

MY DAILY REFLECTIONS...



AS WE EVOLVE THROUGH TOUGH TIMES -A COMPILATION

**TO GAIN ALTERNATE PERSPECTIVES WHEN THE TIMES ARE
UNCERTAIN AND WHEN OUR SURVIVAL IS THREATENED**

Written for my budding entrepreneurs, students, and mentees. At times we need a spiritual perspective to develop the rare virtue of **ACCEPTANCE!**

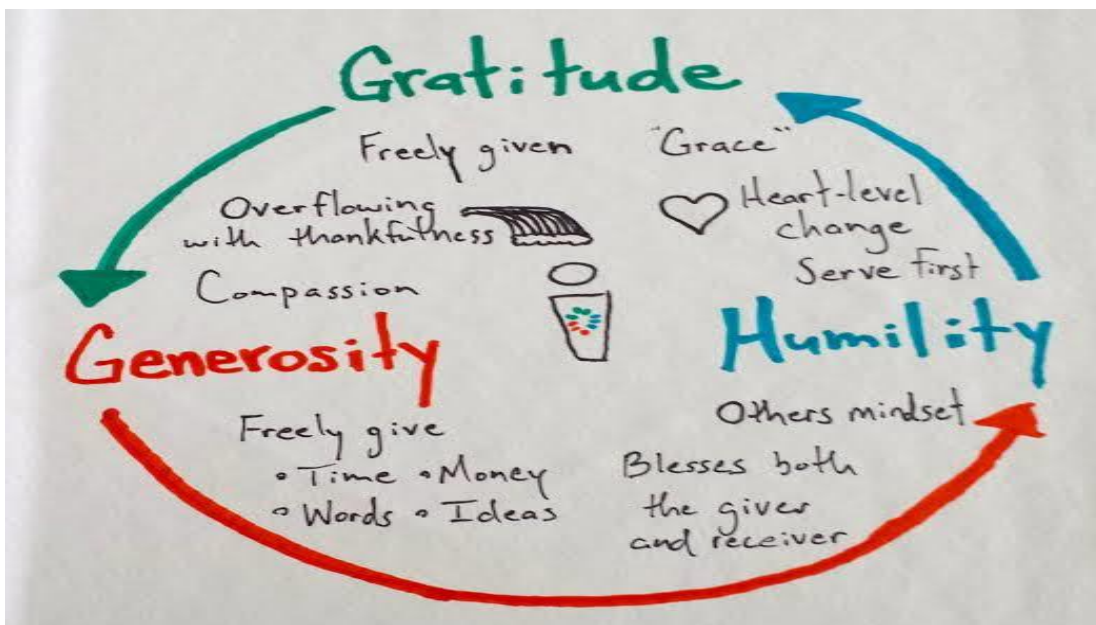
**- Prof Arun Sehgal, Visiting Faculty, JBIMS, University of
Mumbai**

I cannot say this article is original because there are many writers who have inspired my thought process and helped me grow internally. At best, I can only say that I am sharing these thoughts compiled after several readings and early morning meditation sessions at my farm in Karjat. The contents were compiled a day at a time.

WHEN A REALISATION SETS IN THAT WE ARE HERE ON THIS PLANET FOR A FIXED TIME

We are merely a soul that is visiting this planet to evolve further, this body is its birthday suit that gets worn during the long journey which is destined to end one day. The soul will not die but the body will. Hopefully by the end of this journey our soul would have evolved to a higher level of consciousness.

The process of evolution is always accelerated when the going gets tough, when the times are challenging and difficult, when the pain is experienced. Once we are mindful of this fact then we enjoy the process of evolution by being a silent observer to the drama around us. We feel the pain but get ability to deal with the same.



3 words that came to mind during my morning reflection:
Gratitude, Humility, Response-ability.

I feel incredibly grateful for having the means to go through this even as millions face severe hardship.

Humbled by the events and once again brought to my conscious awareness how little is in our control and the insignificance of my ego

To develop the strength of response-ability from care and compassion even as we save and rebuild our businesses and organisations. Being faced with difficult choices and dilemmas, our emotional and intellectual abilities will take us only upto a point. We will need to tap into our spiritual strength to come out stronger and help others on the way.

Today during my quiet time when I was reflecting, I realised that our ability to solve a problem is always bigger than the problem.



The future will be uncertain and challenging and there are two things that will see me through - my **willingness and ability**.

I need to develop the **Will** to go through the challenges with as much enthusiasm and dedication as I did in calmer times. To find the **Ability** of calm endurance with determination and focus. to move from asking- "Why all this?" "to asking "Now what?"

Today I was reminded of something I had heard years ago that has stayed with all my life: Things in life will go wrong, we will fall, we do not have a choice. But we do have a choice as to how we fall.

There are 3 ways to fall. I can fall like a pot of mud and get shattered, which means that-the situation is overpowering me. Or- I can fall like an iron ball where I do not break but break things around me, falling with anger and negativity. Or- I can fall like a rubber ball, the harder I fall the higher I spring

back. A rubber ball does not bounce in sand, it needs a solid surface. Tough situations come as an opportunity for us to spring up to a higher level of consciousness.

I realised that it's not just the situation itself but the uncertainty of the future that was becoming a cause of concern. Today I paused on that thought and laughed at myself. When was life ever meant to be predictable? It is the nature of life to throw up different situations, each for a purpose, each with a learning, each as an opportunity to grow.

I realised I must move from wanting predictability to developing adaptability. It is not the strongest of the species that survives but the one that is most adaptable to a changing situation.

Everything happens for a reason. The Universe is not a hostile place but in fact conducive for our growth - inner and outer.



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Our stress comes from our two habits of **Insistence** and **Resistance**.

When we insist that the result must be in a particular way within a given time. Second- when we resist what life throws at us because that is not what we wanted.

No mother has delivered a child without pain, no freedom obtained without sacrifice and even in business and science, some of the greatest value creation and breakthroughs have been built on the back of creative disruption.

I had a realisation this morning that the Universe was disrupting only to help us create a much better future. The pain is part of the process to deliver the unborn future. But I will only be able to embrace this change if I have faith in the Universe and its amazing ways. The deep-down fear of the unknown future

must be replaced with **Faith**. Faith that there is Grace in everything that happens. I am reminded this morning of Tagore's words, "**Faith is a bird that feels the light and sings when the dawn is still morning,**

Today, I was inspired by the most powerful force in nature, the Sun. Shining its light and warmth, serving everyone equally without distinction. We may not realise, but we too may be the centre of somebody's universe, people who depend on us and for whom we may be a source of strength. It is our light of knowledge, the warmth of compassion and the spirit of service that will make us effective.

Our intellectual knowledge will be incomplete without a deeper understanding of ourselves. Inner knowledge is equally important.

The world has a lot of financial and intellectual capital. What we need to build is the Capital of **Compassion** even as we scale heights of worldly success. An attitude of being able and available to serve others makes living ever so meaningful.



Let **Knowledge, Compassion, Service** be the centre of our Universe.

The thought that came to me this morning was - **Proceed Slowly and Silently.**

The mind being true to itself is going through its various emotions - extreme clarity and confidence at one point to the creeping of anxiety and concern at another. The thought of what could one have done differently in the past is only natural to cross my mind.

One has to slow down the inner turmoil of the mind and be mindful of the quantity, quality, and direction of thoughts. No matter what external resources are available, an agitated mind will compromise and rob us of our ability to face up to the opportunities and challenges in life.

Nothing helps tame the mind as sitting in silence. The power of silence and

quiet time, not only settles an agitated mind but more importantly allows us to be guided by our higher inspirational inner voice to show us the way forward.

We depend too much on our intellectual ability. We must trust the silent still voice within as well.

I don't have answers for all that will come my way in the next few months or years but if I am well guided by my inner voice to take the next few steps and keep the trust that I am on the right way.

During my meditation today I realised the phenomena around me that has been responsible for who I am and what I have today. "Where thoughts go, that is where my energy flows. Where my energy flows, that area grows. My thoughts shape me and my future"



It is a fact therefore that constant awareness of my thought patterns can help me reshape who I am as a person.

And yet I know how difficult it can be.

The mind being a creature of habit rushes into old habits of thinking. Worry, fear, anxiety, anger, regret and unproductive thought patterns can so easily disturb my inner balance if I drop my awareness.

To introspect, detect, negate and substitute negativity with higher order of thoughts is the way to a happy life.

The mind needs challenging goals. We must allow these goals to be large enough to keep us constantly inspired and active. It does not matter if we achieve them. The inner discipline and dedication of the mind while acting is all that matters.

Our real growth lies not in our achievements but in our efforts. Let every imperfection be a stepping stone in our journey of shaping our life.

Let the purity of our mind reflect the beauty within, unleash the untapped potential and live the greatness that we truly are. Before we can bring any positive change to the world around us, we must change our inner world. We carry an image of what a picture-perfect life looks like for us.

We somehow believe we can control things to fit into a fixed frame and spend our life in that pursuit. This frame comes from our ego and deep-seated insecurities. Our ego believes that we can control the events of life in a way we want.

Our security lies in relationships, money, health, success and other transient things. We want them to always be in place and fit into our frame, else we are agitated, disturbed and depressed.

It is not only about fitting the picture into our frame. Living effectively is learning to give the right frame to the different pictures' life throws at us. This is the frame of **perspective**.



Perspective is learning to accept things I cannot change, finding the courage to change what I can but more importantly knowing the difference between the two.

Acceptance is not a meek feeling of helplessness and resignation. On the contrary, It is having the strength of humility, knowing that there is a higher law of the Universe at play and nothing happens without a purpose.

As I look at some of the most difficult and challenging times in my life, I now realise they were some of the best things that ever happened to me. What is good for us comes to us in strange ways! We will grow and develop if we live with the right perspective. I realised that each moment is precious.

The sum total of all my moments, sums up my life.

It is extremely easy to live in the past - reliving the great times that we had as also revisiting the mistakes made and constantly regretting why we didn't make different choices.

We can live in the future - anxiously hoping things will be fine and our ambitions fulfilled. Neither the past nor the future can shape our lives. The only thing we truly have is the here and now.

Regret of the past, attachment to old memories and anxiety of the future robs us of the opportunity of truly transforming our lives by being fully present in the here and now.

If I can bring my mind to be constantly aware of living in the vital present, working with focus and single pointed dedication in a spirit of service and self forgetfulness, no challenge will be too great to overcome, no goal too high to achieve.

The future is carved in the precious present. Let me always be mindful of that.

I'm reminded of the words of a great master - "Let your mind be where your hands are"-Swami Chinmayananda

It is only when I let go of the lower can I attach myself to the higher. The challenge is not in knowing what a better higher order of living is. The challenge is in letting go.

It is easier to let go of habits and bring about personal change, but exceedingly difficult to let go of anger and hurt caused in relationships. My habit is my own. I do it. But when I am hurt it is done "to" me. I realised it is my ego that gets hurt and prevents me from letting go. In some strange way holding on to anger, hurt and the resentment becomes legitimate in our minds. Letting go may not change the situation, but it releases us of an unconscious bondage we live with, suffocating the joyful flow of life through us.

Praying for the well being of those that may have caused us pain is the most effective way of letting go. It is a struggle. But in this struggle lies our true growth. It is difficult to practice but I am getting this skill amazingly fast by practicing mindfulness.

Our ability to tap into the limitless reservoir of love and compassion within even in the face of adversity, is truly harnessed after we acquire the ability of letting it go.

This morning, I realised there is much work ahead. Much to do to regain, rebuild and recover. The call to action is the highest it's ever been.

I must learn to bring my out my best. Things will not always play out the way I want, I don't have a choice. But I can choose how to act. If I act for profit and loss, I will be tossed between my emotions of joy and sorrow.

If I act with a sense of duty, I will develop equanimity.

If I act with Love, there is a sense of joyous equanimity.

But if I act dedicating every action to the Higher, in a spirit of dedication and service, it will help me live in a higher level of consciousness.



The opportunity in this upcoming uphill journey is exciting. To not only regain lost ground but refine myself within. Filled with optimistic dynamism, always keeping the highest purpose in mind I look forward to the future.

Every fall will teach me and help me grow. Every success will teach me and help me grow. It's not about succeeding or failing. It is all about learning and growing.

We can either live with a paradigm of scarcity or abundance.

Every day is a new beginning, and every day presents us the opportunity to start afresh.

We cannot change the past. But we can honestly re-examine our lives, resolve to bring about change and restart as of now. Life gives us a second chance. Everyday.

There are two aspects to anything that happens in our life. The fact and our emotions attached to the fact.

A sharp and focussed intellect carries the discriminative power to deal with the fact to the best of one's ability. Our challenge is managing our emotions attached to the fact.

The mind quickly assesses the result of what has happened. Suddenly we get gripped with fear, anxiety, and agitation because the mind is thinking about the result of the result.

The fact can be assessed calmly. The consequence can be understood clearly. But what that consequence can lead to, the result really starts bothering us.

What has helped me is the awareness that I have two choices - I can either stay focused and deal with the situation at hand which is the best chance I have for achieving a favourable future. Or- I can allow my mind to write its futuristic fantasies and rob me of the vital present to be effective.

It is my highest duty to do my best in any situation and to aim for the best result. But I can only do that if I manage the emotions around the result of the result.

Even though results are not in our control, we must have a plan. The mind needs an inspiring goal to work towards to keep it disciplined and channelised. A wandering mind without a purpose is destructive. The mind is our best friend and worst enemy.

Patient self application is the key. One day at a time, one task at a time. I've realised one needs to develop the ability to zoom in to the work on hand and ensure its completion in the best conceivable way and zoom out to re-view our goals and plans.

If we are constantly zoomed in we will become micro managers and control centric, not trusting others around us. We will limit our own potential due to our insecurities.

If we are constantly zoomed out, we lose touch with reality only to get hurt when things spin out of control.

The daily practice of Quiet Time to be guided ahead by our inner voice and the end of day re-view keeps us in balance. No matter how noble the cause or big the challenge ahead, we must apply ourselves fully. One day at a time.

I was reflecting on the fact that everything we do has two outcomes. The outer result in the world and my inner growth and development.

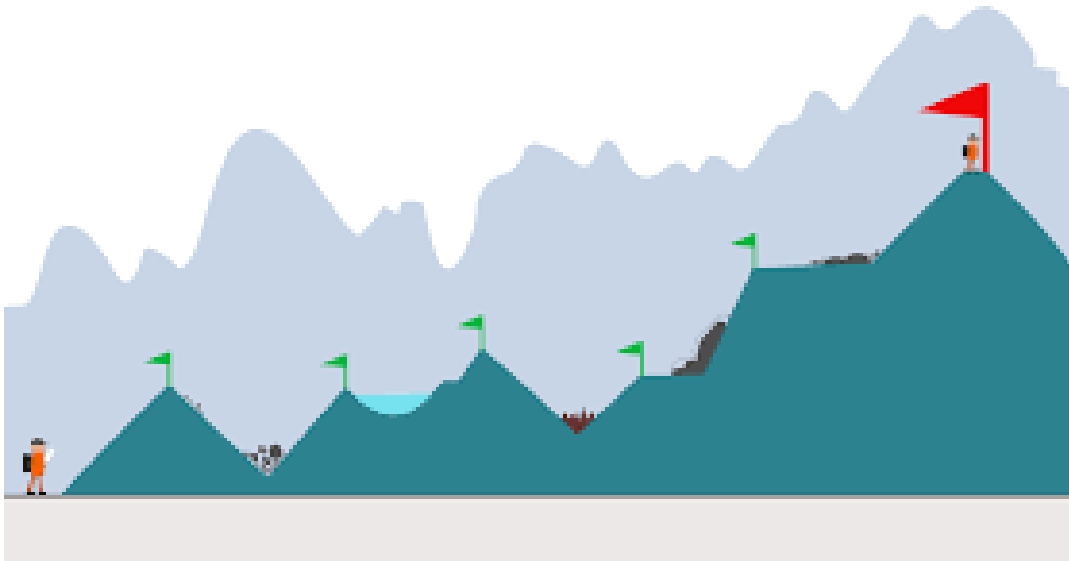
Our Goals in Life must be aspiring enough to keep us inspired and focused. The world acknowledges and appreciates our outer success and soon without realising our sense of security and worth comes from achieving our Goals “in” Life, in “what” we do.

But true success comes from our inner growth irrespective of outer success or not. It lies in “how” we do things. Growing internally becomes our Goal “of” Life.



When we realign our thinking and work towards achieving our Goals in Life, we stop stressing about the outcomes and enjoy every moment of the action. But this requires deep conviction.

It is easy when we are successful externally and growing internally. The challenge is staying the course when we struggle in life. When others around us are doing better. The mind will easily shift from our inner focus to outer comparison without us realising.



I must remind myself daily. Remind myself that having set an ever-inspiring destination, to start focusing on the journey knowing that it is not about reaching the destination but the way I traveled. To constantly remind myself that - **“The Journey is the Goal.”**

Everything has a nature which defines it. Heat and light are the nature of fire, sweetness is the nature of sugar. We too have our nature that defines our character and personality. I realised it is important to introspect and be honest with myself about myself and recognise my nature. And work towards improving it.

To be effective in the world we must understand three factors: Ourselves, The Nature of the World and our Relationship with this World.

Once we accept that different people in our life have their own nature, life becomes easier to navigate.

Our challenge is we want people to change and be the way “we” want them to be. But the fact is that people change only when “they” want to.

When we bring the higher in us in every relationship, we have the greatest chance of a successful relationship.

To bring out our positivity when the other person is behaving otherwise is our true test. And when we can do that, we are truly “successful”

Our hurts are caused by our expectations and non acceptance of the nature of people around us. These difficult relationships come in our lives as an

opportunity for us to develop unconditional love, empathy, and acceptance. They build our inner ability and strengthen our higher nature.

Difficult relationships in our lives are not a problem. They are a blessing.



Emotionally we need a closure.

Strained relationships, broken friendships, pressured partnerships bother us even when we feel we were not in the wrong. The need for restitution and resolution lingers deep within.

It is not that our life is otherwise not happy. It is not that we do not have several other happy relationships. Yet this deep lingering need to mend things. I realised it comes from our need for Harmony. Because being harmonious is our true nature.

Conflict disturbs us not because we are weak, it disturbs our harmony. We feel one in nature because nature is in harmony, and it resonates.

Our natural tendency is to gravitate to people and situations where we feel a sense of harmony. Consciously and subconsciously, we live our lives seeking and being in that harmony, what we call being happy.

The nature of this inner harmony is Love, Purity, Compassion.

It is difficult to live in harmony without mending our relationships with those whom we have hurt. And it's not just those who have drifted apart, it could even be those close to us whom we meet regularly.

And we can only get closure if we reach out to them with Love, Purity, and Compassion.

We take ourselves too seriously in life. Our sense of self importance stems from our ego. We forget that Joy is our true nature. I have realised that one of the strongest traits one can cultivate is **Humour**.

Humour lightens the air even amid very "serious" conversations. It gives the mind the much-needed break for a few moments and in that laughter the mind is tapping into the ever-energising Joy within allowing us to find creative solutions to complex situations.



It takes strength to keep our sense of humour in tough times and it gives confidence to others around us specially those who are dependant on us. In tough times having a Humour can be challenging but it can be our ultimate strength.

CONCLUSION

As the author of "My Daily Reflections... As We Evolve Through Tough Times," I hope this compilation serves as a source of solace, strength, and inspiration during moments of uncertainty. These reflections, born out of firsthand experiences and quiet meditations, are intended to offer alternative perspectives that help us navigate the complex and often challenging journey of life.

In sharing these thoughts, I am reminded that we are all travelers on this planet, here for a finite time, with the potential to evolve and grow through every experience—especially the difficult ones. It is in the face of adversity that our true character is tested and refined. By embracing virtues like gratitude, humility, and responsibility, we can not only survive but thrive in the most challenging circumstances.

Through these reflections, I wish to convey that life is not about achieving perfection or control over external events but about cultivating inner strength and resilience. It is about learning to let go, adapting with grace, and finding meaning in every moment, whether it brings joy or sorrow. My hope is that these words resonate with you, offering a guiding light as you face your own challenges, and that they remind you to always strive for growth, balance, and a deeper connection with your inner self.

May this compilation be a companion on your journey, helping you to embrace life's unpredictability with faith and courage, and to approach each day with a renewed sense of purpose and optimism.



**WE BORN TO BE
HAPPY NOT TO
BE PERFECT**