



Go Deep Into Life

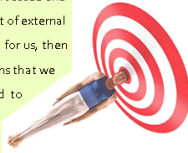
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"Is your life a practice run for next time?" This rhetorical question catches a sad reality: many people lead their lives very superficially, waiting for things to happen. There are three kinds of people - **those who make things happen, those who watch things happen and those who wonder what happened.**



Let us see how we can make things happen instead by going DEEP into our lives.

D—Desire All of us have desires, but are we tapping the power of desires? For that, we need to ensure that everything we do falls into one of the two categories: either we do what we desire or we desire what we do. When we have the choice, we need to be bold enough to tread a different path, do what we feel will best utilize our talents and answer our calling. Most people daydream and fantasize, but do not desire in a focused and intense way. Often this is because so many of our desires are so superficial, being a product of external persuasions. But if we look within - instead of without - to find out what is really important for us, then we will be able to tap the power of desire. On other times, when we are forced into situations that we don't like, when we don't have a choice, as will inevitably happens sometimes, we need to intellectually understand the long-term benefits of what we have to do - and then desire to do it. Most people drag their feet in such situations and miss out the opportunity for growth and learning that is latent in these experiences.



E—Envision: When we have ascertained our desire, the next step is to envision its materialization. Thought are things and so positive autosuggestions will empower us. These serve as planned mental templates of future success. Just as we cut a watermelon into small sections before eating, similarly lets divide our ambitious desire into **Specific Measurable Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound (SMART) goals.** If we don't set a clear goal, whom can we blame for not achieving it? A journey of a thousand miles begins - and proceeds - with one step; so lets be clear of our a short term steps even if the long term path appears shrouded with darkness and difficulties.

If we are failing to plan, we are planning to fail.



E—Endeavor: Vision without action is a dream, action without vision is a nightmare. Once the goal is fixed in our mind's eye, lets roll back our sleeves and get down to work. Lets not cut corners. Lets not expect things to be easy. A well-known Vedic aphorism reminds us: *Na hisuptasya simhasya pravishanti mukhe mrgah* "Though the lion is the king of the jungle, it can't expect the deer to enter into its mouth if it lies down, doing nothing." Similarly all our prowess and ability alone will not guarantee success, unless we strive for it.

P—Pray Most people hesitate to pray because they fear that their prayers may not be answered. But the fact is all prayers are always answered; just that the answer is not in the form that we expect it. The spiritual connection, the hotline with the eternal that we establish, is a gain far greater than the nature of the answer to the prayer. Prayer - especially in the form of chanting of sacred mantras - strengthens us with the pacifying, comforting, uplifting presence of the divine within and steadies us to face the ups and downs of life. The more things change, the more we need to embrace the things that don't change. Prayer then is not a device for flight from reality, but an armor to strengthen our fight in reality. Prayer is a free outgoing call to God with no battery, no power, no charging, no sim card, no network problem, always good signal, unlimited talk time.



Lets pray not just to get the best, but also to give the best. If we get the best result, our reputation - what the world thinks about us - will improve. But only when we give our best endeavor, our self-esteem - what we think about ourselves - will grow. The former is a fleeting gain, the latter a lasting glory. When we know that the Supreme is with us, we break free from the mental limits that prevent us from giving our best performance.

Lets also pray to the Supreme to give us the intelligence to make the best of what we get. Our happiness depends not so much on what we get, but on what we do with what we get. God helps those who help themselves - by accepting the form in which He sends His help. When we go deep into life thus, we will have truly loved, learnt and lived.

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