



Face Your Life with

FORESIGHT



By Swami Jyotirmayananda

To attain success in life, you must have foresight. Possessing this great virtue implies that you are able to prepare yourself for the future in a meaningful way—both practically and philosophically.

Unfortunately, most people have hindsight instead of foresight. They go on uselessly regretting their actions of the past and fretting about how they should have done things differently.

Most human beings have to endure a great deal of pain in life due to shortsightedness. In reading the Mahabharata, one sees the extreme shortsightedness of the evil Kaurava brothers. Having become terribly egoistic and vain due to their power, they failed to realize that the righteous Pandavas were bound to triumph.

In developing foresight and learning to be meaningfully prepared for the future, you must understand well that the future is your creation. Therefore, do not envision a negative future and then start preparing for it! Rather, you must face the future with a courageous optimism, with faith in the Divine Plan, and with a philosophical understanding that ultimately it is you who are the architect of your destiny. To help you do so, reflect upon the following points that are associated with the letters of the word “FORESIGHT.”

F is for Faith

In creating your future, you must have faith that God is always with you. When you were

a little child you did not worry about survival, and yet, sustained by the all-caring Divine Hand, you survived. Due to ego, however, you have developed a feeling of separateness from God that burdens you with insecurity and pessimism. With philosophical insight, you will develop increasing faith that God is with you and you will have renewed courage to create an inspiring destiny for yourself.

O is for Optimism

Do not misuse your imagination and constantly envision a negative future. As you think, so you become. If you are constantly crying that the world is going to be in turmoil, naturally that is what you are promoting. Constantly hammering upon your mind in a negative way is worship of *alakshmi*. *Alakshmi* means negation of prosperity and affirmation of poverty. But when you project the positive, you are worshipping Lakshmi, the Goddess of Prosperity.

Do not let your energy become involved with worldly matters that are out of human control and should be handled by God. Those aspects of the future of the world are His headache, not yours. Your job is to face the future with bold self-effort and optimism.

R is for Reflection

In order to project a good future, you must learn the art of reflection. Try to understand

the spiritual meaning of your life and discover the real nature of your soul. Your innermost identity is the Divine Self and, therefore, you have boundless possibilities to unfold.

E is for Eradication of Negative Qualities

Reflection involves finding the defects in your personality and trying to eradicate them. As you look around, try to pinpoint the qualities that you don't like in others, then look within yourself and see whether or not you possess those very same qualities. Make a resolve that you will not tolerate within yourself those things that you dislike in others—vanity, pride, gossiping nature, irritability, etc.—and start eradicating them with a sustained movement.

S is for Self-effort

Do not sit back, gambling that by chance you will suddenly encounter great opportunities in life, and that those opportunities will boost you into great prosperity. Rather, patiently exercise your self-effort day by day and shape your future with a dynamic will.

I is for Insight into Karma

Always remember the importance of the Law of Karma. If, in spite of your best efforts in life, certain situations do not change according to your wishes, you must understand that some previous karma is blocking your progress. Therefore, have patience and continue wholeheartedly to promote good karmas. When you are under pressure, do not unwittingly do things that create negative karmas.

Due to stress, people often develop a distorted intellect. They think it is justifiable

to be harsh with others, to create disharmony, to speak venomous words, to hurt others' feelings. For the vast majority of people, this is normal. However, on the spiritual path you are striving to be better than normal. Therefore, gain insight into karma and do not create negative karma, no matter how provocative the situation may be.

G is for Goal

The highest goal of life is God-realization. That goal must always be kept in view. Have the foresight to know that the world you live in is transient and your real home is with God. In the karmic process, you have been a traveller through countless embodiments, but your eventual destination is God-realization.

If a traveller becomes distracted by the scenes, people, and situations he encounters along his journey and, in so doing, forgets all about his original destination, of course he will never get there. Similarly, in your journey through the world-process, every situation is just a passing situation, no matter how wonderful it may appear. You cannot rest until you reach your abiding home with God.

This was brought out in the story of King Parikshit. Knowing that he was going to die in seven days, the king attempted to attain immortality by listening to stories about the Divine Krishna. These stories kindle devotion to God, which opens the window to the heart and leads to intuitional realization. Thus, when the last seven days of Parikshit's life came to an end, he was already enlightened and the sting of death did not hurt him at all.

Similarly, everyone must have the foresight to know that life is transient and, as a traveller, one must not become overly engrossed in passing events. The affairs of life

must be handled well from a practical point of view, but material possessions should not become a burden that consumes all your mental energy.

Your possessions should help you become comfortable, and being comfortable should help your mind think more deeply and constantly about God. However, if you live for your possessions, and acquiring and protecting them gives you more and more of a headache, then wealth has moved you further away from God, rather than closer. Therefore, keep the goal of life always in view.

H is for Harmony

Your goal in life is not to prove yourself to others or assert your superiority over them. Rather, it is by adapting and adjusting and by cooperating and harmonizing that you promote peace internally and externally. When your mind is caught up with constant disharmony every day, you have no time for peace.

When you hurt people or are harsh with them—whether wittingly or unwittingly—you become afraid. You never know what reactions will set in.

Although this modern world affords people all types of protection, yet they remain as afraid as deer in the forest. Why? Because they are using their mental energy for the gratification of ego rather than for the promotion of peace and harmony. Harmony is an expression of God. Where there is harmony, there God dwells.

Another aspect of harmony involves structuring your daily life in such a way that you have a healthy balance of everything that is important for the unfoldment of your personality. You must have time to

meditate, study scriptures, practice yoga exercises, relax, do your job, perform your duties, etc. There should be an order and a rhythm to everything that you do so that you can enrich your personality and unfold your latent potentialities day by day. When you are constantly doing things in a discordant way, swinging to extremes of activity and inactivity, it becomes difficult for you to enjoy true happiness and peace.

T is for Truth

“*Satya meva jayate*”—“Truth alone triumphs.” If you are intent upon realizing the truth, reverencing the truth, speaking the truth, pursuing the truth, then you have nothing to be afraid of. The world cannot hurt you.

Raja Yoga says, “*Heyam duhkham anaagataṁ*”—“Abandon the pain that has not yet come.” If you have foresight, you will not allow the pain that has not yet come to come to you. The pain that has not yet come is immeasurable, boundless. But if you attain Enlightenment, you will avoid it.

Therefore, remember the letters of the word “FORESIGHT” and their associations:

F - Faith

O - Optimism

R - Reflection

E - Eradication of Negative Qualities

S - Self-effort

I - Insight into Karma

G - Goal

H - Harmony

T - Truth

and face the future with joy and confidence. The treasure of all treasures awaits you!