slums. Dharavi in Mumbai, the largest slum in Asia, houses 500,000 people over a small area of 170 ha.

We can go on with more statistics, but the picture must be clear by now. Severe environmental degradation is happening all over the world. What is the reason for this? Hundreds of scientists, environmentalists, politicians, social workers, and thinking citizens have come to a single conclusion: ***We are consuming natural resources at a rate much higher than nature can regenerate them and we are polluting the environment at a much faster rate than the environment can absorb.*** This is an unsustainable way of living and it can only lead to an environmental and social catastrophe.

What about hunger, poverty, and deprivation faced by millions of people?

The crisis of development arises from the fact that 20% of the world's population remains desperately poor even after several decades of international development aid. Poor countries have become enormously indebted and incoming aid is often used only to service old debts. Many countries have cut their social welfare programmes leading to further deprivation of the poor. The disparities between the rich and the poor have only been widening.

Wars have resulted in turning large populations into refugees without food, water, and shelter.

### **What has the world done about the environmental crisis?**

Dissatisfaction with the Idea of Progress began surfacing in the 1960s, when the adverse environmental impact of unbridled growth became clear. Books like Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* set the tone for an environmental movement.

The United Nations Conference on Human Environment in 1972 held in Stockholm was the first international initiative to discuss environmental problems. Later, the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) was set up in 1983 with Gro Harlem Brundtland of Norway as the Chairperson. The WCED Report, called *Our Common Future*, emphasised the need for an integration of economic and ecological systems. The Commission supported the concept of Sustainable Development and defined it as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The idea of sustainable development has been criticized for being interpretable in many ways. Yet, it has caught the attention of many people, since it seems to imply that development and environmental conservation can go together.

After Stockholm, the major effort was the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro. Attended by more than 100 Heads of State and 30000 participants, UNCED came up with several documents including:

- The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development listing 27 principles of sustainable development
- Agenda 21, a detailed action plan for sustainable development in the 21st Century
- The Convention on Biological Diversity

The next conference, popularly known as Rio+10, was held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002. This Conference recognized that implementation of the Rio agreements had been poor. This Summit marked a shift from agreements in principle to more modest but concrete plans of action.

"Anyone who believes exponential growth can go on forever in a finite world is either a madman or an economist."

- Kenneth Boulding



### **Why is there a general lack of public awareness about environmental issues?**

There are many factors that limit our awareness of environmental issues. To the millions of poor people, the problems of daily existence are more important than environmental degradation. The more prosperous are afraid that, in the name of environment, their comforts may be taken away. In any case, most of us do not pay the real costs of exploiting nature.

There is also false anti-environment propaganda by vested interests like the large corporations, for whom constant growth is vital. At the political level, parties are more interested in short-term gains and would not take unpopular measures for conserving the environment. Further, in this age of extreme specialization very few can look at the larger picture of what is happening to the world. There is also paucity of reliable and clear information on the environment. To make matters worse, indicators like Gross Domestic Product give us a misleading picture of what is desirable.

### **Is there any hope for the future?**

While there is surely an environmental crisis, there are also many stories of hope, of successful efforts by individuals, voluntary groups, international organizations and even governments. While we can draw some comfort from these stories, they do not add up to make any real change in the world.

Part of the reason is the NIMBY syndrome. NIMBY stands for 'NOT IN MY BACKYARD' and describes the prevalent attitude of the majority, which wants to enjoy modern comforts and consumer products, but is not willing to deal with the adverse effects of such a lifestyle. They are happy as long as the waste that they produce is not dumped in their backyard! It is the NIMBY syndrome that is preventing us from solving many environmental problems. Individuals must think about their own lifestyles and ecological footprints.

We must act collectively and individually to save the planet and the human species through sustainable development.

To begin with, each of us should see the environmental crisis as a real one needing urgent action from all of us. We have to move from a linear thinking to systemic or circular thinking that recognises complex interactions and natural cycles in the world.



We should examine beliefs, such as the following, that we have imbibed from our education and culture:

- "The world works today, will work tomorrow"
- "Economic growth is good"
- "Happiness is consumption"

### **What is our ecological footprint?**

This is the question you have to ask yourself. As we saw earlier, your ecological footprint is the amount of productive land area required to sustain you on this Earth.

With current population levels, there are about 1.9 hectares of productive area per person in this world. However, the average ecological footprint is already 2.3 hectares. That is, we already need 1.5 Earths to live sustainably.

If we go by countries, U.S. citizens have the largest footprint of 9.57 hectares per person. If we all start consuming at that rate today, we will need 25 Earths. We survive because there are still countries like Bangladesh, which has a footprint of just 0.5 hectare and because we use fossil fuels, which represent 'ghost acreage' from the distant past. What will happen, however, when India and China reach population figures of 1.5 billion each?

### **The conclusion is:**

If the Earth's environment and humanity have to survive, we cannot continue to exploit nature the way we have done over the past 100 years or more.

It will indeed be very difficult for the people in the Western countries to give up their cars and consumer products. It will be equally difficult for the people of the developing countries to stop dreaming of catching up with the West.

What is your ecological footprint? How much do you consume and where do the items of consumption come from? What is the impact of your consumption on other organisms and the environment? Why does your mind yearn for the consumer products and lifestyles depicted on television and advertised in the media?

Ultimately it is a question of changing one's mindset. If that happens to a sufficiently large number of people, we may yet begin managing our resources in a wise and sustainable way.

**What does 'changing one's mindset' mean?**

The great scientist Albert Einstein said, "You cannot solve a problem with the same mindset which created it in the first place". That is why token responses like buying recycled paper or using a CFC-free refrigerator.

What is it that we are trying to protect the environment from? Is it to protect it from 'them', the polluters and the destroyers? Perhaps we must first protect the environment from ourselves. It is our own lifestyle, greed, selfishness, and lack of awareness that make up the starting point of all the problems.

We mistakenly see a difference between other beings and ourselves. When we truly begin see ourselves as an indivisible part of the universe, there would be a fundamental shift in our mindset.



## WHAT THEN CAN I DO IN MY DAILY LIFE?

You can begin with the following:

- Step out of the process of consumerism and preserve your individual freedom. Exercise your choice in how you live.
- Determine your genuine needs for living a rational, reasonable and truly contented life.
- Believe that the collective interests of all organisms in the world are above the interests of any particular entity, race or group of beings.
- Consider the order of importance of interests to be global, regional, national, community, family and then the self. Develop a sense of universal responsibility, caring for others and for the coming generations.

### What You Can Do to Save Yourself, Your Family, and the Planet

To the reader: As you read about the worsening environmental crisis, you may wonder what you can do save the earth. Here is a list of things you can do to conserve the environment. I have listed them under different topics such as energy, water, waste, etc.

I have used a variety of sources for making this list and I cannot vouch for the efficacy and accuracy of every single item. I await comments, corrections, new ideas, references, weblinks, etc. Please send an email message to [rrgopalan2005@gmail.com](mailto:rrgopalan2005@gmail.com).

### Conserving Energy

#### Electricity

- Turn off lights and fans when you leave a room, at home or in the office. Make it a habit and a practice in the family and the department.
- Shut off personal computers, television sets, music systems, set-top boxes, mosquito repellents, etc., when not in use. All appliances consume energy even on standby mode. The so-called zero-watt bulb actually consumes about 10 Watts!
- Replace all the bulbs in your home with Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFL). If you replace one 60W incandescent lamp with a 15 W CFL costing Rs.125, you can save about Rs.25 every month with six hours of daily use. You can thus recover the cost in 5 months. In addition, each CFL reduces up to half a ton of carbon dioxide emission over its lifetime.

- Look for Light Emitting Diode (LED) lamps, lanterns and table lamps that consume much less power than CFLs (of the order of a few watts). They are now becoming available and their light output is increasing all the time thanks to research and development.
- Install a solar system that powers a set of lights and a few appliances. You will save electricity and also manage the frequent power breakdowns.
- Buy a solar lantern as an emergency light: The lantern comes with a solar panel and connecting wire. Connect the panel to the lantern and place the panel facing the Sun. In a few hours, sunlight will charge the battery in the lantern.
- Buy energy-efficient appliances when you replace old ones or you need new ones. Check always the specifications for energy consumption figures and look for the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) star rating (access the website [www.bee-india.nic.in](http://www.bee-india.nic.in)).
- Iron a pile of clothes at a time, instead of one or two at a time.
- Run a washing machine only when there is a full load.

### Cooking

- Avoid using kitchen appliances every day. Grind spices once or twice a week.
- Keep the burners clean.
- Soak rice and cereals before you start cooking.
- Keep vegetables and other items ready for cooking before lighting the burner.
- Use shallow and wide vessels.
- Cover cooking vessel with lid.
- Use only the required amount of water.
- Use the small burner as far as possible and reduce flame at the right stage.
- Allow frozen food to reach room temperature before you reheat it.
- Eat together to avoid repeated heating of food.
- There is an alternative to boiling water for disinfecting it. Fill a plastic bottle with water and place it in the Sun with a black surface underneath. In a few hours, the water will be completely disinfected.
- Buy a solar cooker and use it, say, for rice and dhal: It saves gas and the food tastes better.

### Water-Heating

- If you use hot water, install a solar water heater in place of an electric geyser. This is now compulsory for new houses in many cities.
- If you use a kettle to boil water, fill just the amount you need. Boiling a kettle half full instead of full four times a day could save enough electricity to power a TV set for four hours.

### Transportation

- Minimise the use of automobiles for your personal transport. Use public transport whenever possible: One busload of people takes 40 vehicles off the road during rush hour, saves 70,000 litres of petrol, and avoids over 175 tons of emissions every year.
- Do not be carried away by the hype about Nano or other cheap cars. More cars on the road will only increase traffic jams, air pollution, and carbon emissions. If you must buy a car, choose a more fuel-efficient vehicle or the electric one.
- Follow the advice given by PCRA ([www.pcr.org](http://www.pcr.org)) regarding energy conservation.
  - Drive only at 40-50 km/hour.
  - Use the right gear.
  - Keep your engine tuned.
  - Don't wait for your car to warm up; Instead, drive in low gear till the engine warms up.
  - Stop-and-go driving wastes fuel. When you slam on the brakes, a lot of useful energy is wasted in the form of heat. A good driver always anticipates stops.
  - Keep your foot off the clutch. It will help the clutch plate last longer.
  - Clean air filter regularly.
  - Use the recommended grade of oil.
  - Choose low-traffic routes.
  - Reduce load on the car.
  - Minimize travel by planning the trip and combining tasks.
  - Check your tyres weekly for the correct air pressure.
  - Avoid idling your vehicle at signals and traffic jams: 60 seconds of idling uses more fuel than in restarting the vehicle.

- Use bicycle or an electric two-wheeler for local work like shopping.
- Arrange car pools for going to work and for taking kids to school.
- Avoid air travel and go by train instead.
  - Buy locally grown and produced foods. Avoid food items that have been imported or have come from long distances. They would have consumed considerable energy on transport.
- Live near your place of study or work, if possible.

### **Building a House**

- If you are getting a house built or redone:
  - Choose an architect who follows ecological principles.
  - Minimise the use of materials like cement, steel, and concrete that use up lots of energy during manufacture; use earth blocks instead of burnt bricks, vaults and domes in place of concrete roofs, and so on.
  - Provide skylights wherever possible to bring in natural light and reduce use of electricity.
  - Take into account local climatic conditions for providing comfort while reducing energy consumption. For example, minimize the need for air-conditioning.

### **Conserving Water**

#### **Water Usage**

- Start with yourself: Measure the daily water that you use and try to reduce the amount.
- Examine the usage pattern of water in your family or in any one family. Educate them to use water with more care and efficiency.
- Replace leaking taps at home.
- Don't keep the water running while using the washbasin.
- Install shower outlet for kitchen sink. It will reduce the amount of water used for cleaning utensils.
- Do the dishes in a bowl rather than under running water.
- Remove any bathtub you may have. Use it to plant vegetables!
- Take quick showers instead of baths or take a sponge bath instead of a shower.
- Check the public taps and pipelines in your area, and arrange to plug the leaks.
- Use only low-volume and dual flush toilets.

- Buy a front-loading washing machine. It uses 40 % less water than the top-loading one.
- Wash your car with a bucket rather than a hose pipe.

### **In the Garden**

- Use drip irrigation for your garden.
- Replace lawns by trees and shrubs that need little fertilizer, and are drought-resistant. Or, grow vegetables.
- Grow only those plants that require low amounts of water.
- Use liberal amounts of mulch to reduce water evaporation.
- Water the garden only after dusk.

### **Increasing the Availability of Water**

- Implement rainwater harvesting in your house or apartment block.

### **Bigger Steps:**

- Recycle bathroom and kitchen water (grey water) using natural methods like planted filters. (This requires space.)
- Install a composting toilet in your house. This reduces water consumption, reduces the load on the sewage system, and produces organic manure.

### **Minimizing And Managing Waste**

- Examine every item of waste that is generated in your home. Find out where it came from and where it is headed. In each case, try to prevent the generation of that waste item. If it cannot be prevented, can it be reused or recycled in any way? Is there an alternative to throwing it in the garbage bin?
  - Segregate waste: Keep separate bins for degradable and non-degradable waste. Compost kitchen waste and get organic manure for your garden.
  - Reuse every possible item at home – paper, plastic bags, cards, envelopes, wood, etc. You can make artistic items out of waste.
  - Minimize the use of paper:
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- Use both sides of each sheet.
- Collect and reuse sheets printed on one side.
- Minimize computer printouts. Save messages and documents on the hard disk.
- Reduce junk mail by writing to firms to take your address off their mailing lists.
- Send greetings by email and not through fancy cards.
- Do away with paper tissues; go back to handkerchiefs and cloth napkins.
- Sell old paper, metal, etc., to the waste trader.
- Buy recycled paper products.
- Avoid heavily packaged products.
- Donate old clothes, books, etc., to NGOs for redistribution.
- If you are buying a car, buy a small and efficient one.
- Do not buy soft drinks in metal containers.
- Repair and reuse old bicycles.
- Minimize packaging waste by taking your own cotton bags to the market and the grocery store. Do not buy pre-packaged items. Buy reusable or refillable containers.
- Avoid supermarkets and if you do shop in them, take your own bag. Refuse the large plastic carry bag offered by the shop. Even better, support the small store, which uses old newspaper to pack groceries.
- Try to persuade supermarkets in your area to offer a small discount to shoppers who bring their own bags; tell them that they can benefit by spending less on bags and advertising their 'green' concerns.
- Learn to make hand-made paper.
- Buy durable products that will last long.
- Examine your buying habits. Buy only what is necessary. Do not be taken in by telemarketing, advertisements, and 'sale' campaigns.

### **Minimizing Use Of Chemicals And Hazardous Substances**

- Educate yourself about hazardous and dangerous chemicals. Examine every item you use at home and try to find out if it contains such chemicals or if it has been processed using such chemicals. If the answer is yes, try to replace the item with a more ecofriendly and safer product.
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- Avoid the use of chemical mosquito repellents in your home and in those of your friends. Chemicals like allethrin used in mosquito coils, mats and liquids are toxic to the body. Covering windows with nets and using a mosquito net are far safer methods of protection against mosquitoes. If you must use a repellent, choose natural substances like lemongrass (citronella) oil available in the market.
- Many household items like naphthalene balls, insect sprays, floor cleaners, detergents, drain cleaners, paint thinners, etc., are very toxic. Try to use safer natural alternatives like ammonia, bleaching powder, baking soda, mineral oil and vinegar.
- Use natural colours for Holi; for example, flowers of the tree: Flame of the Forest.
- For Ganesh Puja, buy only mud idols without any chemical paints. After the Puja, immerse the idol just in a bucket of water and not in a pond or lake.
- Buy rechargeable batteries.
- Do not throw away toxic material like batteries, thermometers, and insecticides into garbage. Find out if the manufacturers will take them back or if anyone would recycle them. Otherwise, encase them in something like concrete before burying them.
- Do not throw unwanted medicines or motor oil down the drain. If the medicines have not expired, donate them to any charitable hospital or voluntary organization that accepts them.
- There is a thriving industry in cities that recycles motor oil. If there are genuine recyclers in your city, collect all the oil in your neighbourhood and give it to them.
- Use fertilizer sparingly, never near a body of water.
- Buy natural products like earthen cups, leaf plates, bamboo dustbins, etc.
- Safe and Inexpensive Household Cleaners. Avoid buying expensive and dangerous branded cleaners. You can save money and also avoid toxic chemicals by using simple substances as cleaners. The following four basic chemicals (two acids and two alkalis) that are commonly found in households do a good job of cleaning, as good as or even better than many commercially-made products:
  - Vinegar (acetic acid)
  - Bleach (Sodium hypochlorite)
  - Baking Soda (Sodium bicarbonate)
  - Ammonia

In fact, most of the commercial products contain one or more of these four as their main ingredients, but are much costlier. Besides these four chemicals, lemon and salt are also useful in house-cleaning chores. Here are some ways of using them:

- To clean drains in bathroom, kitchen, sinks etc.: Sprinkle a handful of baking soda down the drains and pour half cup of vinegar on top. You will notice brisk effervescence. Leave it to subside for half an hour. Then pour hot boiling water. This removes grease and keeps the drains clog-free and can be done weekly, fortnightly, or as necessary.
- Keeping an open packet of baking soda in the fridge and freezer removes smell accumulating from foods. Change the packets once in three months and use the old packets for cleaning the drains as above.
- 10% bleach is a good antiseptic cleaner. Prepare it in a spray bottle and use it for cleaning kitchen countertops. In hospitals and laboratories (where biological tissues and fluids are handled) 10% bleach is used for cleaning work surfaces in sterile rooms.
- Neat bleach can be used to clean toilet bowls, bathroom floors, bathtubs etc. This is acidic and one has to be careful handling it. If spilt on clothes it can discolour them.
- Baking soda or vinegar can be used to remove the calcium build-up in coffee makers and tea kettles due to hard water. Once in two months, add a cup of vinegar in the kettle and boil it. Then empty the kettle and boil clean water once more, and throw that too.
- Besides being useful in cooking, baking etc., baking soda has amazing cleaning properties as well. ('Google' the uses of baking soda!) To clean small silver articles like lamps etc., put them in boiling water with a tablespoon of baking soda and a few crumpled aluminium foils. Boil for a few minutes. Then wipe them dry with a cotton towel. This method works better than silver polish. Cleaning silver articles with a paste of baking soda and lemon juice also works.
- You can use a baking soda solution (a teaspoonful in a pint of water) to clean acidic deposits on car battery terminals.
- Health tip: Use a mixture of 95% baking soda and 5% salt to clean teeth as tooth powder, couple of times a week. It prevents cavities. Cavities are formed because of the acid in food. Baking soda helps to neutralize the acidity.
- If a kitchen vessel has burnt food, then boiling some baking soda in water in that vessel loosens the burnt food, making it easier to clean.
- Add vinegar or salt in water to rinse vegetables.
- Ammonia diluted with water can be used to clean windows and glasses.

- Always buy plain soap with no fragrances or additives for daily use.
- Cleaning washing machine and dishwasher: Once every few months, run the regular cycle with baking soda, vinegar, or bleach alone.
- Vinegar in water (a cup per gallon) can be used to mop wooden floors.
- Baking soda is great for removing tea and coffee stains from cups.
- Sprinkle baking soda at the bottom of kitchen garbage can to remove smell.

### **Minimizing Air and Noise Pollution**

- Ensure that your vehicle does not spew out excessive smoke.
  - Discourage your friends or neighbours from lighting bonfires. Bonfire smoke is dangerous - containing highly toxic and possibly carcinogenic chemicals. Never burn tyres or plastics, which release deadly dioxins and poisonous gases. Join the police and NGOs to discourage people from lighting such fires during festivals like Bhogi in Tamil Nadu or Lohri in the North.
  - If you must light a bonfire, burn diseased cuttings and branches. If you are at a bonfire, do not inhale the smoke.
  - Say 'no' to crackers during Diwali and other occasions.
  - If any group creates too much noise in your neighbourhood, especially between 10 pm and 6 am, try to persuade them to stop or reduce the volume. If they do not respond, feel free to go to the police.
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## Conserving Biodiversity & Forests

(Including adoption of healthier food habits)

- Buy your food from local markets and small traders and not from supermarkets. The big supermarkets (and fast food chains) tend to offer a small variety of species and thus endanger biodiversity. They also drive out small local businesses. You may be attracted by their current low prices, but ultimately it will all boomerang on you.
  - Buy local varieties of food items, fruits and vegetables in preference to those that have come from abroad or from a place very far from your town. Buying local species ensures that the diversity is conserved.
  - Save the forests by saving paper.
  - Contribute to organisations that promote tree planting and have 'adopt a tree' programmes.
  - Plant trees yourself – in your compound, neighbourhood, park, streets, on the denuded slopes of a hill, etc. Get proper advice about choosing the appropriate trees.
  - Change your food habits and start eating indigenous varieties of rice and wheat. You will be conserving biodiversity and at the same time eating more healthy food.
  - Do not buy any product made from killing endangered animal species. This includes products made from ivory.
  - Eat less meat; or even better, become a vegetarian or a vegan.
  - If you have some land or even just a terrace, grow vegetables using organic methods.
  - If you have more land and you cultivate any crops, vegetables, or fruits:
    - Plant only indigenous species.
    - Prefer polyculture to monoculture.
    - Do composting or vermicomposting and use mulch.
    - Shift to organic farming.
    - Use drip irrigation.
    - Plant appropriate trees wherever possible.
  - If you have no space at all, start a community garden for vegetables and herbs.
  - Buy only organically grown food; if it is not available locally, form a consumer group to procure and distribute organic food.
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## MISCELLANEOUS

### Individual Level

- Try to reduce your ecological footprint by examining the source of everything that you consume.
- Find a job in which you can work from home on all or most days.
- Follow the 'one-store' policy: if there is more than one branches of a store, do not patronize it. This way you will avoid all chain stores and support small, local businesses.
- Join a local environmental group or voluntary organization and work with them at the local level.
- Find out more about citizens' movements aimed at conserving biodiversity and join one of them as a volunteer.
- If you are in a coastal town, join voluntary groups engaged in activities like beach clean-up.
- If there is no group and if a water body is in peril, organise a group to make representations to the government and to create awareness in the community.
- If you are running a hostel or community kitchen, get a large reflector-type solar cooker.

### Group Initiatives

- Cooperate with ragpickers: Residents should keep organic waste and recyclable waste separately. Ragpickers collect the two kinds of waste at the doorstep and take them to a central location. They compost the organic waste and sell the manure. They also sort the recyclable waste and sell it to the traders. Such arrangements are working in many Indian cities; for example, Exnora activities.
- Cooperate with one another to keep the streets and the neighbourhood clean.
- Celebrate festivals like Diwali together, thereby minimizing toxic fumes and noise.
- Use car pools to reduce pollution, save fuel and reduce road congestion.
- Acquaint yourself with the basic environmental laws and take action when you come across any violation. File complaints as a group with the appropriate authorities.
- Get together with like-minded people and set up an intentional ecological community.



## QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTIONS

Some basic questions to reflect on after this workshop are:

- What action am I going to take to enhance my ethical practises?
- What one action can I take right now to breakthrough to a higher level of effectiveness?
- What are the ethical challenges embedded in a particular project in which you are involved?
- What are the blocks I may encounter on my way to this journey?
- How many times have we asked ourselves: Is that the way I should treat someone else? Is that the way someone else should treat me?

### The Self Questioning Method: A Systematic Approach

People need a systematic way to approach living an ethical life. Here are a few questions that, used daily, can help with the how-to of everyday morality. You can ask and answer these questions yourself.

- Did I practice any virtues today?
- Was I fair and just today?
- Was my community better because I was in it? Was I better because I was in my community?
- Were you a person who shared and modelled integrity, trustworthiness, honesty or compassion?
- Were you more positive than negative in your attitude and behavior?
- In what ways did you benefit those around you? In what ways were you a hindrance?
- Did I do more good than harm today?
- Did I treat people with dignity and respect today?

Source: Pragati Leadership Institute ©

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