

Fifth Pillar: Life free of stress

- 1. All pervasive stress**
- 2. Causes of stress**
- 3. You may have to repent for (extreme) perfection**
- 4. Self realization through self confidence**
- 5. Progress of science**
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1) All pervasive stress:-

One day after reading for a long time I started feeling exhaustion, so I came out of the house for a while. Neighbour's 4 year son was sitting there. I thought of becoming fresh by talking with him a bit. I asked him, 'Will you play with me?' He immediately retorted with some disfavour, 'Uncle, don't talk to me, I am in tension'. Well, indeed even a 4 year old child is in tension today!

In olden days the head of a combined family who was holding all the responsibilities, rarely used the word "stress/tension". But now in this modern lifestyle, speed going age, even a school-going child says "Mummy, exams-tension".

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2) Causes of stress

Sushma and Divya were childhood friends. One day when Divya went to the home of Sushma, she found her very depressed. Divya asked her what the matter was since she had never seen Sushma so much depressed. Sushma replied, 'What else can I do? Manish has not yet returned. He had promised to return before 6 o'clock. See, now it is about to ring 8 o'clock. Manish has put me in lot of tension today.' Divya started laughing, said, 'Manish has not given you any tension. It is your thoughts that have caused tension.'

One of the reasons why tension is rising is that people are being attracted towards negative thoughts. You might have noticed in places like office or other institutions that people gather around those who have negative news. About people who are quiet, are asked whether they are alright. And about those who have positive news people think that this fellow seems to have been benefited already or that this fellow is not in his beans. Therefore to finish tension, attend to moroseness, make her your maid.

There is a difference between calm soul and a dull soul. The calm soul is embodiment of energy. Such a person is capable of subjugating his desires and vain ambitions with proper understanding. In the depths of calm the thoughts pulling in different directions are calmed down and the soul becomes pure and crystal clear.

If there are four people in the house each one of them may be believing in four or more different things. One might be particular about cleanliness while the other may be more concerned about decoration while a third may be particular about looking after the guests even as the fourth may be interested in earning more and buying a bigger house. If see as a witness the viewpoints all four are fine. But it is such views that become the cause of stress in the home. "Is this a home or fish market?" said Jayashree in a raised voice. "Mummy should I do my studies or keep cleaning all day?" Replied Sujata. "I want to earn more so I do overtime. At least I should have tranquillity at home!" said Ganesh. Such talks used to create stress in the household of Ganesh and Jayashree.

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3) Too much emphasis on perfection may lead to repentance:-

"Why is this watch kept here?" Sunita was getting angry with Mukesh. "Mummy I am very hungry. I will keep it at the right place after breakfast." Mukesh said sheepishly. "No, first keep the watch where it belongs. Only then will you get your breakfast." And Sunita caught hold of Mukesh's ears. Sunita was behaving like this even with her mother in law and husband. And everybody had been stressed due to this behaviour of Sunita. Over emphasis on keeping each and every article in its place and keeping the house spick and span kept Sunita also in a state of constant tension. At the age of 40 years itself she had diabetes.

"Meeana get my bag packed fast, I am getting late", said Jayesh, somewhat angry. When at last he hurriedly sat in the car he found that there was a small fudge on his shirt. He became so very desperate as if the sky had fallen on him. Since he was getting late for office he somehow calmed his mind saying that it was but a very small blemish, it's ok. But at last his nature was all over him. He returned home for changing the shirt. Meena was accustomed to this behaviour of Jayesh so did not say anything.

People like Sunita and Jayesh have to suffer ailments like blood pressure, headache, diabetes and heart disease etc. apart from tension as such.

Sujata was so quite mad after cleanliness and forced her husband, who held a responsible position, to take leave from his office. Well, you can imagine the consequences for yourself!

Remember ----

Your thoughts alone form your family.

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4) Self change from self respect:-

"Very good! Excellent! Your control is very good." Dr. Majumdar told Mr. Gadgil. "No doctor, this the result of your treatment. It is because of you that my diabetes is under control." A very submissive reply by Mr. Gadgil giving the entire credit to the good doctor. The doctor explained that it was due to the change in the lifestyle that Mr. Gadgil has brought that is the real reason for the good result. "...My patients are unable to do even this". Even so, after two years, ... "Can't believe so much blood sugar! All my fault, I have not observed your advice properly." Said Mr. Gadgil with a sense of guilt and hopelessness.

If you have noticed, Mr. Gadgil offered all the credit to the doctor without owning the results of any of his own efforts. And when the control was disturbed he called himself a sinner taking all the blame on himself. There are many patients in the world. Never ever act like this anytime. *When you exercise regularly, observe diet restrictions etc. and blood sugar comes under control, you should not hesitate to assume credit for the same and feel good about it. If the control is disturbed, do not have the feeling of sin, but try to find out where did the things go wrong and change accordingly.*

Ponder -----

There should be no reduction in self respect ever..... there is no self-change without self respect.

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5) Progress of science:-

"Doctor, can diabetes not be cured with the help of laser?" A merchant asked during the 'Camp for positive Living with diabetes'. Many people have some or the other such suppositions. "Can there be no transplant of the pancreas?" or "Medical science has made so much progress yet no medicine has been found out on the cure of diabetes!" or "Which is the best machine for exercise?" Generally such things are considered as 'progress of science'. No one talks about change in one's point of view to control diabetes, thereby bring about great change in your life. A great psychiatrist Dr. William James has told something which can be pondered over quite deeply. Emphasizing on the importance of viewpoint he has said, "The greatest discovery of the twentieth century is that we can revolutionize our emotions and experiences by changing our points of view." If we think about changing the lifestyle, the benefits will be manifold compared to possessing the best exercise machine. *You will be surprised to know that you can easily change your food habits, spare your time for exercise and meditation by becoming aware of your emotions and experiences.*

What is life? Just stop reading for a minute and ponder over this subject. You might get many thoughts. Life is a challenge, life is a game etc. etc. My answer to this question which I felt like pondering upon is ----

"Life is a liking"

Whatever you think the whole day is of your liking. What do you do first thing in the morning? Sip a cup of tea, read the newspaper, meditate or go for a walk. That is your liking. If we can make the mind understand, we can bring about revolution in our liking. Therefore, give due respect to the medical science but give more importance to matters related to the mind.

6) Support for living the life:-

Victor Frekley was arrested by the soldiers of Hitler. All his family members were killed in front of his eyes by putting them in the gas chamber. Their only fault was that they were Jews. He was tortured in various ways. Thousands among the Jews who were arrested were dying every day. Just think, what will be your state of mind if such a thing happens in front of your eyes. But Victor Frekley did not lose the equanimity of his mind. He did only that which was within his control. Victor Frekley was a psychiatrist. So he started studying the behaviour of his fellow prisoners. After the second World War when he was liberated, he wrote a book based on

his experiences in Hitler's concentration camp "Man in search of Meaning" which became a best seller. Victor Frekley could have spent in disappointment, hopelessness, misery, and general depression. He knew that if he had done that he would also be one among the many who were dying. And the world would not be privy to this thoughtful book. Dr. Victor Frekley studied the extraordinary power of human mind in the concentration camps. In one of the camps the prisoners were given small biscuits to eat along as food that were grossly inadequate to satiate hunger. Even then Victor Frekley found that some of the prisoners had saved some of the biscuits. Why did they do it? They were getting so few biscuits, how could they save out of such a meagre quota? Just think. The reason was that those people who wanted to live thought that 'for now at least these many biscuits are being given. In future if they stop giving even these, how will we survive?' Remember, mind is so powerful, it can convert impossible into possible.

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7) Eighteen beautiful maxims for life without stress:-

1. Each and every incident of life benefits you, one way or the other. Always think about the benefits accruing, directly or indirectly.
2. Do not repent for past mistakes neither think of the future. Strive to make the present successful. Today is in your hand. If you do constructive work today yesterday's mistakes will be wiped out and benefits will in future, for sure.
3. Do not be worried by comparing your life with that of others. Because in this whole world you are the only person of your kind. You are special. There is no other like you.
4. Always remember that your critic is your best friend who makes you aware of your mistakes like a psychiatrist absolutely free of cost.
5. Forgive those who are cause of your misery, and forget it.
6. Do not try to resolve all the at one time and get in more trouble. Solve just one problem at a time.
7. As far as possible try to be of use to others. By being of help to others you will be able to forget your own sorrows.
8. Change the viewpoint of seeing the expected future problems. By changing the point of view you will be able to change misery into happiness.
9. Do not be sorry for the conditions which you can not change. Time is a great healer.
10. This universe is a huge stage of drama in which we are all actors. Every actor is acting as per his best histrionic talents. Therefore do not be worried by looking at somebody's histrionic talents.
11. Do not take revenge but try to change yourself. Mind becomes stressful by the desire to take revenge. If the goal is to change oneself then it results in progress.
12. Do not be jealous but think about God. Jealousy burns the mind but thought of God brings untold calm to the mind.
13. Giving happiness increases happiness. Therefore exert to give happiness. Never ever think of making somebody unhappy.

14. When you are facing difficulties think that account of your past karma is being settled.
15. The subtle ego within you creates disturbances in the state of your mind. Therefore give up even that subtle ego. Remember that you have come empty handed and are destined to go empty handed.
16. Make it a practice of observing your thoughts as a witness for about 4 or 5 times a day. This can help you to be free from your worries.
17. Surrender all your worries to the Almighty God (*Parampita Paramatma*).
18. Every day have an appointment (yoga) with the Lord. The mental, physical change that happens by the practice of Yoga, can reduce stress and improve health.

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