

## A SHOT OF HOPE THE SPEAKING TREE

# Moving From Positivity To Objectivity

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As a country, we have been overwhelmed by the devastation caused by the second Covid wave turning itself into a monstrous tsunami. To cope with tough times, being positive though a necessary beginning may not be enough. One has to be more courageous than just being positive. Perhaps, the word 'positive' and 'positivity' never had such a dreadful meaning as in the time of corona.

While the grief caused by the pandemic is excruciatingly real, there is another reality that is sacred, sublime and infinitely elevating. More than ever, one needs to be in touch with that reality which is to be discovered deep within ourselves. This reality, which is beyond the duality of pain and pleasure, gain and loss is the source of all healing. Even though not deliberately chosen, often one's grief creates a rupture in one's heart through which a greater possibility may surface.

Lately, 'being positive' has become some kind of a spiritual cliché. One's effort to be positive is akin to taking painkillers which help one forget the pain but don't heal the wound, which needs compassionate self-care in the light of clarity. The word 'positive' presupposes a polar negative, isn't it? In one's effort to be positive, what happens to the negative? It stays covered and camouflaged within our psyche and will resurface in a conducive environment.

Practising positivity is recommended in the Patanjali 'Yoga Sutras' as 'vitark badhane pratipaksha bhavanam', in order to neutralise a negative thought, bring in the positive. Yet ultimately, one needs to uproot the source, the breeding ground of negativity. Our blindness to the oneness of life is the source of all negativity and resultant suffering. When the polarities of positive and negative are transcended, there is objectivity, space where hope, courage, compassion, cooperation and fortitude are no longer a matter of choice but are spontaneous. In such a space one carefully does one's part and prayerfully leaves the rest on the infinite wisdom of the existence.

Begin with being positive and reflect deeply on the enormity and enigma called life. In our material-oriented living, we have perhaps forgotten to appreciate life. Blind to all-caring existence and its abundance, we have even become forgetful of the fact that we breathe. Let the recent struggle for oxygen be our teacher, telling us to be grateful for every breath that we will take, for the rest of our lives. In the loss of loved ones, let us not lose our capacity to love and laugh. Let us be driven by the love of life rather than be crippled by the fear of death.

While pain is inherent to life, grief is psychological. To be in profound peace, one needs to manage one's grief, as elucidated by 'Two Arrows' parable of the Buddha. The Buddha said that in any event of misfortune two arrows fly our way, one is that of the event and the other of our reaction to it. Being struck by one is painful. Being struck by the other is awful. One can't control the first arrow, but remember that the second one shot by you is more lethal.



*For hope in the  
time of Covid-  
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