

OPPAM

ONLY POSITIVE



**ARE YOU YOUR
BEST FRIEND?**

**HOW MUCH DO YOU
KNOW YOURSELF?**

OPPAM

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Editorial

DR ANTONY P JOSEPH
Managing Editor

BE YOUTHFUL IN YOUR MIND

He had not stopped his habit of venturing the sea in a small canoe to catch fish even at the age of 75. But, things were not so pleasant. For many days, he had not even been able to catch a single anchovy. Still, he had not stopped going fishing.

He hoped that a massive fish would come and fall prey to his fishing rod. One day a miracle happened. Something swallowed the hook of his fishing rod. Elated, he began to pull the fishing rod.

He was astonished when he knew what had fallen prey to his rod. An enormous Marlin fish. A fierce fight took place between the old man and the fish. The fish tried to escape him, but he was not ready to give in.

Eventually, he defeated the fish and rowed back to his shore. Unfortunately, on his way back, something terrible happened. A shoal of belligerent sharks ate up the whole fish! Nonetheless, the old man won the reputation of catching the largest fish ever caught by anyone in that village. Santiago was the name of that old man.

This is the summary of the world famous novel 'The Old man

and the Sea' authored by Earnest Hemingway.

When you are tired and depressed, take 'The Old man and the Sea' and read it. You will be energized. This literary masterpiece tells us the way to fight against adverse situations and to prevail over despair.

It is true that Santiago could not bring ashore the fish alive. But, that does not mean that he failed. All of us have a tendency to withdraw from the fight, putting forward several reasons for it. Age is one among them. We often think: I am aged. How can I do that?

Santiago also had a choice to become inert telling he is old. But, he chose to be different. At the age of 75, he caught the greatest fish anyone has ever caught in that village. This is not a small feat.

Age is just a number. If our mind says we are aged, we will become aged. Be youthful in your mind. Then we will be able to make an effort at any age.

Let us try to spend every moment and every day of our life creatively. Let us not withdraw from ventures recounting reasons for it.

Let success be with us.
Wish you all success!

ARE YOU YOUR BEST FRIEND?

In her book 'Eat, Pray, Love,' American Author Elizabeth Gilbert narrates an incident. One day, she was walking hurriedly through New York City. All of sudden, she was struck by her reflection on a mirror by the way-side. Looking at her reflection, she said to herself: O! I know this person very well... She is my best friend!

We live in a world, where people are not able to love themselves or value themselves. Is it not a pathetic thing that we are not able to take ourselves

seriously?

Let us see what Elizabeth Gilbert did afterwards. She embraced her reflection. She kissed herself. Later in her life, whenever she had to pass through distressing situations, she used to remember this instance and it helped her to overcome her despair and sorrows.

One of the main reasons that helps us to find our happiness is to explore ourselves as our best friend. We are people who pursue others for friend-



One of the main reasons that helps us to find our happiness is to explore ourselves as our best friend. We are people who pursue others for friendship. Even though it is essential in life, first of all we need to accept and love ourselves as our own friend.

ship. Even though it is essential in life, first of all we need to accept and love ourselves as our own friend. To rise up to such a state, we need to do the following things:

Set aside time for yourselves

Out of the 24 hours in a day, we need to set aside some time for our own happiness. It could be for reading a book or a periodical, writing a poem, playing a musical instrument or listening to songs. Spend at least a few minutes a day for yourself.

Discover your good qualities and talents

Most people look at the capabilities, talents and success of others and get disappointed about themselves. But, why do you fail to realize that you are equally talented or even more talented than those people? If you do not accept yourselves, who else will accept you? Stop envying others and start to feel proud and happy about your talents.

Listen to the voice of your inner critic

Always give ears to the voice of your conscience, and go forward accordingly.

Forgive yourself

You may be a person who has fallen and failed many times in life. But, you should be able to forgive yourself. If you are not able to forgive yourself, who else will forgive you?

Care for yourself

You should care for your body and soul. You need adequate sleep, good food, exercise etc. Also follow a tension-free lifestyle. You should also give attention to your physical appearance.

Respect yourself

Whoever you are, you should be able to respect yourself. You should discover your value.

Gratify your needs

If you want something and you think that it is essential for you, do get it. This does not mean that, in these times of consumerism, we need to go after everything we get in the market.

Meditate on the good things in you

There is a lot of goodness in you. Perhaps, even your life partner may not be understanding or recognizing the good in you. Do not get disappointed about it. Discover your goodness, proclaim it and rejoice in it.

Exalt yourself

You might have gone wrong; you might have fallen. But, it is you who have to get up. Rise by yourself, walk and take a leap forward.

Say to yourself that I am good

Say to yourself: I am good and I de-

serve happiness. I deserve a good life.

Chase your dreams

Others may feel that your dreams are trivial. They might even belittle them. But, never renounce nor abandon your dream.

Believe in yourself

Believe in yourself and have elevated thoughts about yourself.

Accept yourself

Accept yourself as you are. Accept your weakness as you accept your pow-

er. You might succeed in some places and fail in other places. You might be loved in some places and rejected in other places. You are a combination of both these. When you start to accept yourself, you will be able to rejoice in this paradox.

In a nutshell, you are the one who has to decide whether you need to be happy or not. For that, primarily, you need to make friends with yourself. Be merciful to yourself. Be in love with yourself. Then you will be able to love yourself. Nobody can take away that happiness from you.



INSTILL OPTIMISM IN YOUR CHILDREN

Most parents try their best to make their children secure the top-most rank in their classes. Likewise, parents today encourage their children to nurture their artistic and sports inclinations as well. Nevertheless, the number of parents who take effort to instill optimism in their children are comparatively less. Even though your children reach high positions in life, if he or she is not optimistic about life and future, it is not going to help him or her. So, along with your children's education, health and success in examinations, you also need to inspire them to grow in optimism. Here are a few very useful tips for parents to follow in this regard:

Stop complaining

Never make negative comments such as 'Today was a damn day!' in front of your children. When you have negative experiences in life, take care that your responses do not give bad example to your children. When you make negative remarks about your relatives, parents of your spouse, neighbours, superiors or colleagues in front of your children, you are instilling negative impression in them. These experiences will lead them to an attitude of despair.

Give them high hopes

Give your children high hopes and good dreams about life and future. Par-



When your children get involved in some problems, do not attempt to save them impetuously. Wait a while and see how they are going to respond to the problem. If they can solve the problem by themselves, it will increase their self-confidence and optimism.

ents can impart good hope to their children only if they themselves are happy and proud about their lives. You should never give chance to your children to think that you are a failure. You might have faced failures in your business. You should take care that those failures do not make your children pessimistic.

Persuade and encourage them to take up responsibilities

Motivate your children to take up reasonable responsibilities and risks, and encourage them to do it. Never frighten or discourage your children when they are about to attempt a new

thing. Do not speak to them in a way that takes away their confidence. Let them do some tasks that are fitting to their age. You must also appreciate them when they do it.

Give chance to your children to solve problems

When your children get involved in some problems, do not attempt to save them impetuously. Wait a while and see how they are going to respond to the problem. If they can solve the problem by themselves, it will increase their self-confidence and optimism. Likewise, do not impulsively respond when your child commits a mistake. Wait a little and discern if your child has done a wrong thing or if he has a solid reason to do it.

Change your child's perspective

Some children think that they cannot do a particular thing. They may think that they are not smart enough. Parents should cleverly change this negative perspective. Convince them that life is also about embracing challenges.



WHAT ADULTS CAN LEARN FROM CHILDREN

Often we try to teach children a lot of things. But, seldom do we realize that we also need to learn many things from children. Each child is a book to learn from. Every child has the resource to teach not only each one of us, but the whole world. We will understand this, if we keenly observe them. So, try to see the world through the eyes of a child. Here you have some tips to possess the eyes of a child:

One of the main things that you can learn from children is their effort to obtain what they desire and their ability to forget their failures. This feature is mainly seen in toddlers aged 1-2. Imagine that a child is extending its hands for something, for example a big ball. Although the ball slips away, the child will persistently pursue it. We may be

chasing a bigger dream. We are too soon to fall into despair, when our first attempt fails. We might even recede. Look at that toddler! He is still after the ball, although it is bigger for his size. Never give up even if your initial attempts have failed. Persist. Think that, when we were toddlers, we have fallen many times in our attempt to walk.

Honesty and transparency is another thing that a child teaches you. Children do not hide their feelings. They do not do anything for human respect or appreciation. While we adults try to build relationships with people that match our status and keep people aside labelling them as bad, children approach all without any prejudice. We, who often indulge in hypocrisy and artificiality, must learn from them. So,



Honesty or transparency is another thing that a child teaches you. Children do not hide their feelings. They do not do anything for human respect or appreciation.

live a candid life and behave without hypocrisy.

A child hurls itself into the hands of its mother or father even if they are coming all sweaty or dirty from work. Because they are its father and mother. They do not think about their beauty or smell. Consider people irrespective of their status and capabilities. Welcome them as they are with all their limitations. Only then your love will be true.

Children also teach us that we must forgive and love. Even though the father or mother gives the child a slap, when he or she tries to pacify it, how quickly the child forgets its grievance. The child

will be smiling with tearful eyes. How many people do we keep away from us because of silly grudges and ego? We often live with vengeance for the past wounds. If only we reflect on this good quality of children, all our grudges and vengeance will melt away.

The greatest realization we have when we become parents is the awareness that our children need us. We think that we are important. We must have been victims to many rejections in life. Your spouse might have spurned you and negated his or her love. Despite all this, it is important to know that your children need you. Even though their marital relationship is broken, couples in the world will still unite for the sake of their children, because they need their parents.

This is one of the major factors that motivate them to live. This might be the reason why parents are unable to bear when their children renounce them when they are old!



THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND TO STAY HEALTHY

All religions say that our body is a temple. This means that our bodies should be treated with reverence and respect. Life will improve through healthy habits. The health of our body as well as the health of our mind will be activated through this. So it is necessary to pay attention to the following points.

Sleep

Today's world is sleep-deprived, and most people don't have enough time to sleep. Many people only get 4 to 5 hours of sleep, but for a healthy lifestyle, one needs to rest for 7 to 8 hours a day because sleep is essential for proper nutrition and muscle building.



There is no explanation needed to prove the importance of exercise in our daily life because it is widely known that a lifestyle without exercise is the cause of many diseases today.

A protein-rich breakfast

A protein-rich breakfast can help you gain weight and reduce hunger throughout the day. It also keeps the sugar level in your body stable.

Quit smoking

Smoking causes heart-related diseases, asthma, cancer, and infections. Therefore, this should be avoided entirely.

Meditation

Practicing meditation for 10 to 20 minutes a day is very essential for our health. This not only makes our body calm, but also our mind.

Tea

According to USA Today, tea contains antioxidants. Therefore, it increases fluid consumption and provides benefits to the circulatory system. In addition, tea can help with weight loss, dental health, and increased immunity.

Fibre-rich food

We must include a greater variety of fibre-rich food in our daily diet. Apart from improving digestion, they can also influence cholesterol levels.

Power nap

The National Sleep Foundation suggests that a 20- to 30-minute nap is

ideal for a human being. This is also very beneficial for our brains.

Avoiding the use of plastic bottles

Bottled drinks containing chemicals should be avoided because their usage can adversely affect our productivity and circulatory system.

Cook vegetables in Olive Oil

Experts suggest that vegetables should be eaten after being cooked in vegetable oil, because this reduces the chances of cancer and diabetes.

Avoid consumption of fast food and junk food

An article published by the University of New South Wales states that fast food and junk food should be avoided in our daily diet.

Include greens in your diet

We miss out on vital nutrition every day when we exclude green and leafy vegetables from our diet.

Floss

Experts say that flossing is not only important for health but also for our entire body. This can prevent many infections in our bodies.

The advantages of having a lemon in your hot drink

This not only prevents dehydration but also provides our body with Vitamin C. Apart from being good for the skin, it also helps in digestion and losing weight.

Protecting the Skin

We should be alert while choosing



which skin product to use. Many skin care products contain harmful chemicals.

Consume fruits

A study conducted by researchers at the University College of London stated that eating fruits and vegetables can even help reduce the risk of death.

Exercise

There is no explanation needed to prove the importance of exercise in our daily life because it is widely known that

a lifestyle without exercise is the cause of many diseases today.

Wear sunglasses

Many people nowadays are reluctant to wear sunglasses, but researchers suggest that using sunglasses can protect our bodies from cataracts and skin cancer.

Check your weight

According to a study conducted by the University of Manchester, checking weight daily can make people more health conscious.

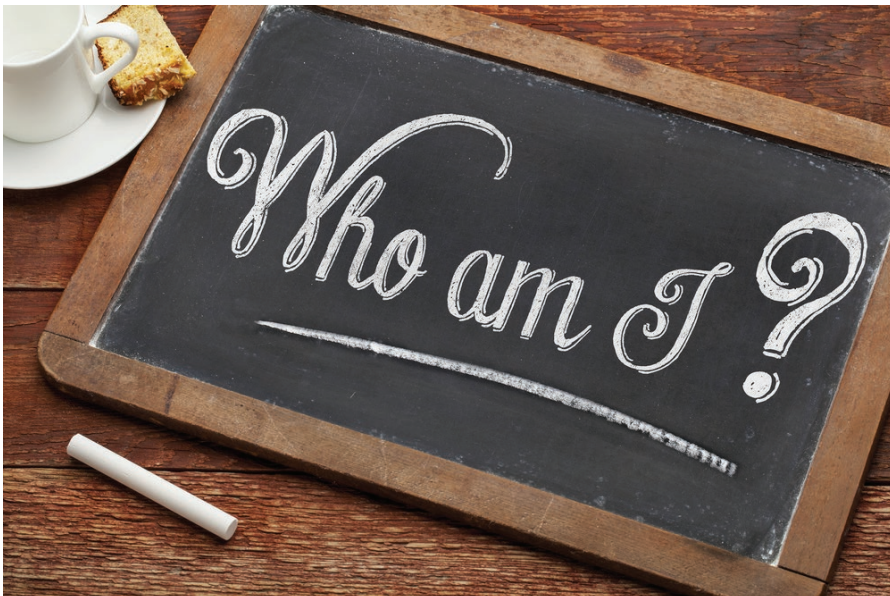
We spend most of our time to understand others and to intervene in others' problems. To a certain extent, it is okay as we are social beings. But, do we really spend a modicum of time we devote for knowing others and solving their problems, for knowing ourselves? The first step to self-improvement is to know oneself. It is called self-awareness, and it is a long journey. We will have to face several problems and challenges in this journey. If we are able to discern these challenges and solve them, we will be able to know our personality.

When one knows oneself, one will be able to discover one's powers. When

we realize our powers, we will be able to achieve our goals and lead our lives in the right direction. Success is the happy result of discovering one's innate powers. At the same time, realizing one's limitations is as important as realizing one's powers. It is not something you should be ashamed of. Most people who discover their powers fail to accept their limitations. Remember that our personality is a combination of our powers and limitations. When we are able to realize both, we will own a glowing personality.

Such realizations will give us the courage to leave behind our comfort zones and move ahead. We will be able

HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW YOURSELF?



When our 'self' has improved, we will be able to see the meaning and goal of life in a better light. Some people are unable to find the happiness of existence because they lose the meaning of life and relationships. So, improve yourself.

to take risks and advance in our jobs. Challenge yourself. Take responsibilities. Most often, our lives are renewed when we come out of our comfort zones.

Another important element for self-improvement is to enhance one's mental health. When our mental health improves, we will be able to control our emotions and face such circumstances

effectively. Self-improvement will also help us to improve our relationship with the people around us. If you are a short-tempered person, that realization will enable you to take control over your anger and remain calm.

Optimism is a natural change that takes place in a person, when he gradually realizes that he is a civilized man. For that, you need to keep stimulating yourself. Do you know why a person is able to make the right decision? It is because clarity of mind, self-awareness and self-confidence work together in him. When our 'self' has improved, we will be able to see the meaning and goal of life in a better light. Some people are unable to find the happiness of existence because they lose the meaning of life and relationships. So, improve yourself. It will make our lives more enjoyable.



THE SKY HAS NO LIMIT



“I did not wish to walk in the ways everybody else walked. My decisions and desires were different.” These are the words of Ayesha Aziz, the youngest female pilot of India. Ayesha was just sixteen when she secured a Degree in Aviation from Bombay Flying Club. In 2011, she obtained a student pilot license. Thus Ayesha became the youngest student pilot of India and the first female pilot from Kashmir.

“From my childhood, I had decided what I should be. At one point, I thought I should become a teacher. But, when I grew older, I realized that I should become a pilot” Ayesha said in one of the interviews. When her parents supported her dream, she began her flight to the limitless sky. When she passed out of high school, she decided to join the Flying Club. “I have only one thing to say to you: “If you ardently desire or

“Apply all your concentration on whatever you do. Persist on it. It is true that you need time to learn many things. But never be discouraged and lose hope”

dream for something, the whole nature will stay with you to realize it” she says.

“When you start to fly, you leave behind everything and attain greater speed than a machine. What you want then is serenity of mind. You will never be bored. While you are flying the aero plane, you will not even think if you are a man or woman, because the machine does not care about it,” Ayesha says. She

also opines that a woman should hold her self-confidence in a male-dominated society.

Today, she is a member of Indian Women Pilot Association. She has also obtained a Flight Radio/Telephone Operators license. Besides these, she was one of the three Indians who were selected for NASA’s Space Training Course.

From her childhood, Ayesha dreamed of facing challenges. Her life is proof for her unflinching effort to realize that dream.

“Apply all your concentration on whatever you do. Persist on it. It is true that you need time to learn many things. But never be discouraged and lose hope” says Ayesha to the young people.



CAN WE SPEAK TO CHILDREN ABOUT DEATH?

Almost all adults agree that speaking about death to children is really difficult. When their nearest one dies or is about to die, their parents and the adults in the family would find it very hard to tell about it to the children, especially if the children are very young. But, psychologists opine that it is wrong not to tell children about death to children. There are many children who have been

victims of depression due to the death of their dear ones and have stopped their studies. The dead person may be his father or mother or his close relative or his classmate. Statistics state that one out of ten children suffer from such losses. Most children may not have reached the age to understand what death is. To get the preliminary notion about death, a child should be at least ten years old. So,



As time passes, children are prone to forget the ones who have died. Help them to remember them. Ask them to write stories and poems about the deceased ones. Tell them to write memoirs about them.

when we speak to children about death, we need to take their age into account. Children's response to death will change according to their age. Some deaths will be happening after giving forewarnings. Some people die after a long period of illness or accidents or due to old age. Giving information about the imminent death to children will help them to prepare for it and alleviate the impact

of death. Psychologists put forward six points that will give light into how to tell children about death:

Speak to each child separately

We know that every child is different. If there are more than one child in a home, speak to each of them separately. Make them understand that you are always available to them to share their feelings. You should also convince them how the deceased person loved them.

Find out what the children have understood

Once the children have started listening to you and speaking to you, find out what they have understood about the occurrence. Ferret out their ideas and notions about death... If they have understood erroneously, rectify their understanding.



Provide information as per requirement

Give them forewarning about death according to the situation. You should say in the beginning: “The doctor said that Daddy has a tumor; but doctors are trying to save him.” When the children have accepted the fact, tell them: Doctors say that there is little chance for Daddy to get better.

Finally, you should say: “Doctors say that Daddy can never be the same as he was earlier. He might die in the near future.” Thus, reveal to them about death gradually. This may help the children to accept death in a more mature way.

Welcome questions

At this point, children may ask you questions. They may ask about the possibility of going to another hospital and taking another treatment. Give them honest answers. Small children may

need simple replies. But, older ones may need detailed explanations.

Reduce anxieties

Convince them that they have the obligation to reduce the pain of loss and guilt feeling. Tell them that they are never a reason for the death of the person in any way. Help them to believe that no one in this world is able to bring back those who have died. We should also tell them that it takes time to heal the wounds of loss.

Help them to remember

As time passes, children are prone to forget the ones who have died. Help them to remember them. Ask them to write stories and poems about the deceased ones. Tell them to write memoirs about them. Bringing back joyful memories of the deceased ones will help the children to heal the wounds within, left behind by the loss.



SIX RULES FOR A SUCCESSFUL MARRIED LIFE

Can you make your married life successful just by obeying six rules? Do not doubt! Ryan Stephen, a Blogger, husband and father, assures that if you are ready to follow these rules, your family life will be successful. He started his blog for families in 2016 and his blog became popular in a very short time. Recently, he tweeted six rules for a successful married life and it instantly became a viral hit. His tweet was retweeted 9,000 times in a couple of days. Here are the rules put forward by Ryan:

You should never say ill of your life partner

You should never say the negatives of your life partner to your friends even for fun. There are many wives in the world who speak ill of their husbands. There are also many husbands who slander their wives. Whatever be the situation, never speak ill of your spouse to others.

Communication must be effective

No one can accurately read the mind



Many issues arise between couples because they wrongly understand the words uttered and heard. If you find the words of your life partner unclear, request for a clear explanation and solve it.

of the other person. Many issues arise between couples because they wrongly understand the words uttered and heard. If you find the words of your life partner unclear, request for a clear explanation and solve it. A double check is essential in what you say and hear. The idea must be clarified just the way you double check the answer paper in an examination.

Engage in new things together

One of the spouses might be an adventure enthusiast. Do not hesitate to support his/her adventure spirit. Come out of your comfort zone and join with the other. It is like mutually supporting in everything.

Celebrate success together and encourage each other

Never belittle your partner. Nor should you feel jealous of your spouse. Support him/her in sorrows and share the joys. Do work-outs and kitchen chores together.

Be thankful to each other

Be it in the matter of jobs or carrying out the household responsibilities, be thankful to each other. Don't feel reluctant to express your gratitude. Perhaps, your spouse might have suffered a lot to help you reach the position you are enjoying now. He/she might have encouraged you to reach there. It is not enough to keep your gratitude in your mind; you need to thank him/her.

Believe in each other and respect mutually

The couple must believe in each other. They must also respect each other, especially in front of others. It is important to express your mutual respect and faith in front of your children. If you frequently belittle your life-partner in front of others, who will respect him or her?



ARE YOU CONFUSED? THEN SPEAK TO GOD



There will be hardly anyone in the world who has never been confused. Everyone will be confused when he/she has to make a crucial decision. When he approaches his friends or relatives to help him to make the decision, their advice will put him in greater confusion. Spiritual Gurus advise that instead of approaching people when faced with a confusion, we must turn to

God and talk with Him.

When we start talking with God, though slowly, we will definitely find a solution. We will be able to turn in the right direction and reach our destination. Impulsive decisions and reckless actions can go wrong. But, a decision taken after consulting God will never go wrong. Although we may be taking a small step, it will be towards the right

Sometimes, God may not clear all our confusions in the twinkle of an eye. But, God will show us some devices that can help us go through or solve the problems. He will sustain us in hope. He will give us courage, patience and power.

direction. That is the assurance of God.

Sometimes, God may not clear all our confusions in the twinkle of an eye. But, God will show us some devices that can help us go through or solve the problems. He will sustain us in hope. He will give us courage, patience and power. He will give us the accurate plan to do the right thing and to turn in the right direction.

We may not be able to reach a satisfying conclusion on vexing questions like ‘why are good things not happening in my life?’ and ‘why do blessings get delayed for me?’ etc. But, if you have

shared this with God, the answer is sure to come. Sometimes, the answer might come late. That delay is only your imagination. Because, God’s time is the right time. God may be delaying his answer just to test your patience – to see how long you will wait for Him. Your time need not necessarily be the right time to receive God’s blessing.

When we start talking with God, changes will begin to occur in our lives. Our stress will start to diminish. Our tension over silly things will vanish. Our heartbeats will be back to normal. We will look more pleasant and beautiful. When we start to speak to God, He will also speak to you. It will grow into a heart-warming relationship. God will become our best friend – a friend who never abandons you in any situation, a friend who does not covet anything from you. In such a state, you will find solitude a pleasing experience. We will feel absolutely secure. Everything will become fine.

So, when you are confused, just have a talk with God!





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