

Personality Development & Vivekananda

Our personal development is more important than all other types of development economic educational rural etc. because all these other kinds of development are undertaken only for the benefit of man.

Most of the people don't consciously develop their personality as they are not aware of it. Our appearance, speech and actions become apparent to us only through others as we don't see ourselves or our behaviour. Hence study and development of personality is to be done with three things in mind 1) Individual reflection 2) Social interaction and 3) Work.

An individual with self reflection interacting with others especially through work is in a position to analyse & develop his / her personality.

One must define a person first before talking of his / her personality. A person has a body, a mind & has a level of energy: this is called body-mind complex. All the three factors are changing and affect each other. However there is a constant factor in everyone of us which runs as a thread running through a garland of experiences. Some call it Soul or Atman the constant, the Real man behind the changing person.

The most obvious amongst personality is the Body of a person. It goes without saying that the body structure is the most important factor in the first impression of a person. Naturally a healthy, strong, proportioned body is an asset to a person. Various books are available which deal with how to develop it. We suggest yogasanas for body development. Wholesome food plenty of fresh water, regular exercise, timely habits of daily choice of likes getting up, sleep, eating etc. help develop a healthy, strong and well structured body.

A body is covered with clothes for protection. With modern technology clothes have become attractive and variety is available. Also changing morality, & sensuality has brought in another dimension in common mans dress. But one must keep in mind that the weather conditions, social demands, occasions require appropriate clothing & sober decent dress is what is appreciated, in the longer run.

Further the external appearance is judged by the actions and speech of a person. A friendly and welcome personality has likeable postures, gesture, facial features, smile to its credit. The whole external appearance in terms of its social implication through work & other interaction is judged by various bodily actions and reactions its speech and conversation.

Postures & gestures can be perfected as an actor does with practice in front of a mirror and also observing their impact on others. Co-ordinated movement of different limbs especially hands, feet, head, and eyes (parts that move) can create pleasing appearance.

Behaviour & manners is a little deeper proposition. It is mainly dependent on the character of a person and social customs put together. Behaviour & manners can't be same under different time and place. Different cultures demand different manners. Story of Sir Keshab chandra Sen is told that when dining in a banquet given by Queen Victoria in his honor he mistook warm water with cut lemon brought at the end of a ten course dinner as sharbat to be drunk, thereby causing all including the Queen at the table to drink it after the example of the Chief-guest. The Namaste done in India in greeting others thus recognising the respectful divine in others is not one same as the handshake offered being reminiscent of the friendliness of the wild cowboys, showing only lack of enmity.

Art of conversation is as old as civilisation. Languages developed for social interaction. A command on many languages besides ones mother tongue along with a modulated voice carries a lot of weight. A person with narrow interests, with little interest in others, showing great interest in talking about itself is a bore. Many people are cynical, talk in monosyllable are either too loud or

hearty thus causing bad impression. In India people talk too much and monopolies conversation which is considered bad manners.

In gestures postures, behaviour, manners and conversation imitation should be avoided. Nowadays with high pressure advertisement young people tend to copy actors, actresses & TV personalities. However whatever is original is respectable. Imitation is entertaining but originality is enlivening. So act freely as every individual is unique.

In the body mind complex the mental makeup or character carries greatest importance. Thinking, feeling, willing, imagination are some of the aspects of mind. Thought is the only force in the world as Swamiji says. Through thought I judge myself interact with the world. Hence mass thinking should be avoided. A habit of deep original thinking based on well collected data and capacity to analyse with concentration will go a long way in developing personality. A person has to balance between his intellect and emotions as intellect is lame and emotions are blind. Intellect is trained by reasoning and emotions by prayers, will power is developed through taking challenges and the whole mind through continence.

Life becomes meaningful when it fulfills certain felt needs. Depression, aggression & addiction is due to meaninglessness in life. The void can't be by money power or position which is clear from examples of the Western Culture. The hippies were children of some of the richest people in the world. Drugs are taken by the affluent & powerful. So life should be made meaningful where you will have

- 1) Deep sense of satisfaction and contentment.
- 2) Whole hearted action
- 3) Creative dreaming
- 4) Love and care
- 5) Appreciation of beauty
- 6) Wonder about the mystery of life
- 7) Innocent fun
- 8) Life lived here & now.

It is said that " One who is content in mind is the richest person. However forced poverty can't be eulogised. Blind ambition is to be avoided. Fuelled by passion it leaves you high & dry.

All the work that you do should neither be an enforced burden nor greed made visible but love made visible. For making work interesting one must be aware of the value of it to oneself & society. He can, who thinks he can. Nothing is impossible. Greater responsibilities must be taken in order to have greater scope to use your increased ability. One has to create opportunities & not wait for them. Within a short time remarkable results should be achieved. So efficiency is something between feverish over work & lazy sluggishness. Effective use of time should be made. Irresponsibility should be overcome and fear of failure should be removed. Dignity of work is very important. Any work done to perfection is to be respected.

Creative dreaming was recently talked about by Leander Paes our only Olympic meddle winner. Combined with resolve, grit, perserverence it can give you success & satisfaction. Sense of imagination has to be inbuilt with an eye for beauty to create interest in work.

The whole attitude of mind however depends on how you look at life around you. With little thinking and education one can appreciate creation around us and the hidden creator of it all. Energy pulsates around us, all we have to do is open ourselves to it and recognise it. Nature works through creation, preservation & destruction, through five elements and three gunas. We are in it and body mind complex is governed by this mysterious play, Recognise it & try to catch the glimpse of the

creator which is the constant behind the changing phenomena. The same constant is in individual also and has to be recognised, meditated upon and then only inner stability & poise is achieved.

Once you understand the play of nature around you, most of your fear about dealing with it goes away. You established a deeper communication and appreciation with other people. Your heart speaks for you. You develop a practical value structure on the fact that people's character is based on Gunas Sattwa, Rajas, Tamas in permutation & Combination and nobody is absolutely good or bad.

People want affection friendship. People want to be nice, truthful. Even a thief doesn't want to be cheated by others. People are moved by emotions & not reason. Everyone is careful of his reputation. People do not understand in general that their words and behaviour affect others.

Hence while living & interacting with people following points are to be remembered and followed.

If we live with	we learn to
criticism	condemn
hostility	fight
fear	apprehension
ridicule	shyness
encouragement	confident
sharing	generous
tolerance	patient
praise	appreciative
acceptance	love

Negative values can be change by putting in positive values.

Hence one must develop at least one good friend who can be trusted to appreciate our good qualities understand bad an suggesting good to replace the bad ones.

Friends are of two kind, living beings and those who live without forms. Swami Vivekananda is such a voice without form and is a person always ready to help those who are ready.

Born and brought up in Hindu as well as western samskaras he search for deeper meaning in life and through his sincerity & intensity came in touch with Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa. He epitomises this inner realisation of the self the changeless eternal within everyone and stand as a perfected personality in all respects living a meaningful life full of intensity & creativity. He stands as a fully developed person with attractive appearance, dynamic behaviour, artistic conversational style, as a creative worker, accepted by millions as their leader, friend philosopher & guide. He took every opportunity to improve things around through positive attitude, was ready to help others at his own cost, avoided injustice & partiality with a composed mind, well integrated personality, thoughtful, concentrated, intense and fulfilled.

May he help us in realising our goal of life here and now is our prayer to him.