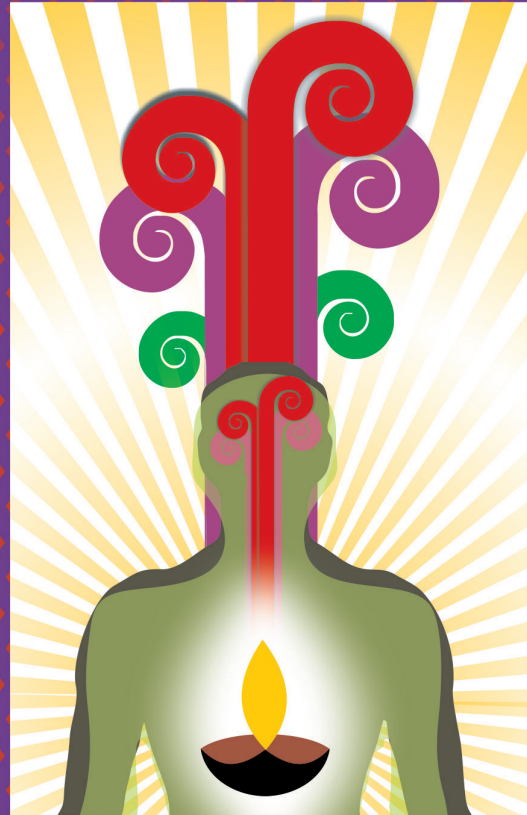


# Keys to Social Entrepreneurship

A JOURNEY DEEP WITHIN



**Dr. Kalpana Sampath Ph.D**



Dr. J M Sampath & Dr. Kalpana Sampath

Kalpana is a human resource professional and a development artist, actively involved in processes that enable to live a life of purpose and excellence. She has been on this evolving journey for the past two decades with her husband, friend, philosopher and guide Dr. J. M. Sampath, and they have together conceptualised multiple tools and processes for Organisational Development, nurturing a culture of excellence.

Kalpana's life stems from her inviolable principle of love and acceptance. Her interests include research, arts and spiritual reflections. Her doctoral thesis on studying the "Feeling of belongingness in organisational context" reflects her focus to understand self and the journey to be human. She is also the Director of Arpitha Associates Pvt. Ltd and EFIL Educational Services Pvt. Ltd.

[kalpana@arpitha.com](mailto:kalpana@arpitha.com)

# Keys to Social Entrepreneurship

A JOURNEY DEEP WITHIN

Dr. Kalpana Sampath Ph.D



Published by  
**Insight Publishers**  
# 17, I Cross, Gavipuram Extension  
Bangalore-560 019, Karnataka, INDIA  
Tel: 91-80-6567 5965, 91-80-26616764  
[www.insightpublishers.com](http://www.insightpublishers.com)

Edition I

First Print in 2012  
© Copyright 2012

All rights reserved  
No part of this publication may be reproduced  
in full or in parts, in any manner or form,  
without the consent of the publisher

*Excerpts taken from:*  
Discovery: 3rd edition, Insight Publisher, Bangalore, India, 1988  
Inner Realities: Insight Publisher, 2003



**Humble dedication to all those  
aspiring to be social entrepreneurs  
with the courage to dream and create  
universal well-being...**



**Keys to**  
**Social Entrepreneurship**  
A JOURNEY DEEP WITHIN

---

**INDEX**

---

<b>I. PREFACE</b>	
<b>II. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	
<b>III. FOREWORD</b>	
<b>1. ASPIRATION...</b> the springboard for action	01-03
<b>2. LEARNING...</b> as an integral process to 'Growing'	04-06
<b>3. LIMITATION...</b> inner block for 'Growing'	07-09
<b>4. INTROSPECTION...</b> first step towards 'Growing'	10-12
<b>5. FEAR...</b> a road block to 'Growing'	13-14
<b>6. EGO...</b> a deterrent to 'Growing'	15-17
<b>7. GIVING...</b> as a receiving process of 'Growing'	18-20
<b>8. OBSESSION...</b> the bane of passion	21-22
<b>9. CONDITIONING...</b> stuck to comfort	23-24
<b>10. TIME...</b> the elusive but decided factor	25-27
<b>11. CONTENTMENT...</b> inner stability for growth	28-30
<b>12. RIGIDITY...</b> holding to hold long	31-33
<b>13. EQUANIMITY...</b> the inner balance	34-36
<b>14. INWARD ACTION APPROACH...</b> the language of a social entrepreneur	37-39
<b>15. INSIGHTS...</b> on a path to self discovery	40-42
<b>16. COMMITMENT...</b> the seed for 'Growing'	43-45
<b>17. MINDFULNESS...</b> social entrepreneurship	46-48
<b>18. INSTITUTIONALIZING...</b>	

essential process of social entrepreneurship	49-51
<b>19. SYNERGIZING EFFORTS...</b> meaningful reaching out	52-54
<b>20. ISSUE OF TRIVIALITIES...</b> sustaining social entrepreneurship vision	55-57
<b>21. FEEDBACK PROCESS...</b> the essential nutrient for 'Growing'	58-60
<b>22. SUSTAINABLE GROWING...</b> true spirit of social entrepreneurship	61-63
<b>23. PERSEVERANCE...</b> the mainstay in growing social entrepreneurship	64-66
<b>24. GRATITUDE...</b> the purpose in growing social entrepreneurship	67-69



## Preface

Values like humility are universal. In Srimad Bhagavad Gita, they are referred to in many places as the qualities of a bhakta (devotee of God), Daivi Sampath (divine wealth), etc. They are even hailed as the means to Self knowledge, which is the goal of life. Continuous reflection on the application of these values in the contexts of day to day life and introspection will lead to their assimilation, when they become a part of oneself. To live deliberately with a commitment to a value is essential for completing the process of assimilation. It requires a firm resolve not to get compromised at any cost. Itihasas and Puranas present us with the ideals of Sri Rama and Sri Harischandra, who inspire us for all times in this pursuit.

The idea of writing a series of articles took shape after a workshop by Dr. Kalpana and Dr. Sampath to the budding social entrepreneurs of CSIM, Bangalore. Realizing the need for them to effectively imbibe these values, both in the personal and organizational levels, Dr. Kalpana committed to write the series of 25 inspiring articles. The book is titled "Keys to Social Entrepreneurship – A journey deep within".

Dr. Sampath is well known for his deep and profound insights about values, their link with the purpose of life, their place in developing evolutionary leadership on personal and organizational levels. He has a



very fine and effective art of communication, employing the methodology of stories from the accumulated wisdom of the ages and suggesting thought-provoking questions at the end of each article. The couple are indeed guiding a meditation on a theme in every article, they get the participants to understand it with great clarity and lead them to introspection and Self enquiry. Their message is targeted at the youth who are in need of proper direction. This timeless message on values has a special relevance to the social entrepreneurs who are the agents of change. They have to be themselves the change which they want to bring about in others. This book will be a very valuable guide to all. Towards the end, Dr. Kalpana and Dr. Sampath have also referred to “sthita prajna” of Srimad Bhagavad Gita, one who is established in the constant awareness of the Self. It is the fulfilment of the purpose of human life.

May Sadguru bless the couple in their spiritual sadhana of inspiring individuals and organizations through their unique method of teaching of values and call for introspection and Self enquiry.

Swami Nityananda Giri  
Sri.Gnanananda Niketan, Tamil Nadu  
Sri.Gnanananda Thapovanam  
Thapovanam Post, PIN 605756.  
Villipuram R.P.District, Tamil Nadu  
Tel 04153-224938, Mob: +919486874722



## Acknowledgements

The idea of sharing notes on what goes into being a social entrepreneur in the form of a series of articles was a fall out of one of the Saturday sessions by Dr. Sampath for the CISM students in Bangalore. After the session, as we (Sampath and me) sat over a cup of coffee with Latha, Aruna and Uncle Sarangapani, reminiscing our journey as a couple and the deep passion for values binding us and enabling us to understand ourselves better, when they suggested why not we document some of our thoughts as a periodical in the ‘Conversations’ newsletter. I readily accepted the responsibility and since then it has been a very interesting 25 months journey, replete with reflections and insights.

Many a time a connected or unconnected life event in the past 20 years as social entrepreneurs has triggered the reflection using a parable or topic. Sometimes it has been discussions with colleagues or a difficulty shared by a client or collaborator that became the seed for a thought. I started reflecting on these significant happenings along with the transformative tool created by Sampath, called ‘*Discovery*’ *A tool that can make you look deep within*. Discovery uses a hundred illuminating stories on multiple values and facilitates reflections at three essential levels: explicit, experiential and introspective, enabling one to draw learning and insights from life events. In Sampath’s words ‘Life is a school from which one never graduates...’ This journey of reflecting through each of these parables on life events culminated into each of the articles of ‘**Growing-** reflections on deep change’ and eventually this humble compilation in your hands...

Of course, this humble attempt has been shared and encouraged by many special people, who have helped my conviction become a reality...





Anuradha, fondly known to all as Pinky and a dear friend and colleague shared my passion by editing these notes that we prepared every month. Marie Banu from CISM, Chennai was always prompt to ensure this went into print every month.

When we had almost walked 22 months, the idea sprung to put all these together in the form of a compilation. Sampath, my soulmate and conscious keeper, with his true giving nature, encouraged me to go ahead and publish it. Pavan, my son, in his usual intuitive way gave the title for the book. Purvaa, my daughter, was always there to shower her love and trust on me and my abilities which has made me believe in myself more. I cannot thank all of you enough.

The two great souls I revere and respect, Uncle Sarangapani and Aruna, if not for connecting me to CISM this would not have seen print today.

Padma Vibhushan Shri M. N. Venkatachalaiah, former Chief Justice of India for readily accepting to write a foreword for this book. Swami Nityananda Giri in his preface, has truly spelt out the essence of the thoughts. Thank you all for blessing and encouraging this effort so magnanimously.

Remya and Murali for the vibrant cover design and Sudha for her patience to layout the book and coordinate the printing. Thank you Maya, my friend for spending the time reading this and sharing your feedback.

I also need to thank all people who have been a part of my life journey and experiences. Placing this under the Lotus feet of my Goddess Mariamman, my Guru Mahavatar Babaji and my Parents Late Shri Natarajan and Smt. Saroja.

Humbly yours,



(Sampath)



## Foreword

I am happy to be invited to contribute a Foreword to this collection of deeply moving essays on meaning of life and the purpose of social living. Only those who have an impersonal love for mankind and have experienced the liberating influence of serving others can write about the deep philosophy of these essays. 'Keys to Social Entrepreneurship' is a precious contribution.

Today the homo-economicus has created a mess for himself and for the world around him. The knowledge is made servient to economic forces. Whatever is dominated by economics will ultimately subject itself to the domination of political forces. Charm and beauty of life and the lessons that a journey through the wilderness of life can provide have no place in the ruthless world of competitive race for purely economic pursuits.

Social entrepreneurship is simply the process of spiritual growth which is possible only through sharing the tears and fears of others. All material gains are ephemeral and are mere way-side stops in the exciting journey of discovery of the spiritual and non physical dimensions of the human personality.

I came across in the internet the following account of the history of social entrepreneurship which, by their reference to the life and work







of some noble souls, emphasize the essential philosophy of social entrepreneurship, the essence of which is that by serving others you ennoble and emancipate yourself:

‘It is the giver that is blessed.’

*“Although the terms are relatively new, social entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurship can be found throughout history. A list of few historically note worthy people whose work exemplifies classic “social entrepreneurship” might include Florence Nightingale (founder of the first nursing school and developer of modern nursing practices), Robert Owen (Founder of the Cooperative Movement) and Vinoba Bhave (Founder of India’s Land Gift Movement). During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries some of the most successful social entrepreneurs successfully straddled the civic, Governmental, and business worlds – promoting ideas that were taken up by mainstream public services in welfare, schools, and health care”.*

Dr. Kalpana Sampath has done us all a great service by this Collection of noble sentiments to which life itself owes its savor. Dr. Kalpana and Dr. Sampath are, indeed, spiritually evolved philosophers. These 'keys' hold a mirror to our own souls which reflects what we really are.

M.N.Venkatachaliah

(Former Chief Justice of India &  
Former Chairman, National Human Rights Commission)

February 6th, 2012

Bangalore



**"There are two ways of spreading light:  
to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it"**

Edith Wharton





## ASPIRATION...

the springboard for action

A few years back in one of our workshops, during a discussion on personal vision and aspirations in life, one of the participants said she has had an aspiration in life for the past twenty years; to start a school of her own for the under privileged. This is something that she had formulated when she was twenty years old and for the past twenty years several things have happened in her life...but she is still living with that aspiration in her mind... she insisted that she is on the path of her vision!! This is a very interesting space in life. We get caught with a nice thought or an idea and continue to hold on to that idea all through life but there is no action with regard to making it a reality.

There are several ideas that many people hold for life in their minds but life continues in a separate track by itself. Some of us also join social entrepreneurship forums and courses but do not take much action with regard to converting the idea into a reality. Society needs social entrepreneurs who will act and pursue their dream as though it is their very life. If it remains in the mind, it is like the person in this story –

*One day a disciple came to sage Ramakrishna and said, "O sage! I hear you say that depth of aspiration is the springboard to the discovery of truth. I don't understand what you mean."*

*Ramakrishna asked the disciple to come with him to the river and take a dip in the water with him. The disciple thought that the master was going to give him a special One day a disciple came to sage Ramakrishna and said, "O sage! I hear you say that depth of aspiration is the springboard to the discovery of truth. I don't understand what you mean."*

*Ramakrishna asked the disciple to come with him to the river and take a dip in the water with him. The disciple thought that the master was going to give him a special initiation. He readily went along and as the master had requested, put his head under water.*

*Ramakrishna just held the disciple's head under water and would not release his hold until the man almost drowned and his struggle became a frenzy. As he rose up, the sage remarked, "When you aspire for truth the way you did for a breath of air, you'll not rest until you've discovered it."*

(Sampath.J.M., Story 68, Discovery )

Until an idea is not something that is as close as the next breath of air for a person, the passion does not get ignited. Every successful social entrepreneur displays a passion that arises out of the aspiration and vision that is embedded deep within. This passion when kindled gives the enormous amount of energy that is required to rise against the tides, tread the un-trodden path and emerge with the power to make a difference to oneself and society. Being interested in society and its development is not a fashion to be followed. It calls for efforts, dedication, sacrifices, and actions, leaving no stone unturned with sometimes zero expectation of the rewards and returns. Sometimes it is a set of pure actions because one feels that it is what will make a difference. The belief is strongly embedded in the person and the power of that belief converts the thought or the idea into reality. People with high aspirations do not seek reward or praise for the work that they do since they are internally anchored and their motivation comes from within.

In order not to admit that it is one's passion that is lacking, people find enough reasons and excuses to justify why they cannot pursue their idea rather than finding one good way to act on their idea and convert it

into reality.

"All the beautiful sentiments weigh less than a single lonely action"

(Rousseau and the Sentimentalists, quoted in John Bartlett, Familiar Quotations, 14th ed.1968, p. 695.)

#### Reflections ...

- 💡 The idea of making a difference to me and society is in my mind or in action?
- 💡 What are my expectations from the society and others in return for the efforts that I take?
- 💡 What prevents me from putting all my efforts to achieve what I aspire for?
- 💡 What are the things I am willing to stake for converting my dreams into reality?
- 💡 Are the ideas that you nurture in mind merely ideas for a long time or have you taken concrete actions to realize the same in reality?

...

## LEARNING...

as an integral process to 'Growing'

'Growing' is a continuous process...something we are all so used to that we take it for granted. Learning is an integral part of growing. Having been through a situation or having read through a passage learning as an automatic outcome is assumed. But how many realizations do these situations leave behind? Is life only so many years of existence or every year a significant period of 'growth'?

*Some disciples once complained to their Guru, "You tell us stories but you never reveal their meaning to us". The Guru replied, "How would you like it if someone offered you a fruit and chewed before giving it to you".*

(Sampath J.M., Story 1, Discovery)

Learning requires effort and it is a very personal journey. But many of us feel we have 'learnt' something when we have actually only stored information about it. But isn't it true we need to see the world from our own point of view and we cannot see it through other's eyes? Why do we want someone to think for us? Don't we all like to enjoy eating the fruit ourselves?

This journey of growing into a social entrepreneur is a very interesting one. This calls for many explorations that each one of us has to do internally as well as with the society at large. This learning can happen only when we 'understand' what we learn.

*Nasruddin used to visit a saint everyday to seek knowledge, though the saint was silent and did not speak anything. One day Nasruddin asked him, "I have been coming to you again and again, expecting that you will say something but you have said nothing. And unless you do, I cannot understand. So just give me a message for my life, a direction along which I can move." So the saint said "Neki kar, kuyen mein daal: do good and throw it in the well". An old sufi saying meaning 'Do good and forget it. Don't expect anything in return for the good you have done'. The next day, Nasruddin helped an old woman cross the road, and then pushed her into a well "Neki kar kuyen mein daal".*

(Sampath.J.M., Story 3. Discovery)

Every experience shared by someone is only knowledge if we don't put in the efforts to understand the same. Every person aspiring to be a social entrepreneur wants to 'help'. But how much does one understand what 'help' is? Understanding happens when we follow an enquiry process – The 5W 1H.

- What does help mean? – an answer to this will give the meaning of help, and what kind of help has to be given.
- Where should I help? - will give the exact location where help should be given.
- When should the help be provided? – will give the timing when help has to be given.
- Why should the help be provided? – will give clarity on the cause that propels the need to help.
- Who should provide help? – will give clear accountability as well as define the target group.
- How should help be provided? – will map the process steps of providing 'help'.

Answers to these questions will provide clarity and if we are willing to stay with this, it will lead to emergence of certain 'Insights' within us. These insights come when we ponder upon the answers that we find, formulate and understand. These 'insights' are closer to consciousness

since they emerge from a deeper level of understanding the context as

#### Reflections ...

- ☪ What is the basis of my learning? What I hear or what I understand?
- ☪ What motivates me to learn to be a social entrepreneur?
- ☪ How much do I enquire into all that I learn?
- ☪ How aware am I to collect the 'Insights' that emerge with me?

...

## LIMITATION...

inner block for growing

*"Me! A Social entrepreneur? Are you crazy? I am not born that way you know. Only some are meant for it. I wish my parents would understand this is what I want to do? Others feel I am just pigheaded and not listening to them. Do you know my background? Do you think I can ever succeed in being a social entrepreneur? Oh, great people were pure lucky, I am not...I have a family and I am responsible for them..."*

These are some of the dialogues we often hear when someone wants to actually chase a dream and lead a life of an social entrepreneur. So, are social entrepreneurs born? Or are they nurtured? Do they have some competencies that others don't? What role does the environment play in their life?

We are not solitary reapers but live with people around. There is always a condition that surrounds us with people and issues, termed as context. The family, society, finances, infrastructure and so on pose a whole lot of limitations to the self in the journey towards achieving the dream. These are limitations which we face day in and day out. In order to make a living and be in the comfort zone, we begin to accept the limitations as ours and go about life just dreaming with a whole lot of 'ifs' and 'buts' ... interestingly there is another context that is within each of us which is equally if not more important. That is our beliefs about the self image that we hold within ourselves that govern each of our behavior and decisions. Each of us is a product of who we think we are.

*A man found an eagle's egg and placed it under a brooding hen. The eagle hatched with the chickens and grew to be like them. He clucked and cackled; scratched the earth for worms; flapped his wings and managed to fly a few feet in the air. Years passed. One day, the eagle,*

*now grown old, saw a magnificent bird above him in the sky. It glided in graceful majesty against the powerful wind, with scarcely a movement of its golden wings.*

*Spellbound, the eagle asked, "Who is that?"*

*"That's the king of the birds, the Eagle", said his neighbor.*

*"He belongs to the sky. We belong to earth we're chickens."*

*So the eagle lived and died a chicken, for that's what he thought he was.*

(Sampath J.M., Story 77, Discovery)

Every experience in life leaves behind an impression within us which becomes an opinion. When opinions get crystallized they become our conclusions. Conclusions when lived become beliefs and these beliefs over a period of time, embedded in our culture, become convictions. Between the movement from living for oneself to living for the larger world and believing in the difference one can make to this world, a number of beliefs stand as hurdles. A social entrepreneur is born and nurtured within first, before she is seen by the world outside. The hurdles within have to be passed to empower oneself to pass the hurdles outside.

*The toughest battles are the ones that are fought within. The one who wins the battle within will hardly lose the battle outside.*

(Sampath.J.M., Inner realities, 2003)

Most of us have our own assumptions about the context that we are in and hundreds of doubts on the self to be able to work with these assumptions. The mind like a pendulum goes back and forth between the beliefs from past experiences and the assumptions of the future demands. Life is lived more within the mind than in reality. Whatever the contextual conditions may be, the life within looms large with hurdles in front making even the smallest movement tough.

I need to first ask myself what my vision is, that is, a purpose for my existence. How much do I allow myself to influence myself? What are the dialogues that go on within my mind that do not allow me to move

towards that vision? How many of them are assumptions within me and how many are the reality of the context?

Social entrepreneurship calls for moving away from several comfort zones and known spheres with an unrelenting focused attention towards the dream or vision that one is pursuing. To gather enough power within to move, I need to identify the beliefs that are holding me as a result of my learning from upbringing, indoctrination, socialization right from childhood and modify my beliefs to enable me to move on the path of my vision. Unless my beliefs within are not worked with, the

#### Reflections ...

not fructify.

- 🕯 What are my true limitations to chase my vision? Are they within? Or they outside?
- 🕯 What are my beliefs that enable me to progress towards my vision?
- 🕯 What are my beliefs that stop me from progressing towards my vision?
- 🕯 How many times am I willing to drop the assumptions that I hold within and go out to truly explore the context?
- 🕯 How many times in a day do I influence myself? Or allow myself to be influenced by others?

...

## INTROSPECTION...

first step towards 'Growing'

Where and when does this 'Growing' happen? Many a time we are all focused so much outside that the inside goes to sleep being dormant. What is obvious is never considered important. Growing does not begin to happen until there is a foundational shift from 'outside in' to 'inside out'. What does 'Inside out' mean? For everything that is happening to self many a time we search outside and therefore the real growing does not happen. The results too become difficult to perceive, making one feel a lot has to be done to 'Grow'.

*Nasruddin, carrying his lamb on his shoulders, was going around asking people if they had seen his lamb anywhere. A friend told him that he had seen it in the well at the northern corner of the village. Nasruddin rushed and peered into the well, and saw in the reflection that his lamb was on his shoulders.*

(Sampath J.M., Story 7, Discovery)

Many a time, we are lost in searching for what is very much within us. 'Inside out' means the ability to be self focused to understand the outside world and its happenings. It is an ability to be self aware. Especially in the transition of becoming a social entrepreneur there are many a time pain, anguish, helplessness, anger felt against and a lot of courage is required to step up to ask the questions 'what can I do about this?' 'Why do I feel the way I feel'? Instead of asking 'what others are doing or not doing, what in me can help me make a difference to the situation?

To respond to these questions, requires a serious deep introspection. We cannot wait for others to continuously point out what is there

obviously within us. Even if we have the good fortune of finding such people the strength does not last. It will exist until they are present and when they move in life our trust in self moves away too. But if a continuous search into self is set, irrespective of the others, the trigger would continue to be from within.

- It enables a person to be inward focused and draw out newer understanding of self.
- It builds in an inner mechanism to self correct oneself and that gives a direction to life.
- It makes one non judgmental with an ability to accept multiple perspectives.
- It enhances intuitiveness and makes us reflective.
- It enhances the ability to see and connect thereby recognizing patterns in life and its implications.
- It brings a sense of accountability to one's life and enhances action orientation.
- It does not allow self to become a victim of circumstances and gives the courage to self to work on overcoming the blocks.

Introspection enables growth and evolution. Every person in life requires a space to dialogue with self. As a social entrepreneur who intends to make a difference to others one has to begin from making a difference to self.

When it comes to making a difference, one of my most significant learning is that each of us are actually afraid to be more than who we think we are. We feel deep inside that making a difference is a huge task and we are not so big to do that. If some of us have the courage to think of making a difference, we are afraid to make the commitment that it

demands. What we experience in the world outside is actually a reflection of the world within. An honest introspection will reveal many spaces where there are possibilities to change.

*"Be the change you want to see in the world"*

#### Reflections ...

- 🕯 What holds me from looking within?
- 🕯 Why do I fail to be inwardly focused?
- 🕯 How do I start focusing inward and look within?
- 🕯 How much time do I give myself in a day to GROW?

...

## FEAR...

a roadblock to 'Growing'

We have explored 'learning' and 'introspection' in the last two 'Growing' series. For growing, one of the key restrictive values is 'Fear'. There is not a single one of us who has not experienced fear. Each one of us think we know fear but actually what we know is very little of what is hidden. After a lot of explorations to understand fear we found one of the simple, yet profound meanings was that given by The Mother - 'Fear attracts what you fear for'. This says it all. Each of our behavior is governed by the beliefs that we hold within us. Therefore, the fear within us governs our behavior that furthers our fear rather than allows us to get out of it. For example, If we are afraid of making a mistake while addressing an audience, that fear itself will grip us, and make us dysfunctional allowing further mistakes to happen.

Fear takes its own toll on any initiative which is different from the routine. Becoming a social entrepreneur is not an easy task. It is even more difficult when one wants to move away from the known to the unknown. As a social entrepreneur one could be confronted with a host of issues and the tendency of the mind is to run away. If one's ability to deal with fear is limited then they easily succumb and give in. At such times it is important to work with one's self and build the capacity to deal with the fear within.

While it is easy to understand 'Fear', the tough part is to identify 'Fear'. Fear caused by external stimulus is easy. But Fear caused by the unknown emerging from the inner resistance to change from the routine is very difficult to identify and deal with. It creates a lot of defenses and is projected as constraints and roadblocks onto the outside world and does not allow action. The defenses make exploration even more tedious. That exploration requires at the



minimum, a deep sense of accountability and acceptance of self. To work with fear, we have to understand the nature of fear. Fear holds us from taking decisions; it limits our ability to think and at times paralyses the mind; it prevents us from exploring alternatives; Fear further limits the capacity of an individual's potential; it keeps us thinking about past experiences and future implications and not allowing us to be in the present and deal with it. Unless we are willing to work with 'self', Fear cannot be removed.

*"According to an ancient Indian fable a mouse was in constant distress because of its fear of the cat. A magician took pity on it and turned it into a cat. But then it was scared of the dog. So the magician turned it into a panther whereupon it was full of fear of the hunter. At this point the magician gave up. He turned it into a mouse again saying, "Nothing I do for you is going to be of any help because you have the heart of a mouse"*

(Sampath J.M., Story 67, Discovery)

In life, stepping out for the first time from the cocooned security of our jobs to become a social entrepreneur we are likely to experience fear. While meeting and interacting with several other social entrepreneurs, each of their struggles and past experiences can instill several doubts about the path that we choose to embark. This fear stems out of several uncertainties that we would encounter and are likely to encounter in this journey. At that time we will have to first learn to deal with our fear. Identify the fear within us and accept it to be able to work with it. It is important to ask what are my beliefs about life, security, self worth and

#### Reflections ...

- ☯ What are my fears that prevent me to take up several new initiatives?
- ☯ What is the basis of my fear? My experiences or hearsay?
- ☯ How and when does my fear surface and what does it do to me?
- ☯ What causes fear in me?
- ☯ How do I deal with my Fear?

...

## EGO...

a deterrent to 'Growing'

Most of us who get into social entrepreneurship, nurture a feeling that we are the saviors of the world and we are better than the average person. This feeling and attitude starts pumping one's ego. Over a period of time the person starts becoming more powerful than the idea he/she is serving. There starts the point of decline of furthering the idea the social entrepreneur is working on. While efforts and hard-work takes you high, EGO pulls you down.

The biggest question a social entrepreneur needs to ask is 'Am I serving the Idea? Or is the Idea giving me the opportunity to serve?' While the relationship between the server and the served starts at one point, over a period of time it changes. Initially, the one who wants to serve feels good about the possibility of serving. As the idea grows and becomes large and the reach increases, the environment begins to project the server as the important person, the relationship begins to change. To work on a social idea and further the same is a great opportunity one has got; the humility with which one serves the idea actually furthers the growth of the idea and influences the larger system.

*There was once a scientist who discovered the art of reproducing himself so perfectly that it was impossible to tell the reproduction from the original. One day he learnt that the Angel of Death was searching for him. So he reproduced a dozen copies of himself. The angel was at a loss to know which of the thirteen specimens before him was the original scientist, so he left them all alone and returned to heaven.*

*But not for long, for being an expert in human nature, the angel came up with a clever plan. He came back and said, "Sir, you must be a genius to have succeeded in making such perfect reproductions of yourself. However, I have discovered a flaw in your work, just one*

*tiny little flaw."*

*The scientist immediately jumped out and shouted, "Impossible! Where is the flaw?" "Right here" said the angel, as he picked up the scientist from among the reproductions and carried him off.*

(Sampath J.M., Story 41, Discovery)

There are certain symptoms that can indicate that Ego is taking over. They are developing a feeling and demonstrating that you know everything.

- Believing that you have a solution for everything.
- Resisting ideas from other sources.
- Unwilling to learn and easily entering into arguments than explorations.
- Attending too many functions that glorifies one's achievements.
- Canvassing for winning awards and lobbying to be seen as someone doing a lot.
- Building a larger than self image.
- Unwilling to collaborate for larger good.
- Subordinating the idea to one self than subordinating the self to idea.
- Engaging in more than required PR.
- Getting to be more directive than collaborative in team work.

The danger that many social entrepreneurs experience is that they are not aware of the cycle that they have got themselves into. Their ego doesn't allow them to see the problems created by their ego. By the time the awareness dawns the damage is done and one has reached a point of no return.

The rising Ego can be recognized through Self-awareness. While there could be several indications from the environment, Ego sometimes forms a strong cloud which can mask the awareness. Many times, Ego is confused with rise in self confidence and self esteem and therefore goes untapped. At that time, mechanisms to keep one aware enables you to

#### Reflections ...

- 🕯 What is the nature of 'Ego'?
- 🕯 Where does my Ego come from?
- 🕯 What are the events that trigger my Ego?
- 🕯 When my Ego is questioned how do I react?
- 🕯 How do I deal with my Ego?
- 🕯 What ways can I adopt to ensure that my Ego is at the effective zone of self esteem?

...

## GIVING...

as a receiving process of 'Growing'

In the last 'Growing' series we explored the power of Ego. This time, we are going to explore one of the important dimensions that trigger this Ego. That is 'Giving'.

Social entrepreneurship has most of the times been correlated at the essence level with a sense of 'Giving'. This ability to give and the need to give pushes people out of the box and makes them move in order to reach out to the larger world. But, 'Giving' with ego develops a dangerous feeling of superiority. It slowly makes an inroad into a person's psyche that fosters a belief that the "Giver is superior to the receiver". This leaves behind an expectation that the receiver should acknowledge this unsaid positional hierarchy.

*What is 'Giving' in reality?*

*When a sanyasi reached the outskirts of a village and settled under a tree for the night, a villager came running up to him and said, "The stone! The stone! Give me the precious stone!"*

*"What stone?" asked the sanyasi.*

*"Last night Lord Shiva told me in a dream that if I went to the outskirts of the village at dusk a sanyasi would give me a stone that would make me rich forever."*

*The sanyasi searched his sack, and pulling out a stone, said, "He probably meant this one, I found it in the forest yesterday. Here, it's yours if you want it." The man gazed at the stone in wonder. It was the largest diamond in the world. All night he tossed about in bed. At daybreak he woke the sanyasi and said, "Give me the heart that makes it possible for you to give this stone away."*

(Sampath J.M., Story 31, Discovery)

When ego is handled, Giving is a state of being which comes naturally without any expectations attached to it. The characteristics of 'Giving'

- A deep sense of humility within.
- Thankfulness or gratitude for the people who create an opportunity to give.
- It is nothing more than sharing and this has an orientation to bring balance in the eco system.
- It is a complementary process of reaching out with what one has to another who requires it.
- Unconditional' or 'No expectations' would be easy to use words; but very difficult to 'live'. Because, when there is an 'expectation' for 'unconditionality', it robs the essence of unconditionality itself.

Therefore, a relationship of "giving-receiving" between the social entrepreneur and the community is a mutual process. Only if community exists, there is opportunity to reach out and unless they allow and value the 'reaching out' one cannot experience the 'value of contribution'.

Many a time a giver also gets into the obsession of reaching, failing to understanding the context and what is required to be given.

*Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day.*

*Teach him how to fish, and you feed him for a life time.....*

(An Ancient Chinese Proverb)

In giving can there be empowerment? This is critical in developing the community. If giving makes the person dependent on the giver, it ceases to be a value adding process. When Giving is approached in the above described ways, there is a higher possibility for growth and evolution for the individuals and society at large.

### Reflections ...

- 🕯 What in me makes me want to 'give'?
- 🕯 How much do I care to understand others before deciding to 'give'?
- 🕯 What is the nature of 'Unconditional Giving'?
- 🕯 How do I distinguish what they want vs. what I think they want?
- 🕯 What dimensions of my giving leaves the receiver empowered?
- 🕯 How do I show my gratitude to the receiver for giving me an opportunity to give?

...

### OBSESSION... the bane of passion

Being passionate is one of the essentials not only for every social entrepreneur but every human being. In the previous growing series we had spoken about aspiration and passion as an essential outcome of the depth of aspiration; but there is a danger to passion and that is obsession. When passion blinds the person to the context, that person begins to work towards shaping the context to their requirement, akin to the boy in this story -

*A little boy was heartbroken to find his pet turtle lying on its back, lifeless and still, beside the pond. His father did his best to console him: "Don't cry, son. We'll arrange a lovely funeral for Mr. Turtle. We'll make him a little coffin all lined in silk and get the undertaker to make a headstone for his grave, with Mr. Turtle's name carved on it. Then we'll have fresh flowers placed on the grave each day and make a little picket fence to go all around it."*

*The little boy dried his eyes and became enthusiastic about the project. When all was ready, a cortege was formed father, mother, maid and child as chief mourner and began to move solemnly towards the pond to bring in the body. But the body had vanished! Suddenly they spied Mr. Turtle emerging from the depths of the pond merrily. The little boy stared at his friend in bitter disappointment and cried out "Let's kill him!"*

(Sampath J.M., Story 25, Discovery)

Initially the turtle was a loving pet. But the minute the excitement of the funeral function occupied the boy's mind, the love for the pet was forgotten. Many a time when the social entrepreneur begins, there is a real need to reach out to the identified group. In the initial days the person begins by responding to the context and formulating ways to reach the needy. Over a period of time, to find the viability and

sustainability of the idea, it is encased into an organizational set up. But as the organizational issues grow and popularity begins to emerge, instead of sustaining the original intention of the idea, the person becomes larger than the purpose. Then the person instead of responding to the context begins to work towards taking from the context. At this point of time, the obsession takes over, sadly, many a time killing the very purpose of the original idea.

How do we identify if obsession is taking over? The nature of obsession is to blind the person to understand the context. The person

begins to interpret the context in relation to his/her ideas.

- Obsession makes the person feel insecure. This insecurity limits the person in resource utilization.
- Obsession makes the person risk averse. There begins a trend to repeat the success stories.
- The need to maintain the image of self and organization overtakes the need to reach out to the needy.
- Only those serving the obsession are allowed to become part of the group and feedback is not welcome.
- Obsession itself becomes the stimulant of the downfall of self and organization thereby killing the purpose and intention in due course.

As much as passion is an integral part of Social entrepreneurship, let go

#### Reflections ...

- 🕯 How do I constantly become aware when my passion starts becoming an obsession?
- 🕯 Why do I get obsessed?
- 🕯 How do I deal with my obsession?
- 🕯 What are the actions I can take on a regular basis to ensure I serve the purpose and not the purpose serving me?

...

## CONDITIONING...

stuck to comfort

What is that one thing that makes every 'let go' a difficult process after a period of time? Whether it is the boon or bane of human behavior, a process of deep engagement makes people form patterns so easily that it makes doing a few things easy on one hand, but makes 'letting go' difficult on the other hand. That process is, the process of 'conditioning'. Here is how one can best describe the process of conditioning-

*A man once read in an ancient book about a black stone on the shores of the Black Sea, which could on contact, turn any metal into gold. The stone would be warm to the touch. So he went to the Black Sea, and found there a heap of black stones. He was convinced one of these would be the miracle stone.*

*He picked up a stone, felt it on his cheek, found it cold, and flung it into the sea. The second stone too was cold and followed the first one into the sea. He did this from morning to evening, every day for weeks, months and then years. Three years passed. One day he put a stone to his cheek, threw it into the sea and then realized that it was the very stone he was looking for!*

(Sampath J.M., Story 61, Discovery)

In those three years, the man had got conditioned to the process of searching for the stone. Being aware of conditioning makes growing an effortless process. For a social entrepreneur, moving away from the known to the unknown, there would be several uncertainties which life will present. The conditioning to the known world does not allow the person to easily move and evolve in the unknown. While the conditioning process takes time and effort, moving away from the conditioned space also involves time and effort.

From our childhood, there are several conditioning processes that become a part of us, that many times make living in any other way seem

almost next to impossible. The conditioning does not allow us to see the realities in front of us. It makes us formulate truths that are convenient to us, rather than those that question and reflect our shortcomings to us. The conditioning process also makes us justify and find ways of being in the same space. Conditioning creates a pattern and that pattern becomes our identity. The more one tries to break the identity, more the effort it takes. When it becomes threatening to the identity itself, we tend to mask the realities, creating stress and anxiety within.

It is also a peculiarity of human beings that they can consume anything that the world offers. This has been seen from the urbanization process in the last century. This makes the step towards social entrepreneurship even more difficult. There is an unsaid conclusion in many minds that if they can reach out to others in the society without having to change or give up anything that they already have, they will be willing to step into social entrepreneurship. This is not just limited to materialistic possessions but even to the concepts, perspectives, thoughts, experiences and philosophy of life. Unless one is willing to shed all that one knows and moves into the space of the unknown, a real social entrepreneur cannot be born. Growing happens when the society and its existence presents itself within and not outside. This growing cannot happen unless one is willing to get out of all the conditioning one has got into. Growing entails the person to see Social entrepreneurship as a process, to deal with all that is presented within the self and not just with the society. Then, there is an evolution that one goes through, in this process of living, being aware of the self and also of the society

#### Reflections ...

- ☯ What are the comfort zone indicators that I am caught with in life?
- ☯ What are the conditioning processes that I can identify within me that stop me from moving away from the comfort zone?
- ☯ What defines me – my possessions or my behavior?
- ☯ What prevents me from seeing each experience in life as an independent one?
- ☯ How do I break the patterns I have got into?

• • •

## TIME...

the elusive but decisive factor

One of the biggest facilitative as well as restrictive factors for 'growing' is TIME. When used effectively it becomes very facilitative. But when wasted it becomes a very costly commodity. This is because of its non-retrievable nature. Especially in the case of a person exploring to be a social entrepreneur and who is thinking when to begin his life in reaching out to others, TIME assumes an important space. Many times when in doubt we begin to postpone our decisions. The thought of change exists at the back of the mind but it never translates into action. It continues to exist in thought only. Time never waits and so it continues to move too. How many times do we realize that every passing day is a day less to do what we intend to do in life?

*The doctor's waiting room was crowded. An elderly gentleman who had been waiting for almost an hour, said to the receptionist, "I cannot wait any longer, would you kindly give me an appointment for another day?"*

*One woman in the crowd whispered to the other, "He must be at least eighty years old. What sort of urgent business can he have that he cannot afford to wait?" The man who overheard the remark, said, "I am eighty seven years old, lady, which is precisely why I cannot afford to waste a single minute of the precious time I am left with."*

(Sampath. J.M. story 94 Discovery)

For most of us moving away from deadline driven corporate jobs into becoming self driven social entrepreneurs, one of the most challenging issues is how to sustain motivation, discipline, zeal, giving.... sustain Growing? A sense of time is very critical. None other than self can bring in the sense of urgency in life.



When the intention and methodology is right but timing is inappropriate the entire opportunity is lost. The appropriateness of the timing is lost when we evaluate the present moment with the eyes of the past experiences or with future anxieties. We are then not able to focus fully to understand the context as well as respond to them. The learning from the past can enable us to know the implications of varied responses; but it need not be the base on which the current response is developed. The anxiety about the future can help create the readiness within to face several situations but it does not have to limit the response to the present situation. The response to the current situation needs to emerge from an objective space, taking into account the maximum number of contextual elements in the present. While the past gives the preparedness, the future gives the possible direction to the journey. Every current situation also has an immediate past and immediate future...

*Once the clock master, while fixing a clock heard the pendulum plead, "Please sir leave me alone. Think of the number of times I will have to tick day and night, 60 times each minute, 60 minutes an hour, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, for year upon year.. I could never do it."*

*But the master replied wisely, "Don't think of the future. Just do one tick at a time and you will enjoy every tick for the rest of your life." And the pendulum decided to follow the master's words and is still ticking merrily away.*

(Sampath J.M., Story 83, Discovery)

In today's world context, what matters is the speed of response and that cannot be achieved without being in the present moment. Learning to be in the present moment requires a disciplined life of reflection, meditation, openness to life, awareness to prejudices and bias and a willingness to flow while having clarity on the inner structure based on

principles. While moving into being a social entrepreneur may seem a huge decision, when we spend time in the present giving the best that we can give, the journey becomes a satisfying one. Responding at the

#### Reflections ...

- 🕯 How much am I aware where I spend my Time in 24 hours of a day?
- 🕯 How much do I value my Time?
- 🕯 What are my priorities in life and how often am I aware of them?
- 🕯 What are my past fears and future anxieties that are not allowing me to take steps faster in life?
- 🕯 What practices do I follow that can help me respond to context by being in the present?

...



## CONTENTMENT...

inner stability for growth

While exploring the process of growing there are some typical questions that come to mind – does need to grow leave behind a constantly unsatisfied mind? Where does contentment feature in this? What is the dividing line between contentment and complacency?

*The Lord chided one of his devotees: "I am weary of your never ending petitions. So I shall grant you three wishes and no more." Immediately the devotee made his first wish, "I want my wife to die so that I can marry a better woman." It was granted. But at the funeral his friends and relatives gathered and recalled the virtues of his wife. The devotee realized his mistake, and his second wish was spent in getting her back to life. Not wanting to waste away his final boon, he consulted others. People advised him variously to ask for immortality, health, wealth and friends.*

*Years passed and he was still undecided. Finally he asked the Lord himself for advice. The Lord understood the man's predicament and laughed. He said, "Ask to be content, no matter what you get."*

(Sampath J.M., Story 22, Discovery)

Contentment is considered a virtue. It is many times also thought to be the foundation for peace. The person who is content with what he has, is said to have everything in life. But the issue with growing is that there has to be a space that we identify where we need to grow. How do I identify that kind of space if I am content with myself? How does the action of relentless pursuit happen?

The word contentment has been used in varied dimensions to suit different people. It is sometimes used to cover up the complacency and

laziness within. It is also used as an opposite for avariciousness. Somehow contentment has been strongly associated with materialism and there it has stood for years. So people in pursuit of materialism have been seen as lacking in contentment. Whenever growth has been perceived as material growth alone, the need to be content has been emphasized.

But the nature of contentment is of high action-orientation with deeper level acceptance of all results that comes with it; the ability to perceive and foresee the implications of our behavior; and the equanimity of mind to accept the changes in life.

Contentment from deep within allows us to flow with life, therefore bringing in opportunities of what we need rather than what we want. We may want several things in life at a point of time but consciousness is aware of what we actually need. Contentment is in accepting what comes and acting upon it. This leads to a higher level of emotional consciousness thereby giving space for speed in action. Contentment in several ways is the ability to balance and flow. When there is flow in life the expectations and attachment to results is reduced and the focus on efforts is increased. The actions are not directed towards what we will get at the end of it but they are directed towards what needs to be done to get the best that needs to be got. Though this can be spelt in words easily, it is the most challenging part of growth. It changes the paradigm from which a person is able to respond to life.

Why contentment becomes challenging is because our needs continues to increase and add up all the time. When we face obstacles to meet that need, the question is never 'do I really need it'. We tend to dwell over the disappoint that comes along with it. "Why is this happening ONLY to me?" At that time contentment becomes difficult to achieve. Clarity on vision will help us to remain focused. Contentment can be attained only

when the vision becomes larger than self. Then we are lending ourselves to vision rather than living a life full of expectations

A social entrepreneur needs to continuously respond and flow in life if they have to make a difference. If there is no contentment within there is pressure on getting what they want rather than responding to what they get because they require that. This makes it possible to move from focus on self to focus on what others require. Contentment therefore

#### Reflections ...

- 🕯 How aware am I of my expectations in life? Are they what I want or what I require?
- 🕯 How do I respond to what happens to me in life?
- 🕯 What are the issues on which I am discontent and how do I deal with my discontentment?
- 🕯 How aware am I of the high energy my contentment gives me and what do I do to grow this within me?

...

## RIGIDITY...

holding on too long

*When an accident deprived the village headman of the use of his legs, he took to walking on crutches. He gradually developed the ability so well that he could dance and execute pirouettes. He also trained his children in the use of crutches. By the fourth generation, no one in the village could walk without crutches. It had become a way of life. One day a young man demanded to know why everyone had to walk on crutches since God had provided people with legs to walk on. The amused village elders, in order to teach him a lesson, asked him for a demonstration.*

*On a bright Sunday morning, in front of the whole village gathering, the young man stood upright and dropped his crutches, took a bold step forward and fell flat on his face. With that, everyone made fun of him for the attempt he had made and confirmed their belief that it was quite impossible to walk without the help of crutches.*

(Sampath J.M., Story 91, Discovery)

Just like this young man, as a social entrepreneur there are frequent experiences of questioning many fossilized beliefs within the system. This can make people drive into several blank walls and hard rock which are difficult to crack. Actually as much as a change needs to be brought in the system, the entire process of initiating change and instituting change is an internal growing experience for the social entrepreneur who is a change agent. This calls for patience, perseverance, hope, faith and relentless pursuit born out of strong conviction within the change agent.

There is a process through which the beliefs are formed. Every experience that a person goes through leaves behind certain opinions

and conclusions. These conclusions over a period of time become beliefs. And beliefs become operational by governing the behavior of the person. A set of beliefs expressed through certain behaviour formulate the culture of a group or community over a period of time. As time passes these beliefs get fossilized in the form of rituals and practices leaving behind a strong conviction within the individuals belonging to the system.

In the widely read book 'Zen and the Art of Motorcycle maintenance', Robert M Pirsig writes,

*"To tear down a factory or to revolt against a government or to avoid repair of a motor cycle because it is a system, is to attack effects rather than causes; and as long as the attack is up on effects only, no change is possible. The true system, the real system, is our present construction of systematic thought itself, rationality itself, and if a factory is torn down but the rationality, which produces it, is left standing, then that rationality will simply produce another factory. If a revolution destroys a systematic government, but the systematic patterns of thought that produced that Government are left intact, then those patterns will repeat themselves in the succeeding government"* (Pirsig, 1974, p.88)

Without these beliefs being questioned, it is not easy to achieve change. To sustain the change movement we, as change agents need intense clarity on what we believe in and a willingness to change within. To do this, we need support and not mockery from the people we associate with. The target community or group resists change due to the fear of change. The group is also unwilling to put in the efforts to change; because it is easy to follow and live with what is known than move towards the unknown. Rigidity makes a person or group unwilling to listen, explore or experiment with anything different from what they know. It also kills openness and the ego looms large to protect and sustain self. When there is rigidity the defense mechanisms are highest and the anger is directed towards the change agent herself.

The change agent cannot approach the community or group without understanding these realities. Also the change agent cannot approach with a feeling of superiority to change the community. As a social entrepreneur attempting change they will have to approach with utmost respect, humility and willingness to work along with the community to sustain growth.

Being a change agent, it is necessary to recognize the fossilized beliefs within the self too. There may be several beliefs about the community or groups that we are choosing to work with. The beliefs of the change agent himself can become the blocks. Therefore, social entrepreneurship is a two way process. It not only grows the group or the community, it also enables the individual change agent to grow.

#### Reflections ...

- 🕯 Why do I resist change?
- 🕯 What are the changes I have attempted in the last two years and to what extent have I been able to sustain them?
- 🕯 Where are the areas of rigidity that I can recognize in myself? How am I able to deal with them?
- 🕯 What is my own level of patience? What are the processes that I use regularly to enhance my level of patience?

...

## EQUANIMITY...

the inner balance

*The best kind of help to others, whenever possible, is indirect, and consists in such modifications of the conditions of life, of the general level of subsistence, as enables them independently to help themselves."* John Dewey

This philosophy is a social work philosophy – “to help people to help themselves”. When a social entrepreneur enters into the arena of taking responsibility and accountability of things beyond self, there are several challenging contexts that they will have to face. Whenever a change is instituted there are several obstacles that a social entrepreneur encounters. Similarly when certain outcomes are achieved there would be several laurels that the social entrepreneur receives. Each of them could leave the person disappointed, distressed or highly elated and proud. Reacting and getting attached to any of these would be a sure way of getting away from the primary objective. What the social entrepreneur requires is a core of steel, not allowing the inner resolution to be shaken. To be that the social entrepreneur requires developing a state of equanimity.

*Once upon a time there lived a king who was very powerful. His court was always full of wise men from many lands. One day he called the wise men to his court and said, “I wish to test your wisdom. Bring for me, before sunset, a gift that will make me joyous when I am unhappy and sober when I am indulgent.”*

*In the evening he called for the wise men to see what they had brought for him. The wise men paid their respects to the king and placed before him a ring on which was inscribed, “This too shall pass.”*

(Sampath J.M., Story 89, Discovery )

The meaning of 'Equanimity' in the dictionary is 'level headedness'; 'calm'; 'evenness of mind'; 'composure'. It means the ability to be passionately engaged with the process of helping but not getting attached to the outcomes. The antonym of equanimity is agitation, alarm, anxiety, discomposure, excitableness, upset, worry. These are some of the emotions that can cause distractions in the mind of the entrepreneur.

At the deepest level the attachment to the outcomes comes from a belief that there are two groups – the enabler and the enabled; and the enabler is at a higher level than the enabled. When the social entrepreneur begins to think that they make the difference and whatever happens to the project is because of them and their efforts, the outcomes begin to affect the inner resolve. While the one who helps is important; one cannot become a social entrepreneur until the community does not seek and accept help. Both are a part of the larger subsystem and each is helping to fulfill the needs of the other. This is also many times the consciousness way of responding to the larger requirements. When this deeper dimension is understood the social entrepreneur emerges from the space of humility and gratitude. Equanimity and conviction will not thrive in spaces of superiority and supremacy. Only ego thrives there.

- There may be a difference between what the entrepreneur may want to give to the needy community and what they actually require. The inner balance or equanimity will help the social entrepreneur to understand this difference, accept the reality and respond to what is required rather than what one wants.
- Equanimity brings a deep sense of humility. This will make the entrepreneur more responsive to the context with openness and a learner perspective, and lend oneself to what needs to be done in the context.

- Equanimity builds a stronger resolve to stay focused on the objectives to be achieved. This makes the person responsive rather than reactive to context. It gives strength to conviction and a capacity to accept things that happen. Acceptance clears the mind and flowers the creativity to manage the situation.
- There is many a time a difference between 'what one sees' and 'what is' in every situation. Being in the state of equanimity makes the person non judgmental of people and situations. It takes note of the typical rights and wrongs that one gets into and allows multiple perspectives to emerge.
- Equanimity lends to the entrepreneur a higher level of emotional consciousness and an ability to identify, recognize and relate to the emotional state of being and choose the response voluntarily. This brings in appropriateness in behaviour of the social entrepreneur.
- It builds the capacity in the social entrepreneur to LETGO when the time comes to enable the community to sustain on its own than create a dependency.

#### Reflections ...

- 🕯 What does balance and equanimity mean to me?
- 🕯 What is the root cause of my joys and sorrows? What are the kinds of things that give me an emotional high?
- 🕯 How soon am I able to catch myself getting engaged with my feelings?
- 🕯 What are the processes that I follow to maintain a sense of balance within me while working on my project?

...

## INWARD ACTION APPROACH...

the language of a social entrepreneur

It is very easy to point out what everybody needs to do to better a situation. In society when a social entrepreneur enters the scene there would be many things that are not existing and running in the best possible way - several factors contributing to injustice, poor management, inequality, abuse. Many times there are a lot of deliberations on what should have been done, who is responsible and who has been irresponsible and so on. It can go into an attitude of 'holier than thou', not making us realize the actual contribution each of us is making to the existing scenario. This little parable says it all-

*The pupils of the Tendai School used to study meditation before Zen entered Japan. Four of them, who were very close friends, promised one another to observe seven days of silence.*

*On the first day all were silent. Their meditation had begun auspiciously, but when night fell and the oil lamps were growing dim, one of the pupils could not help exclaiming to a servant, "Pl do fix those lamps!"*

*The second pupil was surprised to hear the first one talk, "We are not supposed to say a word", he remarked.*

*"You two are stupid. Why did you talk?" asked the third.*

*"I am the only one who has not talked," announced the fourth pupil.*

(Sampath J.M., Story 75, Discovery)

The question is not about who did or did not do things; it is, given the scenario, what can I do best to better the situation? The answer does not lie just in deliberations, it lies in Action; action emerging out of an inward looking attitude.

It is very easy to get caught in looking outward since the eyes face the world and can see the world outside more easily than see the world within. It requires a deep resolve to face self and continue to see oneself as a part of everything that happens in the world. There was once a participant in our workshop who asked “How can you say I am responsible for all that happens in my life? How can I be responsible if someone crosses in a road I am walking on and hits me? I did not do anything.” To this, Sampath answered “Yes, you are in a way responsible since you have allowed such a society to exist, that people hit others who are not at fault. What have you done to build a better society from your side? “

An inward looking, action oriented person is easy to identify. They complain least about the world. They have a high level of acceptance of the context and are sensitive to its multi dimensional nature. They will be constantly focused on strengthening their conviction to respond to the world. They will be in a response mode rather than reaction mode. They do not have the time to find faults with people around them and identify how non-integrated others are. Instead all their time goes in finding how they are contributing and what more can be done by them. They have high initiative and seek a number of alternatives to achieve the goals they have set for themselves. They are also people whose work is seen in actions rather than in speeches about actions. They work relentlessly and seek no external appreciation as motivation or rewards for what they accomplish. They will be driven by a strong vision and relentlessly pursue that vision. Some words which are usually not found in their dictionary – excuse; reasons; because; yes, but.... They own up the problems and see what they can do in the

situation thereby rising above the circumstance than blaming the circumstance.

Sant Kabir's Doha says it very well -

*Bura Jo Dekhan Main Chala, Bura Naa Milya Koye  
Jo Munn Khoja Apnaa, To Mujhse Bura Naa Koye*

(Translation in English)

I went in search of Bad in people, I couldn't find badness anywhere  
When I searched my own heart, I realized there is no one more bad than me

#### Reflections ...

- 🕯 What satisfaction does looking into others' faults give me?
- 🕯 Why do I fail to recognize the same faults in myself?
- 🕯 What does it mean for me to take the complete responsibility and see myself in everything that is around me?
- 🕯 Am I reactive to life or am I responsive?
- 🕯 How do I begin to become inward focused and action oriented?

...



## INSIGHTS...

on a path to self discovery

*'I' is the fuel we need to burn to fly high*  
(Sampath J.M., P-15, Inner Realities, 2003)

We many times wonder, what is that one thing that will make the journey of a social entrepreneur stress free? Most of the times it is the ability to truly let go and discover oneself while discovering the society. The paradoxical part of this understanding is that, only by complete submission and submerging does self discovery begins to take place and insights begin to emerge. This has also been a strong eastern orientation that unless one does not let go and submit completely to anything, one cannot discover self.

The challenge for a social entrepreneur is to ask if one should go with answers to the field which requires their intervention or should one submerge, experience the space and let the answers emerge. The stress comes in when the social entrepreneur thinks they know what needs to be done and begin to judge the space and develop interventions based on those judgments' while the space may actually require something else. This begins right from the time the person steps in to do a baseline study of the targeted society.

Do I see what is or what I think it is? This is a critical reflection that one needs to do. When one is willing to totally let go of all assumptions and interpretations but is willing to observe, absorb and reflect on all that is existing the reality that emerges allows for answers that are not simply right but also more appropriate. This parable describes the experience

very well.

*A salt doll journeyed for thousands of miles and stopped on the edge of the sea. It was fascinated by this moving liquid mass, so unlike anything it had seen before.*

*"What are you?" asked the salt doll to the sea.*

*"Come in and see", said the sea with a smile.*

*So the doll walked in. The further it went the more it dissolved till there was only a pinch of salt left. Before that last bit dissolved, the doll exclaimed in wonder, "Now I know what I am!"*

(Sampath J.M., Story 90, Discovery)

The saying that part is a dimension of the whole has been there for long. But it usually does not get integrated into the life perspective so easily. When we explore the world and its nature it is in reality an exploration

- Absolute openness to observe, explore, experience and reflect to oneself.
- Willingness to identify the biases that arise in our mind and to set them aside.
- A strong connectivity to all that one is observing as happening in the society to what is happening within.
- Willingness to accept the context as it is and not judging the context from what it is not or what it ought to be.
- Allowing the subtleties to emerge and the process to show the pathway towards solutions.
- Required discipline and intensity to document every experience at the form as well as essence level.
- Willingness to learn to learn and not be in a hurry to conclude.



To conclude and emerge as an expert has been seen as a mark of growth. But the precepts of the eastern philosophy indicate that 'knowing many a time stops one from knowing more'. It is the ability to recognize how little one knows and the vastness of the universe and depth to which one can go to explore life that constitutes real growth.

When we explore the society and the issues from this angle, we will not get stuck in the relationship of giver – receiver. There will be a realization that each one of us is also responsible for all that is happening in the world today and cannot pass the blame to anyone else. That realization is likely to bring in a sense of accountability to provide contribution to make any space a better place than what it is. This accountability coupled with action orientation will lead to the emergence of certain pathways to respond to a particular situation. The word 'respond' is very critical here. If it is not out of a realization, we tend to react and reaction need not necessarily give appropriate actions. Journeying in these pathways gives space for solutions to emerge for several issues that plague the society and our existence. When we revisit the path traversed by several leaders and social entrepreneurs we realize at an essence level it is the same as what is described above.

#### Reflections ...

- 🕯 What are the methods I use to identify my biases as they emerge?
- 🕯 How do I discover more of myself as my mind suffers while studying the issues that plague the society?
- 🕯 What is my own acceptance and intensity level in self discovery and how do I enhance it?
- 🕯 At what depth am I able to experience my extent of accountability to all the things around me?
- 🕯 What are the things I do on an every day basis to take care of this accountability?

...

## COMMITMENT...

### the seed for Growing

The one thing that can be extremely challenging for a social entrepreneur is the issue of value conflicts. They completely sap the energy, enthusiasm, motivation of the social entrepreneur. Whether it is two countries, or two groups, or two individuals the seed of value conflict seems to be that 'someone does not keep his/her commitments'.

Speaking of commitments there are two kinds of commitments that we all enter into in any relationship; the stated commitments and the unstated commitments. The stated commitments are those that are explicitly stated either verbally or through writing. Unstated commitments are the legitimate expectations within the relationship which are not explicitly stated but those that are expected to be understood and upheld. In a relationship between the social entrepreneur and the community or the groups that they are serving there are several stated and unstated commitments that we enter into which when not honored completely break the connectivity and sow a seed for value conflict.

There was once a mail that I read, a dialogue between a hen and a pig which says – 'commitment is not about giving an egg a day but giving bacon'. Talking of commitment, in Kannada there is a beautiful folk song about a cow named 'Punyakoti' and this parable is adapted from that song -

*Punyakoti, the cow, was walking back home behind the rest of the herd. She looked forward to joining her little calf. Suddenly from behind the rocks jumped a huge, starving tiger and blocked Punyakoti's path.*

*"Stop! Don't kill me now", pleaded Punyakoti. "I have a young one at home waiting for me. Please let me go feed her and I*

*promise I'll be back."*

*"What! Am I a fool to let you go?"*

*"Do trust me and I'll come back", said Punyakoti.*

*The reluctant tiger let her go. Punyakoti thanked him and went home, fed the calf lovingly, begged her kith and kin to take care of the young one telling them of the promise she had made and returned to meet the tiger.*

*The tiger waited and to his surprise there was Punyakoti in front of him ready to be his meal. She said "Here I am in flesh and blood ready to become your meal. Eat me and satisfy your hunger". The shocked tiger said "How can I eat someone like you? Even God will not forgive me. A person who values commitment is too precious to become my prey!" The tiger let Punyakoti go.*

(Sampath J.M., Story 19, Discovery)

When stated commitments are not honored there are several ways in which it is brought to light and demanded. But when unstated commitments are not honored the hurt is intense leading to revenge, frustration, depression, feeling small and cheated, used, taken for granted and so on. These surface in myriad forms so subtle and hidden that they require intense discussions and self introspection to see where things went wrong. When individuals and institutions work with groups, strong processes have to be instituted to identify, understand and deal with unstated commitments.

As much as dishonoring commitments is a seed to value conflicts, there is no visiting card that can equal keeping commitments. Many a time we fail to realize keeping commitments are easier than dishonoring

- Trust is built between relationships.
- Openness and transparency in relationship increases.
- The bandwidth within the relationship increases.

- The depth and stretch in the relationship is intensified.
- There is speed in action and decisions.
- Honesty and integrity in sharing feelings, emotions and thoughts.
- Accountability and responsibility increases.
- Acceptance, forgiveness, sacrifice and let go is easier.

Someone once said, one way to handle this is to live not making any commitments at all!! It's like saying I will not breathe to save the oxygen in the world. We are all living in a dependent independent relationship and no one can escape the unstated commitments. Further, stated commitments are the ways to enhance our own capacities and competencies to live a connected fulfilled life. Before giving a commitment it requires mindful introspection on the commitment to be made and a clear plan of action on what needs to be done and how it will be done; renegotiation at the appropriate time when things go differently with absolute accountability.

#### Reflections ...

- 💡 What are the different commitments that I usually make everyday in my life?
- 💡 What are my constraints in keeping my word and how much do I take them into consideration while giving my word?
- 💡 How aware am I of the expectations of the people around me with whom I relate in life?
- 💡 How many of those expectations have I articulated and negotiated with clarity openly?
- 💡 How do I deal with the situation and myself when commitments made to me are not honored?
- 💡 How do I deal with myself when I fail to honor my commitments?
- 💡 Why do I fail to keep my commitments?

...

## MINDFULNESS...

key to efficient social entrepreneurship

The other day I met someone who said “I am planning to quit my job and do something else ‘more cool’.” “Cool? Like what?” I asked, she said, “Oh, like starting an NGO... you know, both me and my husband were talking it's become very boring and mechanical doing this office job, everyday, day after day and very hectic. This working with society will give us time to enjoy life, be with kids, and get up late and still use our time and energy for society, earn a good name; you know that's what everyone today is doing when they turn 40. Someone told me there are courses too that we can take and start work from home. Once funds are given we can take a good office and work from there.” I was just listening not knowing how to respond – Is social entrepreneurship a 'cool' job? A career option? A deeper level of existence? A way of life? An irrevocable responsibility of each of us towards the universe? What should I present to this person?

How many things in life do we approach mindlessly without a deeper articulation and perception of what it actually is? We seek solutions to our problems too in a similar mindless fashion expecting one to replace the other like we have learnt to replace everything in life now from gadgets, relationships, jobs, organs to humans... What would a mindful existence really mean and where does mindful social entrepreneurship stand in all this? From the years of working with people and analysis of human behaviour we have come out with 14 distinctions of mindfulness and mindlessness. A few critical ones here perhaps would tickle the brains to think deeper.

Mindfulness would mean going for generative solutions than

prescriptive solutions – No two problems that come in life are same. They may seem similar but at least in the dimension of time they are not the same. Life is not about what everyone does; but it is about what needs to be done in each context. Every problem can be seen from several perspectives and the solutions have  $n+1$  options.  $N$  is the number of options already tried and  $+1$  is the one that is yet to be tried.

When mindful we look at being principle focused rather than rule focused. When an issue crops up, the principles that govern the solution need focus. Many a time caught in rules we forget the context. What is required sometimes are out of the box solutions.

*A large truck was moving through a railway underpass when it got wedged between the road and the girders overhead. All the efforts of the experts to extricate it proved useless and the traffic was stalled for miles on both sides of the underpass.*

*A little boy was trying to get the attention of the foreman but was always pushed away. Finally, in sheer exasperation, the foreman said, “I suppose you have come to tell us how to do this job?”*

*“Yes”, said the kid, “I suggest you let some air out of the tyres.”*

(Sampath J.M., Story 9, Discovery)

Common sense seems to have become most uncommon. Sometimes what the community requires is a simple common sense solution but it is made into a complicated issue and then solutions are sought which take years of effort to resolve. Being principle centered and essence centered and not getting caught in form leads to mindfulness.

Mindfulness is about being conscious. Being rational can many times lead us to being mindless. Rationality can make us judgmental and rigid. What a social entrepreneur may think as an issue may not be so for the person or community. My friend many a time asks, ‘Is it about

adding solutions to problems or adding problems to already existing solutions?’ There is a fine balance in many things in life. That balance has to be understood.

When it is a mindful decision, the social entrepreneur is intrinsically motivated. It is an option which is inside out. When it is the popular option which is born out of outside in, social entrepreneurship becomes a mindless activity. The need to reach out and make a difference needs to come from within as the very purpose for one's existence and not as choice-less popular option. It demands a fine balance of both head and heart. It needs an ability to manage a dynamic way of living and not a static set of options easily available.

#### Reflections ...

- 🕯 Is my being a social entrepreneur a mindful choice?
- 🕯 In a day how many of my actions are essence focused, principle centered?
- 🕯 Do I look for readymade solutions in life or do I take all elements of the context into account and generate solutions?
- 🕯 How many of my options are drawn after examining multiple perspectives?
- 🕯 What do I do to keep my mindfulness alive?

...

## INSTITUTIONALIZING...

essential process of social entrepreneurship

One of the most challenging issues in social entrepreneurship is in formulating and growing a team that will walk the path that the social entrepreneur has set to carve for him/herself. Also, the success and failure of implementation of an idea lies in the possibility of a team carrying the vision of the social entrepreneur. When we speak of social entrepreneurship, it is very much possible and easy to see it as an individual person's passion and connectivity to society. Even if it is a closely knit group's connectivity, there is a single person who begins the idea, and it evolves. Developing an idea into a school of thought and building an institution based on it, is what lends the action to the idea.

Building an institution is all about people. The real challenge emerges when the institution has to be based on a vision that a person conceives in his/her mind and the others have to get connected to it. When people connect to the vision and a team is being formed, it is important to recognize that each member of the team may have a personal dream, or a vision of their own and they are connected to it first. Sometimes this vision may be hazy with varied extent of clarity. Thus, enabling better clarity becomes the first step. Some may have only short term goals. They need to see those goal fulfillments in following the larger vision of the institution. Unless there is a shared vision and enough clarity has emerged around this vision, the movement of the same from an individual to a team will remain far-fetched. Even if it moves, the sustenance and furtherance of that vision is proportional to the depth to which the team anchors and lives the vision in everyday existence.

While vision is one component, the more critical component is the values that the team would live and integrate. Every person in the team

who walks into the space brings something into it and takes something from it. When team members recognize and respect what each member has to offer to that space they will learn from each other.

*In a jungle the three most disliked creatures were the snake, the tortoise, and the rat. The snake was too sensitive, and would reply to the merest touch with a bite. The tortoise was too withdrawn. He would draw into his shell, unconcerned about his surroundings. And the rat was too inquisitive nosing and bumping into others all the time.*

*One day the three gathered and discovered that if each one of them learnt the qualities of the other two, they could become more sociable. So the snake taught his two friends to be sensitive, the tortoise taught how to be with oneself, and the rat taught curiosity.*

*Now each of them with all the three qualities had become a more desirable character, and soon all the three were part of the jungle's social life.*

(Sampath J.M., Story 35, Discovery)

Many a time when people become a part of the team, preserving one's identity and ideology becomes more important. This is not only preserved in oneself but they also begin to indoctrinate and inculcate the same in other members of the team. Each one evaluates the other based on their own paradigms. This develops into a challenging situation when the institution stands on a particular school of thought and works on reaching out to the community as a team. While nurturing a team each one of them has to realize that they are the most important components of the institution, and they bring something critical into the space which can either further the cause and enhance team connectivity, or can completely destroy the cause and break group cohesion. The questions therefore are: Is the cause and context larger than self? Can I lend to the cause and the context on hand rather than expecting to draw from it what I want?

Most social entrepreneurs are creative thinkers, and visionaries who

visualize spaces and want to create a pathway to reach out. They will find it very difficult to handle the group dynamics when multiple ideologies and paradigms begin to operate. The social entrepreneur would feel sapped in energy if they get into moving on the pathway alone focusing on activities and hoping that their team will follow. When the social entrepreneurs become leaders their actual role is to be the conscience keepers, nurturing and providing clarity to their team members, recognizing each one's contribution to the space, and converging the strengths to journey on the pathway, furthering the

#### Reflections ...

- 🕯 How aware and balanced am I as a social entrepreneur in understanding of my role?
- 🕯 Where is my focus while addressing my team—on the activities or on foundational dimensions?
- 🕯 How much do I know the members of my team?
- 🕯 What are the processes that I have set in my team to allow learning to happen?
- 🕯 What are the processes I have set within me to be a learner and

...



## SYNERGIZING EFFORTS...

meaningful reach out

As the institutionalization processes have begun to speed up and there are myriad number of small scale social entrepreneurs trying to do their best, collaboration seems to be the one mantra that needs to be chanted if we want to see large scale revolutions. It is a paradox that one of the challenges that social entrepreneurs face is to be able to collaborate. Each of them is so busy journeying in their own path that they have no time or energy to join hands. Inability to collaborate and see the bigger picture is one of the reasons especially in India why, in spite of the large number of institutions working towards bettering this society and empowering individuals, the efforts are not producing the outcome that is desired.

The inability to collaborate leaves behind several implications. Do we create heaven or hell for ourselves? The funds are plenty but the resources are limited. With each person looking at what share can be taken from that for furthering one's own vision, the funder organisations also get very cautious and skeptical. It reminds me of this parable.

*A group of representatives was sent from earth to see what made hell and heaven. The group first went to hell, where it found everybody suffering, though hell looked a rich place. This surprised the group. It was lunch time in hell and they were puzzled to see that the hell dwellers were looking famished and angry in spite of rich food being served in abundance. On closer observation they realized the hell dwellers had no elbow joints because of which they were unable to bend their arms and eat, though food was available in plenty. So all of them starved and kept quarrelling with each other.*

*Then, the representatives went to heaven and found the*

*conditions similar to those in hell. It was dinner time and they rushed to the dining hall. The heaven dwellers looked happy, well fed and contented. The representatives observed that their arms too were the same as those of the hell dwellers, yet they were not unhappy. The representatives found the dwellers were happy as they realized that the delicious food kept on the table was meant for serving others and not themselves. So they collected enough food from the table and fed each other. All of them got plenty to eat and nobody went hungry.*

(Sampath J.M., Story 63, Discovery)

When the mutual help has to become functional, the vision has to be shared and owned by all. There has to be love and care amongst the people willing to work on realizing and furthering the vision. Each one has their own niche and capabilities. No big work can be achieved by one institution or one group. It requires several hands. When the people get caught in their own identities, collaboration becomes a tough journey. The melting of the forms can happen with inclusiveness. When hardening happens the essence of the process is lost.

- the inner trust in oneself and the grounding of the principles within self.
- an ability to continuously learn and obtain clarity on values.
- focus on principles rather than forms of expression of the principles.
- need for introspection and reflection with a need to grow and evolve.
- focus on understanding and responding to context from what is needed by the context rather than what one needs from the context.
- strong conviction and clarity on one's being and way of functioning based on the principles that one stands by.
- deep awareness of one's ego and being humble to include

than defend.

- willing to be non judgmental and be in the flow to make things happen.
- deep awareness of one's own purpose in life and its connection to the institutional vision.
- deep anchorage in a sense of gratitude and giving, leading to

The challenges to collaboration comes from selfishness; focus on short sighted gains; essence differences; gap in intention and action; judgmental attitude; disrespect and low conviction in the path chosen. The nature of collaboration is experienced when learning is easy and allows dissemination of best ways of doing things from one group to another. Every member coming into the group will feel trust, giving, acceptance, respect and regard for who they are, irrespective of the inner package they are made of. There is a need that is created to support each other and make each person contributive to the vision. They experience the openness to explore, learn from each other and grow to realize the larger vision.

*"The giver and the taker are equally important, for neither can exist without the other. One needs the other for one's own fulfillment"*

(Sampath J.M., P-119, Inner Realities, 2003)

#### Reflections ...

- 🕯 How aware am I of the larger vision that I am a part of and how much is it the focus in my decisions?
- 🕯 What are my inner challenges in collaboration and how do I deal with each of them?
- 🕯 What is extent of time and methodology I use in aligning myself and my team with the larger vision?
- 🕯 How do I catch myself becoming judgmental and form centered in my collaborative spaces?
- 🕯 What evaluation do I use to continue to assess myself and my ability to collaborate to achieve the larger vision?

• • •

## ISSUE OF TRIVIALITIES...

sustaining social entrepreneurship vision

Every great initiative begins with a vision in the mind of the social entrepreneur. There are many invisible roadblocks for sustainability of that vision. One such block is the myriad amount of activities that may be required day in and day out to be done in the journey towards the vision. Sometimes in each of these activities it becomes very difficult to distinguish between a critical activity and non-critical activities. One of the ways in which most social entrepreneurs respond is to follow the necessities and so everything looks critical and over a period of time the entire team is caught in the trivialities. While the social entrepreneur's mind is still focused on thinking about the larger picture the team slowly moves towards focusing on the everyday functioning of the office. The functioning of the office and administration issues will occupy most of the time and it will make the group seemingly very busy and active while the actual journey that is required to move towards the vision remains only in one or two minds. The priorities have to be set right; or there would be crisis every time creation of the path forward has to take place and the feeling that we are thinking of crossing the bridge only when the bridge is visible will become a constant existential reality. In all this the true journey which needs to be done may be lost; like the parable below -

*A man was dying from a poisoned arrow. His relatives rushed a doctor to his side but he refused to have the arrow taken out unless he had the answers to three questions, very vital to him:*

1. *Was the man who shot him white or black?*
2. *Was he a native or a foreigner?*
3. *Was he tall or short?*

*He was so adamant about getting his answers that the arrow could not be removed on time and the patient died.*



When an NGO turns so called professional organization some of the largest issues that occupies time are human issues – issues relating to hierarchy, compensation, power and influence, recruitment, working comforts, conveyance, reporting structure and protocols, leave issues and reimbursement issues and so on and so on... this is one of the nightmares of the social entrepreneurs too. As long as the group is of a size that can enable focus on the vision and things can be settled through dialogues, it is fine. The minute the group grows and there are more requirements, individual attention has to be paid to it, then the trivialities come into existence. If the vision is not clearly laid out and responding to the context becomes the way of functioning then too trivialities can occupy the time. Further, within the operational functioning there would be certain activities that are critical to sustain and grow the vision; there would be other outcome oriented activities that are of immediate value; but the team needs to effectively prioritize the choices keeping the vision in focus.

It is important for the social entrepreneur's dreams to be realized but it is equally important for it to be well thought out and strategized. That which will sustain the journey is equally or more important. This has to be identified very clearly keeping all the stakeholders and societal context in view.

The situations in which vision is lost and trivialities will take over could be –

- When the team has not spent enough time to gain clarity on the vision. The path is unclear and in the name of evolution of the path, the journey continues day to day.
- When the team that is formed has multiple agenda within themselves as well as amongst themselves while stepping into the vision. When the activity of shared vision has not been created and therefore the team is not aligned.
- The purpose of each activity that emerges is not articulated clearly and in depth. Each member proposes an activity and the same is given importance not because of the activity but to sustain the motivation of the people and team.

- When the principles on which the team will function is unclear for the members. Decisions are taken case to case and there is less clarity on the path forward.
- When the team is pulled in multiple directions to learn as well as deliver simultaneously. Either one is focused more than the other.
- When the intervention that is planned by the social entrepreneur and team is itself new and/ or there is high resistance to accept the intervention. When the path forward is not clearly laid out by the social entrepreneur and core

Caught in the need to prove, establish and sustain, every move of the social entrepreneur and their team is critical. It is easy to begin with an idea and get people to support the same. But it is challenging to sustain and let the evolution of the idea happen. Realizing this and focus on priorities is a continuous journey.

#### Reflections ...

- 💡 What is the extent of time I spend in articulating the vision, purpose and the path within myself and the team? What is the extent of shared vision?
- 💡 How clear are the milestones and to what extent do I facilitate the movement of the team towards those milestones?
- 💡 How clear are the operational principles to myself and the team? What clear actions are initiated to understand and internalize the principles?
- 💡 How much time is spent on looking into priorities? How much have we empowered the questioning of priority within the team?
- 💡 What makes me adamant on the trivialities and its resolution while being a part of the team?

...

## FEEDBACK PROCESS...

the essential nutrient for growing

Growing requires effective feedback. Learning to give as well as receive feedback is imperative for both individual growth as well as team growth. The importance of this emerges from both the receiving point of view for the social entrepreneurs and them giving the feedback to their team members, all from a growing perspective. That is why feedback becomes a double edged sword—it can either slice open for further development or slice the spirit of enthusiasm.

The highlight of the profile of a social entrepreneur has passion; blind faith in their vision; willingness to risk; ability to walk alone if need be; high standards and expectations; perseverance; and sometimes ego which comes with the passion. These make both receiving and giving feedback a tough process. The person who is giving feedback needs to understand the profile of the social entrepreneur and when the social entrepreneurs critically analyze others they have to realize their standards versus others who work in their organizations. Social entrepreneurs are intense people and they are intense in everything; including both receiving and giving feedback.

Everything becomes dependent on not so much in the content of the feedback, but in the way it is being delivered. While the intention of the feedback may be good, if the delivery is not appropriate, then rejection of the feedback is an obvious outcome.

*A man began to give large doses of cod liver oil to his Doberman because he had been told that the stuff was good for dogs. Each day he would hold the head of the protesting dog between his knees, force its jaws open, and pour the oil down its*

*throat.*

*One day the dog broke away and spilt the oil on the floor. Then to the man's great surprise, it not only lapped up the oil that spilt on the floor, but came back to lick the spoon.*

*That is when the man discovered that the dog had been fighting was not for the oil, but the manner in which it was being given.*

(Sampath J.M., Story 80, Discovery)

While giving feedback, many times sensitivity is missed. Sensitivity could imply being aware of the team members' receiving capacity, their feelings and emotions, and giving time to prepare the person by sharing the intent of the feedback. The feedback needs to be on the actions of the person than the personality of the person. A responsible feedback will include providing clarity on the modifications expected. Labeling and judgements are the dangers where the feedback gets loaded with emotional reactions. For the social entrepreneur whose expectation from self is high and who is willing to scale the mountain to move things the way they desire, feedbacks can come as a ton of bricks onto the team members. They need to truly tone down and communicate the intentions to others clearly. It is a big challenge for the social entrepreneur to keep in mind the space for giving the feedback and yet nurture others to achieve their potential. Sensitivity calls for -

- an open mindedness to explore and discuss while giving feedback.
- a high sense of integrity and ability to practice what one expects from other team members.
- being non judgmental and nurturing in sharing the

The team members on the other hand while receiving feedback from a social entrepreneur conveniently put themselves in different positions

based on stakes and roles and therefore miss the nutrients that can make them grow. The social entrepreneur's intensity may many a time scare the recipient of the feedback. But, the content may have the The basic question while receiving feedback is—are we going to be caught with the way it is given or the content of the feedback? If the nutrient for growth is in the content, what stops many of us from focusing on the way in which the feedback comes?

- Our own ego stops us from receiving the feedback when it punches the core enthusiasm.
- Our hierarchical way of functioning stops us by closing certain channels.
- The “I know” which closes the mind and makes one defensive makes receiving feedback a difficult process.
- Questioning the competence, clarity, role, etc. of the person who is giving the feedback can totally bias the receptivity.

While every feedback has the essential nutrient to nurture growth, the onus of receiving as well as giving appropriately is on the individual. While the social entrepreneur has the gift of passion, the intensity should be fine tuned to allow growth to happen if the team has to be nurtured.

#### Reflections ...

- ☯ What am I truly interested in while giving feedback – 'giving my way' or 'giving'?
- ☯ What are the ways I use to understand the team members and their capacity to receive feedback?
- ☯ What measures do I use to check the intent, purpose, and the outcome of my feedback to others?
- ☯ When feedback comes from several quarters what is the extent of my open mindedness to receive and reflect on them?
- ☯ What makes me adamant to receive the feedback in the way I want

...

## SUSTAINABLE GROWING... true spirit of social entrepreneurs

What is the power that social entrepreneurs have that will sustain them and their efforts through the years? It's funny how sometimes people ask us “So, what are you doing these days? same thing? Values? Still going so strong? two decades and more?” But we wonder, “Is it so long? Should we be doing something else in life? but why? I am enjoying what I am doing so much...”

During the last two weeks we went on a pilgrimage tour visiting the houses, places of great masters who have been on the path of self realization in the last 200 years and have dedicated their lives to a purpose. Mother Teresa's ashram was one of them. Looking at the beautifully laid out story of her life mission, it brought the realization yet again that when life's true purpose and vision is realized, it becomes truly a life worth living. Added to that, the realization that anything one does is drudgery where there is only work and no soul in it. What does it mean to be connected to one's own soul? The parable below makes so much sense in this context -

*A woodcarver called Ching had just finished work on a bell frame. Everyone who saw it marveled at it, for it seemed to be the work of spirits. When the Duke of Lu saw it, he asked, “What sort of a genius is yours that you could make such a thing?”*

*The woodcarver replied, “Sir, I am only a simple workman. I am no genius. But there is one thing. When I am going to make a bell frame, I meditate to calm my mind. When I have meditated for three days, I think no more about rewards or emoluments. When I have meditated for five days, I no longer think of praise or blame, skillfulness or awkwardness. When I have meditated for seven days, I suddenly forget my limbs, my body; no, I forget*

*my very self. I lose consciousness of the court and my surroundings. Only my skill remains. In that state, I walk into the forest; stop at the tree which will give me the bell frame. I see the bell frame in all its perfection. Then my hands go to the task. Having set myself aside, nature meets nature in the work that is performed through me. This, no doubt, is the reason why everyone sees that the finished product is the work of spirits.*

(Sampath J.M., Story 76, Discovery)

One striking realization is that the extent of involvement brings the extent of passion and that in turn results in sustainability. For most of the great social entrepreneurs, the number of years they toil journeying on the path of their vision does not seem to count. There is a time that one can see their life; their vision and their work are all an ensemble. Then they are no longer talking in terms of their 'personal life' and 'work life' as though they are two different parts of existence. There is just one life and in that one there are several spaces and that's all. The identity of the individual is totally submerged and the vision becomes larger than self. They allow the consciousness then to work through them being in the flow than getting caught with structure. Time disappears and only the path remains until reached. This is true of any task, profession, relationship and so in Social entrepreneurship. To create the best and give the best it calls for 100% involvement. The quality of work is directly proportional to the extent of involvement that one has in what one does. Quality directly contributes to sustainability.

- A high level of focus.
- Involvement brings in –
- Great extent of context sensitivity and appropriateness.
  - Ability to connect deeply to all dimensions of the space at a given point of time.
  - A high level of commitment.
  - Consistent quality and responsiveness.
  - Ability to sustain for a long time and giving meaning to one's existence.

Yet another realization is that the ability to involve is innate and we are more afraid of it rather than incapacitated to live it. Life of passion and involvement is not easy until that becomes a way of life. It calls for a whole lot of sacrifices and constant awareness of the choices we need to make to get the best. It calls for deeper level of alignment to one's vision. It calls for total submission. When it is done and it becomes a way of life, it augments living to a degree that dissolves time and space. More than saying sustainability is difficult, one has to truly introspect and agree if giving oneself to a cause is difficult. Then for a social entrepreneur sustainability goes beyond self; things move and grow even after their mortal existence has gone.

*"Perfection is nothing less than 100 percent of me being in what*

#### Reflections ...

- 💡 What are the activities that I do in a day with which I get bored after a while?
- 💡 What are the activities that I do in a day in which I feel I forget myself?
- 💡 What wakes me up every morning?
- 💡 What makes me turn out my best?
- 💡 What actions do I consciously take to enhance my level of involvement in anything I do?
- 💡 What efforts do I put in to align my life vision- work- everyday living

...

## PERSEVERANCE...

the purpose in growing social entrepreneurship

The questions many times asked to a social entrepreneur are: “When did you decide to become a social entrepreneur?” “How did you know this is your life purpose?” “Which incident started this”?

Most of the times, it is not a single incident or a particular time, but a series of events and experiences and the growing passion towards what one wants to be associated with. It could seemingly be a very powerful event that enabled the person to make the decision to walk in that particular path, but to arrive somewhere there would have been several consistent efforts and 'perseverance' is the word which best describes this. Social entrepreneurship is not an outcome, but a process and requires perseverance.

*One day two frogs fell into a pot of milk. They swam around and tried to hop out. As there was no solid support under their feet, it was not possible for the frogs to hop out and escape.*

*After some time one of the frogs said, “I am completely tired. I can't swim any longer. I am giving up.” He gave up and sank to the bottom.*

*The other frog said, “I will go on swimming. I hope something will happen.”*

*So he went on swimming. His movements churned the milk and turned it into butter. After sometime, the frog climbed up on the butter and hopped out of the pot.*

(Sampath J.M., Story 93, Discovery)

For the world, a person is a social entrepreneur; for the social entrepreneur he/she is a person following his/her vision with an undying passion and faith. While on the path of the vision it is very easy to give up when obstacles come, calls for tremendous courage to stand and face them. Even the impossible happens if we are not willing to give up. When we hear about the frog jumping out it seems pretty simple,

but only the frog knows the efforts that went into churning the milk to get the butter. Also, the effort when it is for a single person is very different to efforts when an institution has to be run around a vision, or to fight against a system so as transformation at macro level becomes possible.

Transformations in the system and organizations have happened not because of the single person's personality alone, but also because of their perseverance. Jim Collins in his book 'Good to Great' calls this the 'fly wheel effect', where a single person is able to put his effort on moving a huge fly wheel. It is difficult till the momentum picks up, but once the momentum has picked up, it takes very less effort to keep the fly wheel moving. Similarly, each of us has the capacity within us to be a social entrepreneur. But, how many of us are willing to stay with an idea or a path irrespective of what we face while walking on the path? How many of us are willing to put efforts to build that stamina and tenacity to persevere?

- A deep faith in oneself and the vision.
- Perseverance calls for many things –
- A realization and firm connect between the self and path we pursue.
  - A healthy restlessness within which says 'rest not until reached.
  - A number of sacrifices of self needs and wants.
  - A deep sense of credibility – to walk the talk ; practice before preaching.
  - To be rooted firmly - if we don't stand for anything we fall for everything.
  - To determine the threshold where we are likely to give up and anchor ourselves in that space.
  - To see the vision larger than the self and be willing to stay focused.
  - To identify every opportunity and take appropriate actions.



- To convert every problem into an opportunity to learn.
- To be willing to be with the flow and submit to the larger design of the consciousness.
- To grow beyond the problem than make oneself small and make the problem appear larger than the self.

Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached!' said Swami Vivekananda. He terms perseverance as 'Shraddha' an unparalleled Sanskrit word for single minded devotion. "No problem is big or small; it's my own smallness or bigness which makes the problem look big or small'. When there is perseverance and tenacity and the intention is for the larger good, the universe will converge itself to make things happen.

The best of the ideas have value only when someone is willing to stay with it and implement it. Social entrepreneurship is more about staying and persevering rather than the idea itself.

#### Reflections ...

- 🕯 What makes me stay with an idea?
- 🕯 What makes me stop believing in my thoughts and efforts?
- 🕯 What are my own fears and anxieties that stop me from moving with the idea?
- 🕯 What are the everyday actions that enable me to anchor and strengthen my roots?
- 🕯 What support structures have I built within myself to get back onto the journey when I slip back?
- 🕯 When faced with a constraint where is my focus – on myself or the circumstances surrounding me?

...

## GRATITUDE...

the purpose in growing social entrepreneurship

What really is the purpose of being a social entrepreneur? Most times a social entrepreneur plays several roles CEO, manager, executive doing PR, legal work, accounts, etc., and wears multiple hats. How does a budding social entrepreneur understand what exactly should be driving him/her to leave other possibilities of employment in life and work on benefitting the society? If there is one thing that has always given us the answer to this query, it is as goes in this parable:

*It was time for the monsoon rains to begin, and a very old man was digging pits in his garden.*

*"What are you doing?" His neighbour asked.*

*"Planting mango trees," was the reply.*

*"Do you expect to eat mangoes from those trees?"*

*"No, I won't live long enough for that. But, others will. It occurred to me the other day that all my life I have enjoyed mangoes from trees planted by other people. This is my way of showing them my gratitude."*

(Sampath J.M., Story 95, Discovery)

When an entrepreneur works on a business idea there is clear clarity on the profits to be gained within the shortest time possible. But, when the social entrepreneur works on an idea, benefit to posterity assumes prime importance. Everything else falls secondary to it. This is fuelled by farsightedness and a passion to do all that can be done to see a situation that is different from what it is. The thoughts of gain and loss do not come until the goal is reached. It may call for serious levels of efforts and sacrifices from self; yet the journey continues.

None of us in this world are independent in reality. If each of us is alive, enjoying all that the world can offer, it is the efforts of many that go



behind it. We are all interdependent. So what do we offer in return for the world that is going to be? Unless we realize this interdependence and experience a deep sense of gratitude within, our efforts at being a social entrepreneur cannot be sustained. While a business thrives on the profits and losses it makes, social entrepreneurship thrives on the feelings of gratitude and a deep felt need to offer back to posterity what one enjoyed, and the dream that one would like to see realized that would benefit others in times to come.

Just like how we cannot plant a seed and keep digging the ground everyday to see whether the seed has germinated, the social entrepreneur's efforts too may take long to break the ground and show results. But, the nurturing efforts need to patiently continue. There are some associates who come to tell me within a year or two of working on what they said was their passion at one point of time that they are bored and want to leave to try other grounds. I wonder what the sustaining power of each of these people is who want to approach social entrepreneurship as though it is a favor they are doing to those who take their service. Actually, we should be thankful to those who let us serve them by doing something that will support posterity. It actually does not just fulfill their lives but fulfills our life.

The sense of gratitude enables us to leave behind something that is beyond our lifetime. It stretches and expands our capacity. It relieves us of the position of being a consumer in life to also be a contributor. While for a human, immortality seems very important, it seems to be understood more at a materialistic level of hoarding, accumulation, building businesses, and making a name. It is hardly understood as

giving, sharing, sustaining and building the world tomorrow that would be a place one would dream to live in.

Social entrepreneurship is beyond profession, employment, business. It is a process of fulfillment added to each of these. It requires a deep sense of gratitude and a willingness to share the rich big world and

#### Reflections ...

- 🕯 List the blessings you have received in life so far.
- 🕯 Who is responsible for the tomorrow that I dream?
- 🕯 What are the resources that I have with me that can be of use to the world that I live in?
- 🕯 What in me will make me feel I should leave something for tomorrow?
- 🕯 In what way can I show my gratitude to all the people who have made my life on this earth comfortable?
- 🕯 What is it that I am leaving behind for the generations to come?

...

## CONSTANT AWARENESS...

the real strength of a social entrepreneur

Where does the real strength and sustaining power of a social entrepreneur lie? It is a paradox that the real strength lies in 'Constant Awareness' that we are the only lenders to the idea and not the idea itself! While at one level social entrepreneurship requires the highest level of passion, belongingness, and engagement, to let it grow and continue it also requires 'let go'. If let go does not happen, the social entrepreneur can himself/herself become a limitation to social entrepreneurship. Constant awareness of oneself and one's actions enables us to develop an orientation of let go leading to evolution.

*No Zen student would presume to teach others until he had lived with his master for a minimum of ten years. Tenno, a young student, having completed his ten years of apprenticeship, acquired the rank of a teacher.*

*One day he went to visit the master. It was a rainy day, so Tenno wore wooden clogs and carried an umbrella.*

*When he walked in, the Master greeted him with, "You left your wooden clogs and umbrella on the porch didn't you? Tell me, did you place your umbrella on the right side of the clogs or on the left? Tenno was embarrassed, for he did not know the answer. He realized he lacked awareness.*

*So he became a student and labored for ten more years to acquire constant awareness.*

(Sampath J.M., Story 100, Discovery)

While Tenno learnt several things, he had to labor again to learn to be constantly aware. Constant awareness is also to be learnt and practised. It is not an automatic process as most of us believe. We have layers and layers of conditioning that do not allow a state of awareness to be constant. Learning, introspection and let go are continuous serious

process elements of awareness. We cannot be aware sometimes and not be aware at other times. It has to be a constant process. It is a state of being. This state of being can enable us to be most effective in our decisions and that results in being a 'Master'.

In every action of ours there is a learning hidden that can be captured with awareness. This state of constant awareness gives one a space to be in what we call as 'Stitha pragra' – a state of being in absolute balance and appropriateness. While attachment and engagement can result in action, the ability to stay unattached and respond appropriately can also give enormous power to act. A state of balance in all adversity can come when there is constant awareness. It is the ability to observe self while in action. It is a deep meditative state but with open eyes.

For the last 24 months, we have been discussing the journey of social entrepreneurship as a process of growing. While discussing the points that were enumerated in the previous twenty four chapters at an intellectual level can give many perspectives, the real growing happens only when they are integrated into life as everyday process. While our eyes watch the outside world, we need an inner eye to watch the self. This entire growing series has been an attempt to move towards this state of being. Recognizing that there is an inner world akin to the external world and the power to edit, correct or move is only with self and not in changing others will come through constant awareness.

For a social entrepreneur who is engaged with society and its issues, this state gives them the courage to allow empowerment and growth organically liberating the self from successes and failures. Constant awareness also allows the social entrepreneur to monitor the self and live true to the social work objective of 'help others to help themselves'.

- Be in the present moment and respond rather than react to a situation.
- Be balanced within and therefore pay attention to all elements of the context.

- Be appropriate to the context.
- Give what the context requires than what one wants
- Allow the flow of the situation than become a block .
- Remain positive and do what is essential to handle situations.
- Accept others and the consciousness to intervene when necessary.
- Keep the ego in check and allow consciousness to play.
- Be anchored deeply with faith and trust that all that happens

#### Reflections ...

- ☯ To what extent do I go into the minute details of all that I do?
- ☯ What processes do I follow to watch myself constantly?
- ☯ How do I learn to watch with my inner eye and learn to shut the outer eye?
- ☯ In what areas does my attachment come in and how do I deal with it?
- ☯ What does let go and awareness mean to me in day to day life?
- ☯ How do I learn to learn and watch myself constantly?

...

*Sharing our thoughts through these reflective chapters has been a growing experience for us. Thanking all our readers for their patience and acceptance to allow us to share our thoughts as well as wishing them growing process towards a state of constant awareness, I bid adieu.*

*The journey is eternal and does not limit itself to the 25 that we have explored in this book . . . These 25 are only pointers to the myriad number of challenges and situations that a social entrepreneur would face in life, learn and grow.*

*The thoughts have been organized as*

- ☯ ***to reflect within to grow into being a social entrepreneur.***
- ☯ ***the purpose and distinguishing feature of social entrepreneurship.***
- ☯ ***to sustain social entrepreneurship.***
- ☯ ***to build and nurture a team from a social entrepreneurship perspective.***
- ☯ ***to identify the blocks and rise above them to build social entrepreneurship.***

*I hope you have enjoyed reading and reflecting ... pray the journey continues...*

CSIM



to learn... to heal... to raise...

Centre for Social Initiative and Management(CSIM)  
D 301, Adarsh Gardens, 47<sup>th</sup> Cross, 8<sup>th</sup> Block,  
Jayanagar, Bangalore 560070  
Tel: 9886 833 665 Email: [csimblre@gmail.com](mailto:csimblre@gmail.com)  
Web: [www.csimbangalore.com](http://www.csimbangalore.com)

The Centre for Social Initiative and Management (CSIM), is the education and training wing of MSDS Trust, with a presence in Chennai, Hyderabad, Mumbai and Bangalore.

At CSIM we know about the power of individuals to make a difference.

The broadest definition of a social entrepreneur is 'someone who recognizes a social problem and uses entrepreneurial principles to organize, create, and manage a venture to make social change.' Fortunately for us in India, we have enough challenges and opportunities to give rise to and evolve entrepreneurial ventures.

At CSIM, we create a fertile base for socially motivated individuals to discover their innate capabilities, enable them to enhance their personality and equip them with management skills. This process enables them to transform their vision into action and to launch their own social initiatives.

***Our key deliverables are:***

1. Work to identify, train, support social change agents and equip them to introduce entrepreneurship in their organizations, thus making them "Social Entrepreneurs".
2. Enable non-profit organizations to manage themselves with the same ethos as businesses to ensure high degree of excellence and

accountability.

3. Helps social change agents create sustainable & scalable solutions that can reach a broader range of people, places, context.

CSIM, Bangalore, is the youngest of the four branches and has so far impacted more than 120 individuals through the Social Entrepreneurship Outlook Programme. It is not surprising that the IT city has so many professionals with a social conscience who are seeking to make a difference and working for the common good, using their technical skills and entrepreneurial ideas.

It is our belief that showcasing successful social entrepreneurs and studying their methods is one of the best ways to teach and learn. We supplement this learning with lectures on organizational management. Our unique internship module provides an invaluable opportunity to put the learning into practice in the real world under the guidance of expert mentors.

Slowly but surely, through our customized and innovative courses and support systems like Social Action Groups, Entrepreneurship Learning Club and Volunteering Initiatives, we are building up a vibrant community of conscious and committed entrepreneurs, who will help us to change the world.



Insight Publishers is a young publishing company with a clear vision to enhance the level of consciousness in the larger social system. With a strong humane foundation, our essence of being is to nurture wisdom and we are keen to tread and explore any path, both known and unknown, towards the realization of this aspiration of ours. Our aim is to bring out books and artifacts that will aide us in our quest for maturing into fine individuals. We believe that every person can get limited by oneself and hence it is only self-awareness that can unleash one's potential to the fullest.

**Insight Publishers**

# 17, I Cross, Gavipuram  
Extension, Bangalore-560 019,  
Karnataka, INDIA  
Tel: 91-80-26616764  
[www.insightpublishers.com](http://www.insightpublishers.com)



**Insight Publishers**

# 17, I Cross, Gavipuram Extension, Bangalore-560 019, Karnataka, INDIA  
Tel: 91-80-26616764 [www.insightpublishers.com](http://www.insightpublishers.com)

ISBN 978-93-80738-01-7