

'Yoga'kshemam

5 million (115,000) cases, 325,000 (3,500) deaths. Corona is still ascute slowly. Economy went back by a couple of years minimum. 50% (30%) unemployment. We, L+ beings, are opening up: portfolio of adjustments, refinements; new normal, towards truth, light and life; local economies; natural living and farming centric shorter value-chains; food-nutrition-health-immunity centric climate change resilience; frugal leisure; LPRD-PVM Self-help Collectives; Communitized governance-democracy; and future education.

Government of India has announced the details of Rs.20 lakh crore stimulus package, Atmanirbhar Bharat. Except for some cash, ration, increased MGNREGS budget by Rs.40000 Crore, viability gap funding of Rs.8000 Crore, most of the package is about credit facilitation for various stakeholders including states, MSMEs, workers-farmers-vendors etc. Credit play out is not effective at the bottom-end including tiny enterprises, service enterprises and informal enterprises. People need cash in their hands. Half of India, some 17 Crore families, needs support for 3-6 months, @Rs.200-300/day/family, in addition to what has been given so far as ration/cash by states/union.

Labour reforms underway may give freedom to enterprises, but the workers may be stripped of some of their basic rights including hiring and firing at will. No labour law application would lead to increased informal labour and decreased wage rates. Shift duration increase from 8 to 12 hours may not help workers. However, national floor minimum wage reforms may benefit the workers. We have to see whether they remain on paper for workers or not.

Migrant workers – some will stay back in their native villages; some will not find jobs when they are back. This is a challenge area for all of us to 'rehabilitate' these two segments. Further, we have a new segment of local unemployed/underemployed, and the self-employed losing 'works' or having products with no/less demand. Concomitant issues of production include: air, water and waste. They need to be addressed in a systemic manner, including reskilling, resource support and nurturing support.

With hindsight, we may argue whether lock down was required, or only tracing, treating and tracking would have sufficed along with 'distancing' and 'washing'. Lockdown has brought unprecedented hardships for some 30 crore tribal and other rural communities. Their livelihoods have been threatened significantly. NTFP collection season has shrunk. Other activities have got affected. 50% of the livelihoods value

of the year might have been lost for a majority of them.

Because of the process of coevolution, life learned to immunize itself to infectious diseases and the immune system of the forest dwellers evolved in concert with the immune system of the forest. It is a have-to-have. Time in nature significantly reduces inflammation, and increases the function of antiviral cells, for example. Forest visits increase the intracellular anticancer proteins. There is a strong association between access to healthy wild nature and longer, healthier lives. Can we have more forest(s)? Can we respond to the demand for clean air experienced during lockdown, as a people's right? Can we go for more fair and renewable energy? Can we go for fair data?

Scientists are warning us that worst pandemics are on their way, if we do not work with nature. Frequency may increase. 1.7 million unidentified viruses known to infect humans are estimated to exist in mammals and water birds. Rampant deforestation, modern agricultural expansion and infrastructure development bring us closer to catching them. One million species of plants and animals are at risk of extinction within decades. All this appreciation calls for investing in being in sync with nature, for human and planet health. Governments have to proactively fund. There is no alternative. Business as usual is not OK.

Human touch is an important need of a human being. Our bodies need touch, as we are wired for touch. Release of oxytocin and serotonin connects to our happiness and wellbeing with lower stress. It also saves natural killer cells that kill viral, bacterial and cancer cells. Our social behaviour is affected by touch or touch deprivation. This physical distancing has to come down. It cannot go on, on an imaginary basis.

Transitions

When about 100 rich have the wealth of the bottom half of the world, it has its own repercussions. Pandemic has been pushing the state to take charge of education, health, childcare, eldercare, housing, minimal employment etc. It is also time we discuss employment, underemployment and dignified employment. Minimum wages have to be redefined so that life with dignity is not lost. Can we go towards more and more worker-owned enterprises?

Historically, prosperity comes from equality and education. Also, big challenges of the day require cooperation and internationalism transcending nationalism.

G Muralidhar

Progressive taxation; public funding for basic services; worker protections and participation in management; and special focused work with PVM are the clear ways forward for work on LPRD-PVM. We need to see the future from the point of view of the play of 5 elements – Pandemic(s); Climate change; Inequity, poverty, vulnerability and marginalization; Collectivization, Communitization, and Partnerships; and Technology including digital data and e-world. States' commitments and spends, and contributions from CSR, donors and philanthropy will also influence these.

The leadership has to be effective for these ways forward to unravel. The top key competencies to be demonstrated by the leadership include: safety hygiene and values; self-organizing teams; unlearning and learning; nurturing and mentoring; and sense of connection and belonging ('apnapan')

We have not yet crossed Corona. But, the World is getting back to its ways of 'being out of sync with nature'. We are incorrigible. Can we work on this?

Now, Amphan devastation, Locust, more viral and other epidemic activity, droughts and floods, climate changes. We need to repurpose. Quickly. The crunch has come. Our egos have to bust. We need to be generous to life.

Life's Transitions

We need to apportion all our expenditure into 6 parts: 1 Part reserved for Learning-Seeing the ground truth; and 1 Part for 'care'. By the same token, we need to divide our time into 6 parts: 1 Part for 'learning'; and 1 part of volunteering and care. I seek co-life-workers to join me in dedicating next 10-12 years (4000 days/50,000 hours) in the following way – in five parts: 1 - field-travel; 2 - being with change agents, people who make a difference; 3 - raising resources for them; 4 - survival; and 5 – spirituality.

Let us appreciate that there are several transitions happen in life, at least four I could figure out. In a typical sahasra chandra darshan life (80+ years), these four may be seen as – 3R+ learning 0-15-30-80 years (student); identifying, finding and getting ready to invest time, energy and resources for the best part of life and progress 15-30-45-80 years (early career); searching for meaning and purpose in life seriously and seeing 'it' 30-45-60-80 years (transitioned career, what/how next - legacy); and figuring out and being useful to life at large and universe, with nothing else coming in the way 45-60-80 years. The years are indicative and may vary from individual-to-individual.

This has taken me to reflection on how I progressed from Gundrampally. From a quick tuition by Krishna Rao Sir, to

failing in Class 2, receiving class first prize from father as a chief guest in Class 3, to growing classes of the school as I reached higher classes Class 6 and 7. To joining Sarvail, the first Gurukulam of Modern India, thanks to PV Narasimha Rao, to getting National Talent Search and Mathematical Olympiads, to joining AP Residential Junior College at Nagarjuna Sagar. To REC/NIT Warangal, and growing up, to exploring alternative careers, to joining IRMA.

Blessed to be in Gurukulams – Sarvail, Sagar, Warangal and Anand. They made all the difference to what we are today. PV has initiated Residential Schools, referred as Gurukulams, in 1971, starting with Sarvail, followed by Tadikonda and Kodigenahalli (1972) for the rural meritorious, followed by a residential junior college at Nagarjuna Sagar (1975). Subsequently (1983/84), we have 4-5 schools per district in Telugu states, thanks to NTR. Navodaya schools [Class 6 to 12], one per district, have been started in the country, building on the same concept (thanks to PV and Rajiv Gandhi, 1986). Here the day starts at 0500 hrs in the Brahma Muhurat and goes till 2200 hrs. With Gurus 24x7 with us. More about them soon separately.

Regional Engineering College, now National Institute of Technology Warangal, again a first REC in the country (1959, thanks to PV), and a residential campus, not so attached to teachers, has introduced me to the real world slowly – exposing to Gender, Class, Equity, Naxalism – apart from Technology. Institute of Rural Management Anand, is a residential campus, with teachers accessible 24x7. More soon separately.

From Gurukulams to working with Dr Kurien et al in Dairy Board and IRMA. To working with tribal communities, GCC. To working with commons and collectives, participation, philanthropy. To initiating Akshara – 7L portfolio. To be in self-help LPRD-PVM movement – SERP and several states, NRLM-UNDP. To working with 50K+ LSIs, LSOs, LSEs. To be a Practitioner-Mentor-Academic. To be in Natural Farming. It is a long way. We discuss more about them in subsequent yoga'kshemam's.

The time has come to intensify the fourth transition. Buddha is inspiring us to think about a sangha. Gurudev is seeking us to write and reachout.

Let us intensify the life's transition and seek N. N takes us and keeps us there. If we are L+ people. If we have portfolio of active transitions. If we are 7R. If we practice 7L.

Join us in the world of yoga – parivarthanayoga for 7L. Krsna confirms he is our charioteer.

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