

Energy and Life-Wellness

by Satya Narayana Dasa

This world is the interplay of two types of energies—spiritual and material. Everything we see around us or experience is a combination of these two energies. These energies are manifest at various levels. Life is a manifestation of spiritual energy through matter. In immobile objects, such as a piece of stone, it is material energy which is prominent and spiritual energy is in dormant state. Therefore, we say that stones have no life. In plants spiritual energy becomes a little more manifest than in stones and displays symptoms of life. Above plant life is the animal life and beyond them is the human life wherein the spiritual energy is manifest more than in any other species of life.

Evolution of life is dependent upon the level of consciousness manifest through matter. Human beings are considered superior to all other species of life because of their remarkable level of consciousness. They can be aware of their knowledge, sentiments and experiences whereas animals can not. They can understand themselves and their place in this universe.

Matter manifests at two levels, as gross physical body and the mind. Consciousness, which is the characteristic of spiritual energy, displays itself through the mind and physical body. Because life is a combination of spiritual energy, physical body and mind, life-wellness depends upon the well-being of these three. If they are balanced and functioning normally then life is happier and peaceful.

Disciplined Life

All three—body, mind and consciousness—have their needs. They must be satisfied in a balanced manner. Lord Sri Krishna gives the mantra for life-wellness when he says in Gita, “A person who is disciplined in the activities of eating, recreation, sleep and wakefulness and whose activities are moderate becomes free from all suffering.” Problems arise when there are improper engagements in the activities referred to in the above verse.

The foremost reason for this is the prevailing ignorance about the life-principles. Our actions are predicated by the level of our knowledge. Therefore, first of all there should be proper education about balanced eating, balanced sleeping, balanced recreation and balanced activities during wakefulness.

We are a combination of body, mind and soul. We need to know their nature, functions and requirements. When we buy a car we learn to drive before we go on the highway with it. We also read the user’s manual which comes along with the car. From this we learn the basic technicalities and functioning of the car.

But we do not do the same with our body which is like a car for the soul. Vedic scriptures are like user’s manual to lead us to life-wellness. Therefore, in ancient Indian education system a student studied them before studying any professional discipline. First we must learn about ourselves (our Self) before we learn about things other than ourselves.

In the modern education system we do it the other way round. We learn about the ‘other’ not

about 'I'. There is some knowledge about the body but hardly anything about the mind and soul. Within the spectrum of Indian knowledge systems there is Ayurveda for the knowledge of body, mind and soul; *Sankhya* and Yoga for a deeper study and discipline of the mind and *Vedanta* for the complete knowledge and realisation of the soul. All three disciplines throw light on every subject of body, mind and soul but each one specialises in one particular field. Knowledge of all three is compulsory for complete life-wellness.

Body gets energy from proper diet and mind from loving relations. Soul achieves perfection by its relation to Super Soul (*Bhagavan*). There is another factor that enables us to enrich our life.

Environmental Factor

Our body is a complete system and everything in it is interconnected with everything else. Therefore, everything influences everything else. All the cells in our body keep in touch with every other cell. Messenger molecules race everywhere to notify the body's farthest outposts of desire or intention, however slight. Our body is not an isolated entity in the universe but a part of it, just as cells are part of our body.

We influence our environment and get influenced by it. There is a continuous exchange of energy between our body and its environment. We have all experienced a sense of peace and well-being while being in nature or on a sandy beach of an ocean. So wellness also depends upon our environment, just as proper functioning of a car depends not only on proper maintenance of the car but also on the condition of the roads and the traffic flow on the roads. *Vedanta* teaches us not only about our individual self but our role in this universe and how to lead a balanced life in our family and society which is essential for our well-being.

A complete life-wellness programme must be based upon this knowledge. But knowledge alone is not sufficient, one needs to act on it, just as it is not enough to know how to drive but one needs to actually put this knowledge in practice to reach the destination.

At present life has become very stressful, competitive and occupied in securing the means of existence. Therefore, people are neglecting the simple principles of life-wellness. They often complain about lack of time. If we do not maintain our car properly we are bound to be stranded on a highway some day or meet an accident. Similarly, if you do not fulfil the needs of the three aspects of life, we are liable to fall. We will end up spending time and money and go through the discomfort.

Work Plan

Governments across the world are spending huge sums of funds on healthcare programmes and still, in most of the cases, they are not able to extend the facility to all citizens. They can, however, reduce their healthcare budget in billions if they teach people to harmonise their internal and external energies by following a simple lifestyle based on Ayurveda, Yoga and *Vedanta* disciplines. This can be done by introducing Vedic knowledge in the education system, by using mass media to educate the public in general and by establishing various Vedic information centres across the country. This knowledge should be made freely available for the welfare of the citizens.