

Spirituality

(In your daily activities)

Eric EH Buddhadharma

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Introduction

Life is all about survival. With survival comes the desire to live a secured life and a life filled with luxury and happiness. To achieve all these, we struggle all our lives to fulfill our dreams. While we are busy fulfilling our dreams, we miss out on one thing very special and precious to lives; spirituality. Spirituality, in other words, is the food for our souls. Those of us, who do not have time to pursue spirituality in lives, lead a life filled with a poor soul, void of true happiness. Once we are born, growth and death are certain with misery, suffering and happiness in between, until our last days. How we conduct our lives and how we make use of spirituality in conducting our lives successfully is what this book is all about. Once we learn to fill our lives with spirituality, we learn to live our life successfully. Nothing is truer than this little belief.

In this book I shall examine certain points which you may find helpful and useful to bring joy and happiness in whatever you do, wherever you go and whichever way you live. Without spirituality, we live an incomplete life; empty and wanting always.

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1.What is man?

What exactly is man? Since time immemorial we have been trying to unfold the mystery of all living beings, especially that of mankind. We have miserably failed in our efforts in unlocking this mystery. There are some secrets about everything in this entire universe which man can never ever unfold. Man, in his frustration of this failed mission of unfolding the secrets, went about in defining all living beings including himself, by offering varying reasons, religious, scientific, and philosophical. None of these really serve any purpose in defining what mankind and all other living beings are in reality. Ultimately, this is frustrating, leaving each one of us to give one's own reason for being born in this world. Nothing happens without reason, which we are sure about, so the presence of all living beings including mankind must be having some reason. If we have not been able to locate or establish the reason for our existence in so many

millions of years, better we should not waste our time further in this quest and use those precious hours in some purposeful and positive ways and deeds.

Man, if we see from a realistic point of view, is made up of so many different ingredients, natural and supernatural or mystical. We are a bundle of nerves, organs, vessels, tissues, bones, muscles, lipids and other intricate physiological mechanism that reserves and runs on blood, protein, carbohydrates and fat; supported by air and water. Anyone can put all these ingredients together, alternatively use a dead man in bringing him back to life by repairing whatever went wrong with him, in the same way we do with cars and fridges. Unfortunately, man can never be brought back to life even after repairing all his body parts and making him functional otherwise. This is because man, or as a matter of fact, any living being has another side to his life, which is supernatural or mystical. This has been puzzling mankind since time immemorial.

Man has yet not been able to seize and control something that runs lives, called soul or spirit. Maybe, in course of time man will be able to identify and communicate with spirits, only then dead could be resurrected by man himself by letting a spirit control the once dead body afresh. Only time will tell if such a feat could be experienced by mankind in the future.

Some of you may not find my perspective of looking at *man* very convincing. You may not agree with me about the soul and spirit in any living being. Let me share my experience with you. A few years ago I had a cat that was not pregnant. I dreamt she was holding a very young brown and white kitten in her mouth; while I unlocked the door to my office she brought in the kitten from behind me and many other cats followed her to see and inspect the little kitten. Dream is a dream or as Shakespeare said, "dream is itself but a shadow". But in my case it was not to be so. When I went to unlock my office door the next morning, I experienced what exactly I dreamt. My dream unfolded in front of me verbatim. Unless there is something spiritual about living beings, I could not have ever foreseen the future. In the same way once in a while I am able to experience or dream some impending mishaps. Once I dreamt of a baby shrouded in white, vomiting milk. I got the news at 6 am next morning about a baby who choked himself on milk and died. Recently, a person was hospitalized for a minor operation, I dreamt that he was shrouded in white and offered me something white to eat. I told my wife about this and I knew the matter would turn serious. It did turn serious. In the morning while I was having my breakfast I could hear a Hindu mantra or requiem. I told my wife that if the person survived the next 48 hours he would live. Next morning we received the news of his demise. I have had several such experiences in my life; hence I am convinced about all living beings including mankind having a spiritual side to them. This spiritual side only enables a living being to live and survive till one's death.

Two sides of mankind, physiological as well as spiritual are necessary to define a man, or all living beings. Just as earth and water is responsible for the physiological presence of all living beings, in the same way air provides the spiritual presences for all living beings, enabling them to think, live and react under all circumstances from birth until death. Both these features enable mankind to be a superior being amongst all living beings in this planet. I may be wrong, there could be beings which cannot interact with us and which may be much more superior spiritually

to mankind. We regard mankind as superior only because we can see results in front of us. With the architectures, man's quest for exploring the universe, modern gadgets, living style and superior ability in whatever man does, we are self-styled "superior beings". Being a superior being and being purposeful are two different aspects that need to be combined in one.

Man has so far shown his ability in doing what he had been doing since time immemorial. Most of us grow up and get busy finding ways to survive, also start finding ways to earning. Without income, we could never survive, unless of course our ancestors left behind wealth to take care of our existence. Each one of us chooses an activity from which we could earn and survive. Most of us think we are contributing to the society, in fact, we do not, and we only contribute our time against the earnings. Each one of us does something with an intention to receive back something in cash, kind, or popularity. None of us, or would I say most of us, do not undertake any activity that would not give us some incentive. This is what man is - without any mission to accomplish in this world.

Man is basically a living being strongly looking first for his own survival and secondly to invade and dominate all other human beings and all living beings. If he succeeds in dominating his world, he would invade and dominate all other planets within his reach and ability.

2.Man and his mission in his world.

Whichever way you would like to define a man, it would come down to one thing-his mission in this world. Unless man learns to understand his mission in this world, which is basic to all of us- "*a selfless contribution to this world*"; he will never be happy.

Some great masters never cared about money or survival, even though they had many opportunities to amass wealth all their lives; they shunned luxury and died a poor or reasonably poor people. Take for example Lord Gautama Buddha and Lord Mahavira; they were both prince(s) coming from royal back grounds. They shunned wealth and taught people the reality of life, themselves living on charity. Mother Teresa put in all the money she would receive as donations into her projects for children, women and lepers. Abraham Lincoln the Ex-president of US abolished slavery; he was a simple man who was assassinated in his country. In your day-to-day life you may have come across many such people who care little for wealth but craves just enough for the survival of himself and his family.

Man himself has contributed to this world all those modern lifestyle, not for free but against monetary considerations only. Donald Trump would not gift you a part of his tower, nor would Apple contribute their latest PC tablets to everyone for free. Mercedes would not part with their saloons without money or Ferrari offer their speedsters to you for free. They pay their engineers for all the research they do, the engineers do the research against money and not for free. This cycle is based upon materialism. The contribution to mankind is against self-interest. Only when, therefore, man learns to contribute selflessly, would he break himself free from misery, stress, and malady.

What could be this selfless contribution to his world? Like you have your own home and each day you take care to keep it clean and maintain all the gadgets and light bulbs against faults, in the same way this planet, you live in, needs to be taken care of by each and every one of us. How

would we take care of our planet? This planet is one large home consisting of all the homes of mankind and other beings. Within this planet are different members of her family; mankind, sentient beings and birds, plants, water bodies, sky, earth, air and similar naturally available gifts of nature. Man being so far the established “superior being” need to contribute selflessly towards one or more of its member in his world. The selections and opportunities are endless and each one of us can select what we can do for the other members of this planet without seeking any consideration in return. Some guidelines are given below:

FELLOW MANKIND: Teach children and unlettered adults; contribute towards making schools, hospitals. Make community centers to teach hygiene, small trades, grooming and such other self-help knowledge. Counseling of children and adults are another necessity in any community. Looking after older and invalid people is also very satisfying for anyone.

FELLOW SENTIENT BEINGS: Animals and birds are the most abused life forms in the world. It is compulsory; a large part of our population focuses and concentrates in the welfare of these living beings. Unfortunately, a large part of our population world over, are very fond of eating flesh; they are pet lovers and not animal lovers. The difference between an animal lover and a pet lover is , an animal lover loves all animals irrespective of its kind, be a vegetarian and contribute towards animal welfare, while a pet lover will love his pet and encourage the slaughter of other animals to feed its pets and remain an unfortunate non-vegetarian, a carnivore. Most of us should compulsorily feed animals and birds every day at least once. Animals and birds are unfortunate beings. With man cutting down and burning their habitats, animals and birds are confused and find their habitats shrinking by the day. This is why, sometimes, they encroach upon the so-called civilised habitat of mankind, ironically built upon the land which was once the habitat of these animals and birds. It is time we repay them by looking after their welfare. These co owners of this earth have been ignored and badly treated by mankind. If you give your love to the cubs of lions and tigers, they will grow up amongst you and get domesticated and will never turn a man-eater. Perhaps, snakes would also stop turning hostile if man fed them each day. Animals are hostile towards mankind because man has not interacted with the animals since they were small. They are therefore, frightened of mankind. In my experience a bird and a lion can live in harmony if they grow up together. A child and a lion can live in harmony if they grow up together. Why this little principle fails to get into the mind of mankind is amazing. Man is the most selfish of all species. They have no time to think about these little things in life. They are self-centered and abuse their superiority over other living beings. This has contributed to the serious conditions that man is in today. Unless we mend our ways we shall never be able to break away from the chain of misery, stress and suffering. It is time we respect these life forms, contribute towards its welfare and get closer to them by loving them and feeding them.

PLANTS: We need to respect a plant which not only feeds us but also provides oxygen. Without plants, we would have been deprived of the best source of minerals, vitamins, carbohydrates and clean proteins. We need not cut down trees and sell its wood. We should water plants and trees in our neighborhood and teach our children to do so. Plants may not have consciousness like us,

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