

OPPAM

ONLY POSITIVE



**INVEST IN
FRIENDSHIPS**



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Editorial

PROF ANTONY P JOSEPH
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QUAKER BUTTONS THAT WERE WASHED IN HOLY RIVERS

When he set out on a pilgrimage trip, he visited a friend's house to say goodbye. The friend gave him a quaker button seed and said: "When you take a bath in holy rivers as part of your pilgrimage, please wash it in the rivers. Then it will be free of its bitterness."

He agreed.

After a long time, the man returned to his home village. When he visited his friend's house to share his experiences on the pilgrimage, he brought with him the quaker button also.

"Here is your quaker button, which I have washed in holy rivers. Now you may use it as you like."

The friend tasted the seed and found that it was still bitter. He was surprised to know that in spite of washing it in holy rivers, the bitterness had not been washed away.

Although this is a story, there is a truth it conveys. Every person has his own peculiarities, and a distinctive character. They cannot be changed by wielding a magic wand. The person, by himself, should decide and work to change it. The change has to come from within. Change can be achieved only by sincere desire and effort. No body else can make a change in my life unless I decide to change.

Even when I say so, I admit that there are some intrinsic traits in us. An Ethiopian cannot change his skin and a leopard cannot change its spots. We should understand and accept the peculiar traits of people around us. You will be disappointed if you insist to change the basic traits of others, although not always. This happens in family life as well as in friendships.

Just reflect the areas in your life that are yet to change. Once you realize the traits in you that you do not like, you will be able to stop trying to mold others as we desire. Although we can bring some changes in others by our efforts, we cannot bring a total change. Accept that fact. He or she is like that. Once we have realized that, we will be able to avoid clashes and conflicts in our personal relationships.

Wishing you all success!

Dr. Antony P Joseph



EXECUTING THE DECISION

It is not the lack of decision but the failure to implement the decision that is the reason for the failures in many people's lives. It is relatively easy to make the decision. But it is important to implement the decision. Make sure that those who make the decisions succeed. Here are some of the decisions.

Focus on your passion

Everyone is passionate. But how many of them follow and own that passion? Don't lose your passion and keep following your passion.

Stop the slanderous propaganda

Do not share what you have heard about other people without knowing their truth. Now, even if the things heard are true, decide not to tell others about

the person's self-respect if it causes defamation or damage to his reputation.

Record at least one compliment per day

Humans are social beings and live in relation to their environment. That's why you have to interact with many people every day. Appreciate them for the goodness in them and reciprocate the goodness you receive from them.

Do acts of mercy

Do at least one act of kindness a day. It doesn't have to be something big. Even the smallest of deeds, done with love and goodwill, can become acts of mercy.

Read at least one book per month

This is the time when book reading

Writing has a lot of power. So write down the goals that you hope to achieve in life. Also make a list of things to do like things to do tomorrow and things to do today and work on them.

is very much decreasing. The impact of social media on the changed world cannot be denied. But make the decision to read at least one book a month and stick to it. There is nothing that enlightens us like reading books.

Reduce waste

In many ways we are wasting a lot. From time to money. From goods to

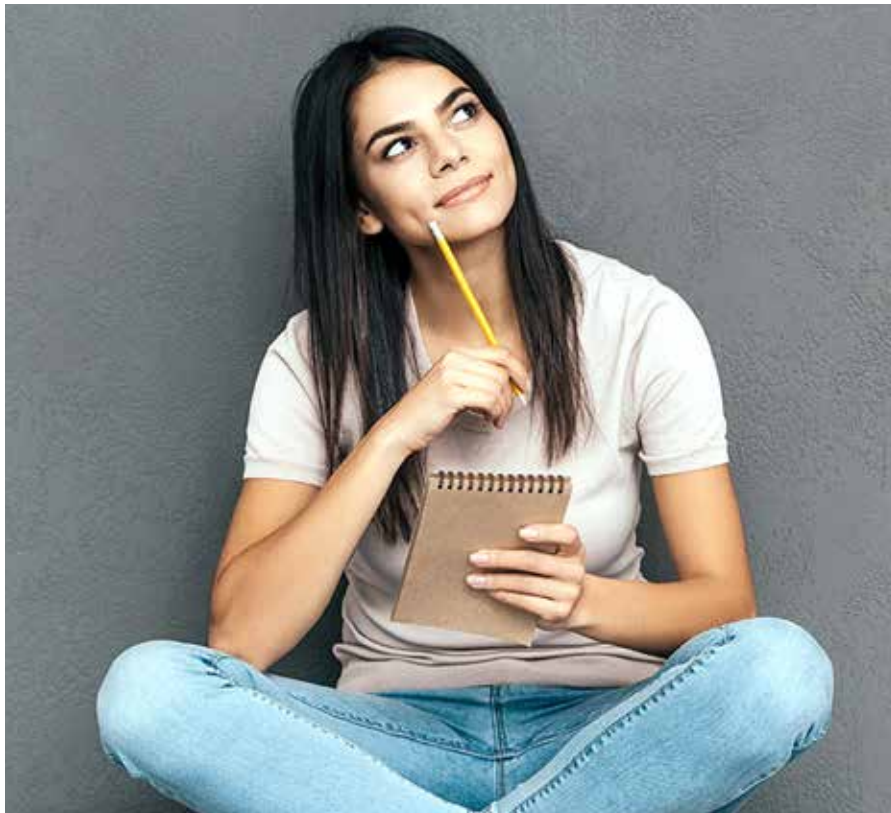
food items. Be aware of unnecessary wastage and take a firm pledge not to waste anything.

Take short trips on a tight budget

Traveling can make us more energetic. New knowledge and experience will be given. Even if months-long trips are impossible, take a one- or two-day trip on a budget. Enjoy this trip alone, as a family or as a group.

Write down gratitude for each day

Keep a record of the big and small good things that you have achieved during the day. Give thanks to God and men for those good things. Cultivate a culture of gratitude. It is the ungrateful people who are polluting this world.



Grow the investment, however small

Save even a small portion of the income for tomorrow. This money can be invested in a number of ways. Tomorrow it will become a saving and a help to us.

Don't get bogged down in over a hundred things

Stress, depression, and anxiety are caused by too many things on our minds at the same time. Can't concentrate on anything. So focus on one thing at a time.

Practice moderation

Spend your time and money on the good things. A lot of what we accumulate is not what we need. Know the difference between want, need and not wanted for the time being; practice moderation

Call instead of text message

If there is something to say to a close relative or friend, some people use

WhatsApp. Call in person if possible instead of text messages.

Discover a new habit

Find a new habit and develop it. Be ready to learn new things every moment and every day.

Stay away from some people

Keep your distance from people who destroy your peace. Keep negative, always blaming, ungrateful and hypocritical people away from your life.

Make meditation/pray regularly

Make meditation and yoga a part of your life. If you are a believer, make prayer a part of your life.

Write down the goals to accomplish

Writing has a lot of power. So write down the goals that you hope to achieve in life. Also make a list of things to do like things to do tomorrow and things to do today and work on them.



IT DOESN'T MATTER IF IT'S NOT A GOOD START

There is a saying that a good start is only half done. No, it is also a belief. Of course, a good start is always good. But should we be so disappointed that the start was not as bright as it should have been? There is one thing that is recognized when going through the history of all those who have succeeded in life

and have achieved success in life. All of them were not bright enough to begin with. Talents were not utilized properly in the early days. Nor were they successful at the first chance. They have faced so many rejections in life. They have tasted the bitter juice of so many failures.

Or look at how many times a child



History today would not have recorded the achievements of the likes of Abraham Lincoln or Thomas Alva Edison if they had carried the belief that beginnings determine your talents and fortune.

learns to write the letters cleanly and correctly. How many times have we fallen and got up. After many mistakes, we got the driving license. Look at the current trending exams like IELTS, OET etc. Majority pass it after writing it more than once. Despite mistakes in practice and practice, they do not back down. After two or three times they are

sure of success. Or there is the effort to succeed.

If you can fix the beginning, fix it. But the beginning is not bright enough. Whether it be in career, studies or relationships, sometimes we have not been able to utilize the full extent of what we can or have. It doesn't matter either. Just don't despair. Just don't make the mind inactive. It is enough to be willing to correct the mistakes made and move forward. History today would not have recorded the achievements of the likes of Abraham Lincoln or Thomas Alva Edison if they had carried the belief that beginnings determine your talents and fortune.

No matter how good the beginning is, the end must be good.

START
NOW





ROLES THAT CANNOT BE EXCHANGED

The main characters in this event are a couple and the husband's mother.

"I want my mother and my wife" the husband said to me. His wife and mother are always at loggerheads at each other. The clash begins the moment he leaves home for office. When he begins to focus on his duties in the office, his mobile phone will start ringing with his wife detailing her grievances over phone. And his mother's call follows. "I am not able to concentrate on my job" the young man said with helplessness

overshadowing his eyes.

Everybody desires for love and is willing to give love. Problems arise when there arises a disparity in the give and take of love. In this case, the villain was love. His wife and his mother love him excessively. For his mother, he is her son. For his wife, he is her husband. "He became her husband only after he was born to me" says the mother. "After marriage, wife has the upper hand over mother" argues the wife. The husband is suffocated between these two. He wants

Husband, wife and everyone related to them should perform their responsibilities well. They should be willing to understand each other. Then family life will be successful for sure.

mother as well as the wife. But each of them wants more love than the other.

The wife accuses that her husband loves his mother more than her. On the other hand, the mother gets infuriated when she finds her husband spending more time with his wife. She calls him 'hen-pecked.'

The actual problem here is not limited to certain events, but that the persons involved do not understand their specific roles and how to deal with relationship. A mother has her specific role. Likewise, a wife has her own role

to perform. The man has two roles to play: that of a son and of a husband. These roles cannot be exchanged. Each of them needs to perform his or her role with sincerity and commitment. The relationship between the mother and daughter-in-law was dysfunctional in that home, and that was the real cause of all the problems.

A wife not only has the role of a wife, but also of the daughter-in-law. She should not fail in fulfilling her duty. I told the mother to give a private space to her son and his wife once he has married. Mother has no right to interfere in all their matters. She should not do things for him, which his wife needs to do. On the other hand, a wife should not hinder her mother-in-law from doing her duty to her son. Son also has a specific role to perform. He should find time to spend with his mother and wife. Similarly, he should also spend time with his mother



and wife separately. When making decisions for future, he should consult his wife. He should consider his wife equal to him. What he has to say to his mother should be shared with her.

When each one performs his or her own roles perfectly and responsibly, there will not be any problem in the family. Problems arise when no one is willing to do his or her responsibility and when someone interfere in the matters of others.

There exists a notion that the mother-in-law is the sole cause for all problems in a family once her son is married. This need not be true always. Problems arise not only because the mother-in-law misbehaves with the daughter-in-law; but for other reasons as well.

There are some people who keep in mind the abusive words used while they

quarreled. Nobody thinks about the wounds created in the minds of others when abusive words are applied. Such words can cause friction in relationships.

There is one more reason that triggers friction in marital relationships. If the husband or wife does not consider his or her partner's emotional needs, it can create problems. Acts such as neglecting the spouse, unwanted silence, unwillingness to understand etc. can destroy marital ties.

In short, husband, wife and everyone related to them should perform their responsibilities well. They should be willing to understand each other. No one should usurp the role of others or perform his or her duties awkwardly. Then family life will be successful for sure.



HOW TO GET RID OF LONELINESS?



Perhaps these statistics may shock you. One in four adults in the world suffer from bitter loneliness! It is normal for men and women to undergo loneliness once in a while, in life. People pass through various kinds of loneliness due to trauma, diseases, marginalization, separation, bereavement and so on.

But long-lasting loneliness can do harm to cardiovascular health and end up in amnesia and untimely death.

Nonetheless, social isolation is not a new thing or an unusual phenomenon. It is something that people across the world pass through. But the way in

which people respond to it can differ.

As thirst is a sign that body requires water, loneliness is a sign or an indication. It is a sign that those people need a social setting or companionship. So, lonely people must think about having closeness to human beings. Here are some tips that might help you.

Find like-minded people

Every man or woman has distinctive aptitudes and preferences. Yet, if one seeks, he or she can find out like-minded persons. Some people will be interested in reading. Some others will be interested in social activities.



Another set of people may be passionate to sports. Although people may have varied tastes, some of them will have a mind that is congenial to us. Make friends with those people. Mingle with them. Thus, you will be able to come out of loneliness.

Take over the loneliness of others

If you happen to find a lonely person, take a share of it, considering it as your own loneliness. That person may be someone whose loneliness has not been addressed. Get close to him or her.

Speak openly about their experiences of loneliness.

Get involved in creative things

There is creativity in everyone. Although the degree of creativity varies, from person to person, that is not a hindrance to get involved in creative activities. Some people have a gift for drawing or painting. Some others can write, dance and sing. Find out such talents and nurture them. You may not become a Picasso or a Michael Jackson, but you can definitely come out of your loneliness.



INVEST IN FRIENDSHIPS

Friends can arise from anywhere. The birth of a friendship is like an unexpected event in life. Sometimes, a friend can come up into your life from your childhood and can stay with you all your life. New friendships can arise during your academic years or professional sites. Some good friendships can happen during a journey.

Relationships have a vital role to play in a person's health and well-being.

Friendship plays a key role. We need to understand the relevance of such relationships in our lives.

Good friendships keep us teaching new things, always. Friendships have the power to transform our perspectives, opinions, and views. They consistently give us good suggestions for our benefits. They can generate positive results. Good friendships enhance our self-confidence and enable us to

HOW CAN I BE A GOOD FRIEND?

Do you want to be a good friend? Here are some useful tips.

When there is a long interval of silence between you and your friend, with whom you used to contact over phone or other means, initiate a fresh contact.

- Be a good listener
- Celebrate the success of your friends, support them in their failures, and stay close to them when they are sad.
- Do not shun them when they are in need.
- Do not blame the other alone for a mistake in which both of you are involved.
- Speak honestly and candidly
- Empathize with your friends
- Never miss an opportunity to rejoice and make them happy
- Be mindful of your health-needs.

achieve our goals. Every one lives in a hectic world entangled in professional commitments, family time, study, and such things. If you are still able to find time amidst all these things for spending time with your friends, make a phone call or go for a trip, then it means that friendship is precious for you. It also means that your friend values you.

We might have criticized our friends at some point in our lives. We might have thought that he or she was not a real friend. We also need to ask ourselves: Was I a good friend to him?

Perhaps, we are good friends. But there is still space for improvement. So, in this new year, let us make a decision to be better friends.



SIGNS OF BAD FRIENDS

Incapability to keep secrets

Friends should be trustworthy. Many things are shared between friends that the outer world does not know. If it occurs that one of the friends shares the secrets about his friend's secrets with a third one, it will break the trust.

Using the other for one's own benefits

Even though one claims to be a sincere friend, if he or she behaves selfishly and use the other for his or her own benefits, that is not true friendship.

Never ready to say 'sorry'

Sincere friends might have hurt the other at least once, through word or

deed. There is always an element of pain in good friendships. But if you are not able to say 'sorry' to the other, it is a sign that you are not a good friend.

Not ready to work to maintain friendship

For most people, friendship is a one-way affair. They are ready to talk, if the other one calls them over phone or they are happy if the other one visits them. At the same time, they are least concerned if the phone call never arrives. Such people are not good friends. Friendships remain strong only when both the friends take effort. One-way friendships never last.



VARIOUS TYPES OF FRIENDS

A friend is a precious person. At the same time, you should also value your friend. At the same time, is everyone who is generally called a friend truly a friend? Never. There are many kinds of friends related to us in some way or the other.

There are some friends whose friendship lasts until the end of our life. They know everything about our lives. They are best friends. They love each other and spend time together. We trust them in all things.

There are some others whom we meet only during some social events.

They are called 'second hand' friends. These friendships are based on certain interests. For instance, friendship in the playground. Their friendship usually does not go out of the ground.

Signs of a good friend

- They will be with you in your need.
- They prove their friendship through acts and not by words
- They can be trusted always
- They will communicate heartily
- They will never judge you
- They will be patient and forgiving



TIPS FOR LEADING A BETTER LIFE

How can we live a happy life? How can we become better human beings?

These are two of the most important questions that every human being faces. The response of wise men to these questions can be summarized as follows.

All emotions originate and emerge from within us. It is we who form our emotions. Our mind is like a blank document or canvas. It is up to us to decide what to write on it. We record in it the things according to our thoughts. Similarly, when faced with a problem, be careful not to lose your presence of mind. When we have a problem, we often blame external circumstances. But it is within us that conflicts actually take shape. Try to control your emotions.

Don't feel sad or disheartened about a failure in life. Realize that life has to go on even after failures. Be optimistic about life after failures. Failures often offer an opportunity to train ourselves. It gives strength to do better and become better beings. Without failure there is no growth.

When you read, read with a purpose and wisely apply that knowledge in a way suiting to the context. We live in a time where reading is declining. Find time to read good books. Because there is no other thing that can give knowledge like books.

We get to know different schools of thought and ideas in a book. Let us ab-



Grow into the conviction that time is our most valuable resource. Every day and every moment offer us opportunities for self-improvement, and we need to be accountable to ourselves for living a quality life.

sorb such knowledge and ideas and put them into practice while we face a crisis. There is no doubt that the knowledge gained through reading helps to calm the mind when crises and challenges arise.

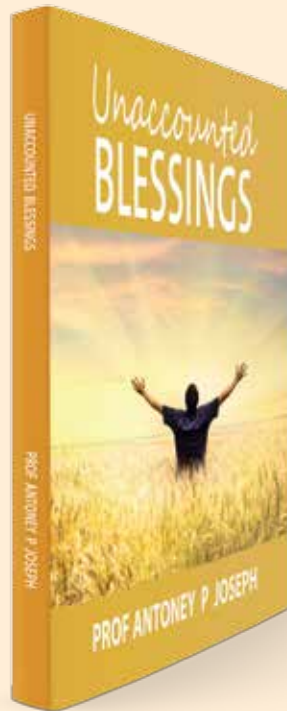
Another way is to challenge yourself with extraordinary honesty. It is not so easy for us to break out of our habits. If we break out of the habits, we will probably have more success and possibilities than we expected. Yet we often get stuck in the confines of our habits. So, challenge yourself and come out.

Grow into the conviction that time is our most valuable resource. Every day and every moment offer us opportunities for self-improvement, and we need to be accountable to ourselves for living a quality life. It can only be done through effective use of time. This will increase our self-esteem and self-awareness.



Unaccounted BLESSINGS

PROF ANTONEY P JOSEPH

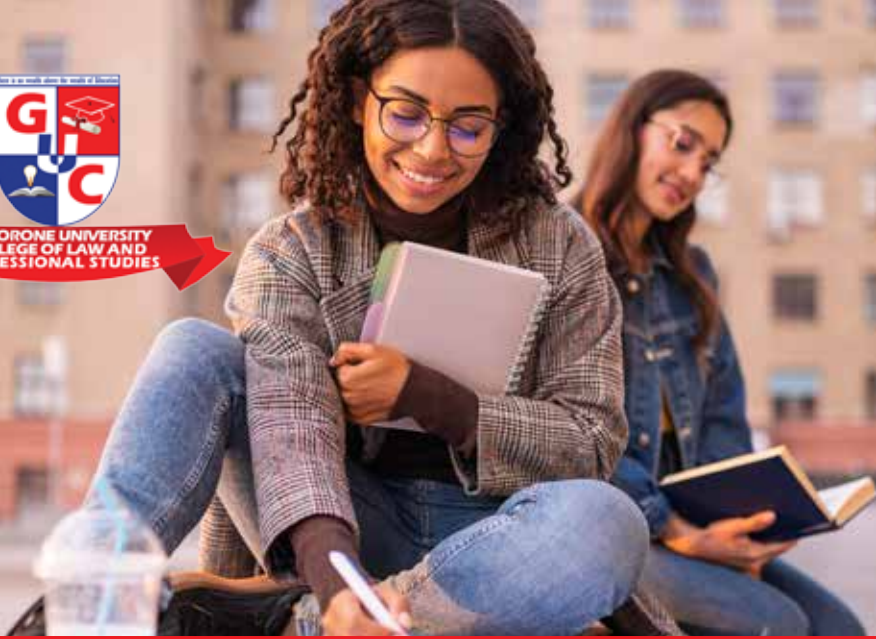


This book shows you the blessings you fail to notice... Once you have finished reading, you will realize that you are blessed and will be inspired to make the lives of others more blessed.

This book which presents solid thoughts in simple language interweaving stories and real events, will definitely ignite you to think and experience, and help you to become better human beings.



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