

A S Rajagopalan Idea Series



***IDEA – Needs and Wants* #92**

Once there lived a King who was very wealthy. Though he had everything and lived a luxurious life, he was not happy or satisfied inside.

One day, the King came upon a servant who was singing happily while he worked. This puzzled the King. He as a ruler with all pomp and prestige feels gloomy, while a lowly servant is dancing in ecstasy! The King asked the servant, “Why are you so happy?” The servant replied, “Oh King! I am a poor servant. But my family and I don’t need have too much and don’t expect too much. All we care is a roof above our head and dinner on the table”.

The king was not pleased with that answer. Later, he sought the advice of one his wise minister. After hearing the King’s woes and the servant’s story, the minister said, “Your Majesty, I believe that the servant has not been initiated to the 99 Club!”

“The 99 Club! What is that?” the King inquired. The minister replied, “Oh King! I will demonstrate that to you. I will place a bag containing 99 gold coins at the servant’s doorstep. And you will know.” So, the King ordered to do it. When the servant saw the bag, he took it into his house. When he opened the bag, he let out a great shout of joy, So many gold coins! He began to count them. After several counts, he was at last convinced that there were only 99 coins. He wondered, “Why it is only 99 and not 100! May be something is missing” He looked everywhere, but that final coin was elusive.

Finally, exhausted, he decided that he has to work harder than ever to earn that one gold coin and complete his collection. From that day, the servant's life has changed. He was overworked, horribly grumpy, and rebuked his family for not helping him make that 100th gold coin. He stopped singing while he worked. Witnessing this drastic transformation, the King was confused. When he sought his minister's help, the advisor said, "Your Majesty, the servant has now officially joined The 99 Club."

He continued, "The 99 Club is a name given to those people who have enough to be happy but are never content, because they're always yearning and striving for that extra 1 telling themselves, "Let me get that one final thing and then I will be happy for life."

Moral: We can be happy, even with basic needs in our lives, but as soon as get something bigger and better, we want even more! We lose our sleep, our happiness, we hurt the people around us, all these as a price for our greediness. *Life is a balance of basic needs and growing desires! *

Ps: In *uddhava gltA, Yadhu mahArAjA* (Lord kirshNA's forefather) faced the same dilemma when he faced a avadhuta sanyasi (one who has renounced everything in life) [Some claim dattAtreya was the avadhutA] and learned about 24 gurus of nature.

Pooja, prayer, and *worship of the Lord is not to ask for more, but to thank what he has already blessed on us. * If we are not happy with the 99% what he has already poured on us and *go after the last 1%, we may lose the whole.*

Lord gives everyone the same full pie *but slices differently than what we want*. We look at a large slice and crave every slice should be that big. This is like saying *"Cut into four equal halves". *

***IDEA - The Seven Wonders of the world* #93**

Rekha was an young girl from a tiny village. She has completed elementary school, and was ready to move 5th grade to a middle school. But the muddle school is in the next town and she has to take a bus everyday.

She was very happy and nervous to go to a bigger school and a town which has reputation for rich kids.

Today was the first day of her school and as soon as she entered the school, she saw everyone was wearing glamorous clothes while she had a very simple and relatively cheap attire. Other students started making fun of her.

The teacher soon arrived and she introduced Rekha to other students and said she is new from a nearby village.

The teacher said, "I will start this year with a surprise test now!" Students were naturly taken back by this. She has asked, "Please write down the 7 wonders of the world. If you dont know all write whatever you kniw of".

Everyone started writing the answer quickly. Rekha started to write the answer slowly.

When everyone except Rekha had submitted their answer paper, the teacher came and asked Rekha, "What happened Dear? Don't worry, Just write what you know as other students have learned here in the previous year".

Rekha replied, "I don't know how to pick 7, when there are so many things available!" Finally she handed her answer paper to the teacher.

The teacher started reading everyone's answers loudly and the majority had answered them correctly such as The Great Wall of China, Taj Mahal, Pyramids, Leaning Tower of Pisa, Hanging Gardens of Babylon etc.

The teacher was happy as students had remembered what they had been taught. At last the teacher picked up Rekha's answer paper and started reading.

"The 7 Wonders are – *Seeing, hearing, feeling the touch, laughing, thinking, being kind, and loving.*

The teacher stood stunned and the whole class was speechless. Today, a girl from the small village reminded them about the precious gifts that God has given us, which are truly a wonder.

Moral: Value, trust and cherish what you have. You don't always have to look away to find an inspiration. *God has given you all the strength and mind to reach your goals. *

ps: If we know how blessed we are and understand the temporal and trivial nature of enjoyments, we will run to any length to stop another janmA here. Rare being born as a human, in Hindu religion and having good parents and has a capacity to see and process the things, separate the alpa astira phalan - why should we dwell in this samsAram?

***IDEA* #94**

Measure twice, cut once

Lakshmi and kaNnan, a very loving couple had been married for over a decade. They did not have any child and were hopeful everyday, that Lord would bless them one day. Both shared the same mental disappointment and that in turn made them more attached to each other.

But their family and friends had different opinion. They try to persuade them to get separated, go for divorce, and look for remarriage since current one is not fruitful. But the couple dreaded even to consider that idea, because of the strong bond of love between them.

Months passed and one day, while Kannan was returning from work, he saw his wife walking down the road with a man. Both had their hand locked in with each other and swinging them high and walking merrily with giggles.

Over the next few days, he saw the same man with his wife at various places and one evening while Kannan was returning from work he saw the man drop her off at the house after giving her a kiss on the cheek. Kannan was angry and sad but he didn't open the topic with his wife.

Two days later after a hectic day at work, Kannan returned home was very tired. Went upstairs and was removing his tie in one hand and the other holding cup of juice in a glass. When the phone rang, he swiftly moved to pick up the phone. The caller said, "Hey dear, I'll be coming to your place this evening to see you as promised." Kannan hung up the phone angrily. It was a male voice and he was almost sure the person on the other end was the man he had always seen his wife with. He suddenly became shaky with the thought that he has lost his wife after all these years to some unknown man. The glass cup fell from his hand and shattered into pieces.

His wife ran climbing up the stairs into the corridor and asking, "Is everything okay?" Kannan was taken over by wrath and gave his wife more than a gentle push. She slipped and fell and rolled down to the bottom of the stairs. She was laying unconscious.

Kannan gravely realized his mistake. He felt her breath, pulse, and heartbeat but there she lay lifeless. In a total confusion, he saw an envelope in her hand. He took it, opened – it was a letter.

It read:

"My loving husband, words can not express how I feel, so I had to write it down. I have been visiting a doctor for over a few days and wanted to confirm before sharing the news with you.

The doctor confirmed it today that I am pregnant with a twin and our baby is due soon. Surprisingly, the doctor is none other than my long lost cousin brother whom I lost contact with for decades. He had promised to take care of me and our baby and give us the best without charging a dime.

He also promised to have dinner with us today. Thanks for staying by my side.

Your loving wife.

The letter fell from his hand. There was a knock at the door and the same man he had seen with his wife came in and said, "Hello Kannan, I suppose I'm right. I am Dr. Arun, a cousin of your wife." Suddenly, the Dr. noticed his sister lying standstill. He rushed her to the hospital. She had lost her twins and may not recover from her coma!

***Moral*:** We should not be too quick to take actions in our relationship or marriage when we haven't checked thoroughly. We all have our faults. We shouldn't be too fast to judge others. Not everything you see, hear or believe about someone is true. Always controlled and calm action under any situation, irrespective of what one might heard or seen is the best approach.

ps*:** bhagavAn is sarva svatantran. When He look at us, the eternal criminals, His anger and punishing attitude tries to explode. Immediately dayA devi intercedes and quenches that fire completely and make Him to be of more reasonable and pardonable stature. ***Without dayA and pirAtti purushakAtatvam there is no viable exit for us from the cruel samsAram.

***IDEA - Focus on what?* #95**

One day a professor entered the classroom and asked his students to prepare for a surprise test. They waited anxiously at their desks for the test to begin. The professor handed out the question paper with the text facing down as usual. Once he handed them all out, he asked his students to turn the

page and begin. To everyone's surprise, there were no questions, just a black dot in the center of the page.

The professor seeing the expression on everyone's face, told them the following, "I want you to write what you see there." The confused students got started on the inexplicable task. At the end of the class, the professor took all the answer papers and started reading each one of them aloud in front of all the students. All of them with no exceptions described the black dot, trying to explain its position in the middle of the sheet etc.

After all had been read, the classroom was silent. The professor began to explain, "I am not going to grade on you this, I just wanted to give you something to think about. No one wrote about the white part of the paper. Everyone focused on the black dot

Moral: concentrating on the black dot is similar to what happens in our lives. We have a white paper to observe and enjoy, but we always focus on the dark spots. Our life is a gift given to us by God with love and care. We always have reasons to celebrate, nature renewing itself every day, our friends around us, the job that provides our livelihood, the miracles we see every day."

ps: *Lord Krishna in Uddhava Gita emphasize santushta: = being content with.* No one has everything and no one has zero of things. Bhagavan gives everyone the same pie, but slices differently. We should thank the Lord for what he had already showered 99% on what we need, and stop complaining or demanding for the last 1% and fight with Him.

Try the prayer as thanks than the downpayment for our wish list!

***IDEA – Who is smart?* #96**

It was a famous college and many students stayed in the dorm and were studying. One night four students went out on a party. They were enjoying so much and completely forgot the time. It was the wee hours of the morning when they returned back to the dorm. Suddenly they remembered that they have a Math test on that morning. Forgetting everything in the party and stayed so late, obviously they didn't study for the test.

They thought of a plan of how to outsmart the teacher. They made themselves look dirty with grease and dirt and went to the professor with a long face and said that they had gone out to help a social service event last night and on their way back the tire of their car burst, and they had to push the car all the way back. So, they were in no condition to take the test.

The Professor thought for a moment and said, "I will be considerate to you, because what happened to your car is beyond your control. You can come and retake the test tomorrow. No problem." The students felt very happy and thanked the Professor and said they will be ready by that time.

On the next day, they appeared promptly before the Professor. The professor said, "This is a special test, you are retaking it. All the four of you need to sit in different rooms and take the test." They all agreed as they had prepared well in on the previous day.

Students were very eager to open the question sheet and were pumped up to answer any question. But the test consisted of only 2 questions with the total of 100 Points:

1) Your Name? _____ (1 Point)

2) Which tire burst? _____ (99 Points)

Options – (a) Front Left (b) Front Right (c) Rear Left (d) Rear Right

Moral of the story:

*Take responsibility of your actions * whether it is good or bad. Otherwise it will come and bite you, definitely.

Ps: For prapatti (saraNAgaty, total unconditional surrender), *kArpaNyam* is one of the accessories (angA). It is accepting the state of utter destitute and helplessness of oneself and praying to the Lord to help oneself. Some may feel it is hard to accept that they are useless and can't do even an iota of thing as a means (upAyam) for the saraNAgaty. We all know how bad we in this janmA were, leave alone how and what are all the sins we have committed in our earlier lives. *Accept the truth and approach the Lord as a beggar.*

Accepting the responsibility for our actions is the first step towards redemption.