

India of my dreams

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All of us who believe in India's story and have strong attachment to this ancient land of ours, want to see a prosperous and happy India. Each one of us have a dream of how India should develop and progress. Just as Jawahar Lal Nehru our first prime minister had said at the time of getting independence that he had to solve 300 million problems (the population of India at that time); similarly each one of us may have thought about "India of my dreams", though majority of us do not express it.

Throughout the history of mankind India has periodically given a new thought; Buddhism, Jainism, Vedantic thought, Yoga philosophy, Sikhism, great tradition of bhakti yoga of Kabir, Rahim, Tulsidas, Surdas etc., and recently the great ideas of non-violence and sustainable development by Mahatma Gandhi.

I feel a new thought and paradigm of development based upon the idea that [spirituality with technology produces happiness](#) should be added to it. Technology allows us to take care of our basic and daily needs and spirituality gives us wisdom to use technology judiciously and for our needs and not for our greed.

What I am proposing is nothing new since some of our ancient rishis understood the importance of technology in a Yogi's life. One of the oldest books on *Yoga* is [Patanjali Yoga Darshan](#). Almost one fourth of the book is devoted to how a *Yogi* can achieve superhuman powers so as to free himself from the vagaries of nature. Thus by overcoming the challenges of the natural world, a Yogi's life was made easy so that he/she could devote

his/her energies in pursuit of truth, happiness and attainment of salvation from the cycle of birth and death.

This essay is my humble attempt to interpret *Patanjali's* ideas in the present context and to show how spirituality with technology can lead to sustainable development and happiness for citizens of India and is the basis of "India of my dreams"!

Why Happiness?

All of us aspire to have a good life and happiness. There are as many definitions of happiness as there are people. But generally people want a decent place to live; satisfactory mobility; good education for their children; clean environment; a challenging and pleasant workplace; wholesome entertainment; competent and affordable medical services, and enough money to meet their usual daily requirements. These are the issues around which all the modern industrial societies have evolved and yet have created the biggest problem of totally unsustainable lifestyles fueled by greed. Thus the climate change, economic meltdown and other consequent social problems are a direct result of our greed for resources and energy. If we can control our greed or better yet sublimate it into higher emotions like [humility and simplicity then it can lead to sustainability, happiness and a rewarding life.](#)

Our overall happiness is a sum of two things, personal happiness and better environment. When both these things are achieved it results in happiness and contentment.

Personal happiness can be obtained in a variety of ways. Basically one becomes happy when one is secure and is at peace with oneself. This sense of security comes from being spiritual and we will talk about this later in the essay.

[Environmental happiness is what I call community or nation building.](#) It is the enabling environment which makes one feel happy to live in, work in and just be a part of it. This environmental happiness also gives us a sense of belonging, makes us feel proud of our surroundings and gives us a sense of ownership. If we create a happy and pleasant environment for our work and living then we will make India a great place to live. Each one of us should therefore work towards improving our immediate environment so that it becomes nice and cheerful. Then we will be genuinely proud to be a part of it which is the India of my dreams.

The greatest resource of a country is its people. If we can unleash their creativity then they can create great wealth and make India a very happy place to live and work in. Creativity of citizens is enhanced when their basic needs are met and they [live in a society where they feel safe and without fear.](#) The history of civilization is replete with examples where creation of wealth through free enterprise was fuelled by the environment of freedom and free spirit. Freedom from fear allows out of box thinking which is an important part of creative process.

Fearlessness comes from internal security which is helped by spirituality. Mahatma Gandhi was a fearless leader who gave us our independence by ridding us of the fear of the British Empire. [He was a highly spiritual person](#) and internally very secure. It is these qualities of spirituality leading to internal security that we need to inculcate in every Indian.

What is spirituality?

Spirituality is concerned with the matters of spirit. When we think deeply and for a long time about anything whether it is an idea or an object then the brain has a tendency of focusing on it like a laser and in that process the object vanishes from the vision field and only its germ or the spirit remains. Then complete knowledge of that idea or object results and is called *Sanyam* by Sage *Patanjali*. This is the [mechanism by which all great discoveries are made.](#)

It is this deep thinking on anything which makes us spiritual and gives us a sense of peace and happiness.

Spirituality is not religion. It is the state of mind that makes it understand that the Truth is beyond the barriers of worldliness, religion, caste, creed, race or geographical boundaries. It connects us to marvels of nature in a deep way and subsequently to Universal Consciousness.

Spirituality helps us in reducing greed because it provides internal security and allows us to evaluate all possible solutions and to use resources only for our needs.

This helps us in focusing on bigger and better things since with internal security the desire to show off is reduced. This also helps us to reduce anxiety and stress levels and creates positive outlook towards life.

Once the mind is calm and secure, deep thinking results which helps in concentration. This helps us to become creative which results in technology development and innovations. All these help us to do our work more efficiently and in creating a holistic society.

Spirituality also helps us to take a compassionate view of nature and as we evolve spiritually we become more tuned to it which helps us in preserving it. Besides it helps us to live in harmony with each other and enables everybody to work together for the common good. This is the genesis of non-violence and sustainability.

How Technology Helps?

Path towards spirituality is accelerated when our basic needs are met. For meeting the basic needs energy and technology are needed. [High tech solutions allow efficient energy and materials usage and thus are necessary for modern industrial society.](#)

Thus the old rudimentary technologies which are inefficient will not work if we want to create a sustainable India. We should learn from nature which is extremely efficient and takes into consideration all the forces around it. This makes natural solutions sustainable and environmentally benign. We should therefore use biomimicary (using natural solutions) in our designs.

Development of high tech solutions is a huge industry all over the developed world and tremendous resources and efforts are being put into it. Presently these developments are fuelled by the greed for money and fame. However if we approach this path of technology development with higher purpose of taking care of our needs in a sustainable manner it may give employment and purpose to life to a large number of people.

Also we should not ape the western societies which are going for completely automated high tech solutions. I believe man/machine interface should be deployed in most of these high tech solutions so that gainful employment results.

How do we become a spiritual society?

1. Spirituality has to be inculcated right from childhood. We should teach our children to focus on whatever is at hand. That can be done by inculcating in them the habit of reading. Reading helps in increasing imagination – the first step in concentration and also helps in inculcating the process of day-dreaming. Reading also helps in calming the mind if the reading material consists of stories about great people; wonders of the world; discoveries and warm wholesome stories. With calming of mind it has a natural tendency of going deeper into any subject of focus. That is the essence of spirituality. At young age when the mind is very agile and pliable this can be easily taught to the children.
2. What does not help children's concentration are [distractions via mobile phones and internet](#). The continuous desire to interact and react through these devices is unsuitable and destructive for concentration. Mobile

phones and internet are useful things in the modern world but we have to educate children on using them for gaining knowledge. Their focus on reading in whichever form will help to wean them away from too much social networking. This is not an easy process but a continuous focus in school will help. Obviously it requires very innovative and inspiring teachers who will inspire them to read, think and debate issues. Thus there is a need to have excellent teachers in the school system.

3. Besides the above, [children should also be taught ethics of work](#); inspired to think of higher and nobler things; taught about environment and sustainable issues and how to help others. And one of the most important things to teach them should be curiosity and ability to question as much as possible. All these things should be taught in a gentle way and not forced upon them otherwise young children who have tremendous energy may react adversely to it.

Presently the education system in India focuses the students to work very hard so [that they can pass competitive exams for getting into good schools for getting high paying jobs](#). They are therefore continuously being taught to be greedy and focus mostly on money. This creates anxiety and increases violent tendencies when their aspirations are not met. This has resulted in India that we see today – a country with tremendous anxiety, increasing violence and intolerance.

India is endowed with plenty of land, good weather, intelligent and hardworking people. What is lacking is leadership to guide and inspire the citizens to work for higher cause. This is what Mahatma Gandhi did during his war for independence. Working for independence based upon the noble path of non-violence was the cause which united Indians to work selflessly.

Each one of us therefore have a duty to educate children and young students regarding ethics, sustainability and spirituality. This will be our contribution to the society.

Thus I feel that when all of us work for higher cause of creating happiness and well-being rather than dividing the country by fear then we will unleash the creative force of Indians and help make India a great and pleasant country to live and work in. That is the India of my dreams.

[HOME](#)

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