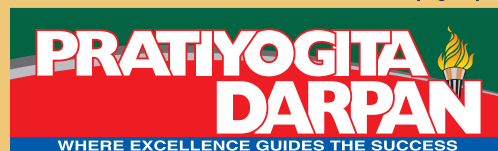




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C O N T E N T S

Regulars

- 364 To Our Readers
367 Editorial

News & Events

- 368 Nation this Month
375 World this Month
382 Regional News
385 National and International Updates

Current Affairs

- 394 Sports World
399 Science & Technology
401 Memorable Points
403 Economic Scenario

Career News

- 412 Employment and Career News
414 Forthcoming Competitive Examinations

World Panorama

- 416 (i) Afghanistan Imbroglio and New AF-PAK Strategy
419 (ii) Resetting U.S. : Russian Relations

Personality Development

- 422 Power and Prestige of Personality

Inspiring Youth : Interviews

- 424 (i) Naveen Singla
Topper : Civil Services, 2008 (28th Rank)
426 (ii) Shilpa Gourisaria
Topper : Civil Services, 2008 (25th Rank)

Articles

Constitutional Article

- 429 Indian Parliament

Religious Article

- 435 Buddhism and Islam : Close Affinity

Historical Article

- 437 Coinage of Ancient India

International Politics Article

- 440 Building a Multipolar World : BRIC by BRIC

Educational Article

- 442 Reforms Recommended by Prof. Yashpal Committee Report

Career Article

- 443 SSB : Three Wings of the Armed Forces
What ? How ? and Why ?

Political Science Article

- 446 All India Judicial Service : Need of the Hour

Philosophy Article

- 447 August Comte and Positivism

Scientific Article

- 450 Global Outbreak of Swine Flu

Vividha

- 452 Compendium

- 455 **State : At a Glance**—Union Territory of Andaman & Nicobar Islands

Miscellaneous Facts : General Knowledge

- 457 Present Status of Indian Culture and Art : An Overview

Profile : International Organisation

- 460 International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

- 463 Trade and Industry

- 464 Current Questionnaire

Question Papers

Subjective Paper

- 467 Civil Services (Mains) Exam., 2008 : General Studies

Optional Paper

- 476 Civil Services (Pre.) Exam., 2009 : Public Administration

Other Papers

- 488 Institute of Advanced Management [(H.M.) Kolkata] Exam., 2009 : General Knowledge

- 490 Combined Defence Services Exam., 2009 : General Knowledge

- 498 Uttar Pradesh P.C.S. (Mains) Exam., 2008 : General Studies

- 509 Allahabad Bank P.O. Exam., 2008 : Reasoning Ability

- 517 Punjab National Bank Agriculture Officers Exam., 2009 : Quantitative Aptitude

- 521 Forthcoming IAS/RAS/PCS/NET/Bank Exam. : Information Technology / MIS

Your Pages

- 525 Essay Contest

- 527 Debate Contest

- 529 Clues for Crossword 5

- 530 Concentric Quiz

- 533 Test Your Knowledge

- 535 Results

- 536 **Annual Current Affairs Special-1**

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BE KNOWLEDGEABLE AND SENSITIVE

To lead a full life one has to be knowledgeable and sensitive. Ignorance is the quality of the beast and the brute, while knowledge is the prime ingredient of a human being. In order to be knowledgeable one has to be alert, aware and inquisitive. It is one's inquisitiveness that prompts one to explore fresh fields and pastures new. It takes him to greater and greater heights of knowledge and the lofty status of a human being. Remember, knowledge without humanity is a trap that keeps one tied down only to the doorsteps. Humanity and sensitivity are almost synonymous. It is therefore clear that in order to develop as a full human being one has to be knowledgeable and sensitive. Intercommunication with persons of knowledge with an open and sensitive mind is the royal road to human greatness.

One of the significant characteristics of great persons is that they put their point of view with sincerity and humility. The other great quality, such people possess, is that they listen with equal sincerity and equanimity, the points of view of other persons. That is why they are always full of knowledge and the concerns they voice, and the issues they raise, create great impact.

To reach the truth lying behind things, one has to try to know all the facts of that thing. This is possible only by exchange of ideas and views with a number of persons. By doing so, these persons expand the horizons of their knowledge, and at the same time they awaken and inspire the good and noble qualities in others, and help them in their transformation. Let us not forget that in this process of expanding the horizons of knowledge, they, also, develop their understanding and transform themselves both outwardly and inwardly.

In short, to make progress and be able to influence others, one has to keep one's mind open. A person with closed mind cannot have communication with others, and that prevents him from establishing relationship with others.

There are several instances which show that such persons courageously faced all opposition and carried the society with them against the heaviest odds. Mahatma Gandhi is a glaring example of this class of persons. Though he made people come his way, yet he never seemed to be doing so. He was very receptive when he talked to people. At the same time, he lost no time to make amends as soon as he realised that he had made a mistake or he had been indiscrete while expressing his ideas. On occasions, more than one, he accepted to have made Himalayan blunders.

Persons like Mahatma Gandhi are firm in their views, but not rigid. That is why they reduce personal aggrandisement and awaken conscience.

A person who is always ready to hear the other man's point of view is always alert, awakened and sensitive to the situation and the surroundings and that is why he does not react but responds. He accepts new thoughts and ideas understandingly. A note of warning may be struck here. The desire for comfort, security and cut-throat competition prevents the persons from doing so, because the change of situation or place instills in man a sense of fear and uneasiness. Learning new things brings out new situations and opens new vistas of activity. Change in views must bring a change in understanding, which is bound to change the mode of thinking and acting. Such persons as do not want to change are like stagnant water and must remain stranded. The students, who adhere to one book and one author, and are not prepared to read other authors and take part in free discussions, are bound to have limited knowledge and look up at the ceiling of the examination hall, when a question has been asked in a language or style, with which they are not familiar. It is not without reason and purpose that seminars are made a necessary part of the syllabus, in which the students may learn new things from different participants. Here they learn not only new things, but also new and different ways of expressing the same one thing. Those, who have taken part in seminars and debates know it fully well how useful it is to be alert and awakened while listening to other persons. Remember, every one has to give something

useful. One who misses to pick it up, misses the bus. In the examination he may have to repent—if I had not noted down what Mr. so and so was saying !

In this regard, the more the receptivity, the greater the depth in understanding. In such a mind, there is greater scope for self-cleaning and self-purification. It is in such man's mind that sense of freedom, initiative, creativity and responsibility can develop and flower. When the mind is purified, the person ceases to be conditioned, and the baser and lower, and less useful ideas leave him. Meaningful thoughts and ideas completely change the person's way of thinking as well as his conduct. If Albert Einstein had not read and completely understood his predecessors like William Crooks and Dalton, he could have hardly arrived at his conclusions, which gave to the world the Theory of Relativity and consequently made atomic energy available to the world. Medical science also has progressed by developing new theories and discarding the lesser ones. Instances are too many to cite.

It is difficult to distinguish between awareness, alertness and sensitivity. They are not only interdependent and complementary to one another, but are also entirely inseparable and interpenetrating. The maturing of mind begins with awareness, so in order to remove ignorance or darkness from our mind, we have to make efforts to be responsive to the sources of knowledge. About an aware man it has been said that he sees his way and goes it. He draws a line and toes it, he has chance and takes it; if there is no time, he makes it. Do remember that real life is created at the confluence of alertness, awareness and sensitiveness. P.Darpan