



THE MANSION of Human progress and prosperity depends upon the foundations of harmony at home and in society. Just as lotuses bloom in the silent hours of the night, so do divine qualities in man bloom in the gentle hours of harmony and peace.

The world is a manifestation of the Supreme Being, God. Unity underlies all diversity. Just as innumerable waves are sustained by the same ocean, so too are innumerable beings sustained by the same Immortal Self, the Lord of all hearts. All human beings have the same basis, the same Spirit that sustains them. Therefore, however varied others may be in their tastes and temperaments; our dealings with them should be based on a vision of unity.

God is not pleased by chants of praise or utterances of prayers as by acts and deeds conducive to harmony and happiness in the family and society. More love and less hatred, more forgiveness and less impatience, more persuasion and less force should be the characteristics of a life that breathes in unity and harmony.

Human relations are often superficial. Once a deaf man went to see an old friend in the hospital. The friend was severely ill, and he was counting the days till his death. The deaf man knew that he could not hear his friend talk, and since he didn't want his old friend to know that he had become deaf, he planned

in advance a conversation that he was sure would be a comfort to the sick man.

He first asked, "Are you all right my friend?" "I am getting weaker every day," replied the patient. The deaf man, thinking he was getting better, said, "Thank God, I am so pleased to hear this." This sick man was terribly hurt. He thought this man was wishing him ill and became annoyed.

The deaf man asked again, "What have you taken for food today, my friend?" The patient angrily replied, "Poison." "May you have good digestion!" The patient was fuming. He told his friend to leave at once, and had him removed. The deaf man departed with a smiling face, unaware of his friend's situation.

PEOPLE DO NOT try to understand others, being too concerned with the noises of their own minds. To others problems, they are deaf. Such inability to understand others leads to various forms of disharmony in our daily relations. When disharmony creeps into a family, every word and action of each member is misunderstood. It is only when harmony breathes over their agonized hearts that they are able to regain their health, thereby allowing their boils of bitterness to be healed.

Adapt and adjust. Do not develop egoism, pride or arrogance. A little act of humility and submissiveness can often bring great rewards. A parable is told




ENJOY  
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in the Mahabharata to illustrate this point. Once the Ocean asked the River. “Oh River Goddess, you always bring me mighty trees, but you have never brought me any of those canes and reeds that grow abundantly on your banks. Why?”

The River Goddess replied, “Oh Lord, the trees are unbending and hard-hearted. That is why they are uprooted by me. But the canes and reeds are humble and adapt to changing conditions. When my impetuous currents sweep over them, they bend down, humbling themselves. Thus my strength is nullified and they remain unaffected. When the floods have passed, the canes and reeds rise again. It is due to their adaptability and humility that they are not destroyed.”

Even so, those who have not learn the art of adapting, the art of adjusting to people around themselves, are broken-hearted when adversities come. But those who can adapt are unaffected. Therefore, do not build up tension with others over mere trifles. Life is short. Try to enjoy this glorious gift of God – your life and its possibilities – by developing an expansive heart.

 **OFTEN, NEGATIVE IMAGINATION** becomes a great cause of disturbance and disharmony. Sri Ramakrishna told the following parable about the power of imagination: Once there was a man lying by the road. A thief passed by and analyzed, “This man has fallen down because he could not carry the heavy booty he stole last night.” When a drunkard went by, he mumbled, “This man has had too much to drink!” A Saint then passed the man and said, “This man is so immersed in God that he has lost his body-consciousness. How glorious!”

Even so, one judges external conditions on the basis of one’s thoughts and imaginations. Try to rise above the limitations of imagination to perceive things as they really are. When someone does not greet you, do not imagine that he has become your enemy. When you have a slight cold, do not imagine that you are suffering from pneumonia. When you have a slight difficulty with your wife or husband, do not imagine that the two of you will never see harmony again.

Check negative imagination in order to live happily. Do not expect too much from others. Feel that all relationships are manifestations of Karma – the results of actions performed in the past. No relation is permanent and secure. In the turbulent waters of the world-process, God is the only reality, which is solid as a rock. Love God in all. True and abiding love is


different from attachment and infatuation. Love your near and dear ones, but do not become attached to them. Attachment is the case of worry, grief and frustration. Love the Lord in all. Serve the Lord in all.

Do not speak harsh words to any, because the Lord indwells all hearts. Do not harm anyone in thought, word or deed. No matter how inimical a person may be, one should not try to harm him. This is the practice of non-violence.

Those who do wrong deeds based upon jealousy, greed and pride are like patients. Their problems are not solved if you destroy or harm them. A disease should be cured, and killing the patient is not the correct method of curing the disease. Even so, cruelty, hatred, pride and jealousy are diseases of certain human beings. They should not be harmed, but their diseases cured.

Often, one is eager to give advice to others. But advising others is a great art. No one should force others to give up their wrong ways of thinking and feeling; they must rather be persuaded by love. Be an example yourself. Be a source of inspiration for others.

Do not spoil your children with too much attachment, indulgence and infatuation. Children are not mere toys for you to play with. They are souls working their way through their human forms. It is your duty to impart true education to them – to bestow on them proper conditions for both their secular studies as well as those spiritual studies, which lead to an understanding of the deeper values of life.

 **QUEEN MALADASA** was a great Sage. She wished to see her children, too, become Sages. When she lulled them to sleep at night, she would sing, “You are the Pure. You are the Enlightened. You are the Taintless. You are beyond the illusion of the world-process. You are not this body or mind. You are the immortal Atman.” And as a result of her song, her children became great Sages in course of time.

Mix affection with firmness in order to bring up your children properly. Train and discipline them so that they may become broad-hearted and serviceable to humanity. In this way they will develop aspiration to realize God.

Let there be harmony between husband and wife. Let there be harmony between parents and their children. Let there be harmony among friends. Let there be harmony among nations. Let there be harmony among the elements. Let there be harmony between the earth and the sky. Let harmony be experienced everywhere.