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DETERMINE YOUR WAY OF CONDUCT

How to lead our lives is a big question, for on the way we lead our lives depends our progress, prosperity and happiness. The best way is to combine meditation and experimentation. Meditation is infact a spiritual process, as through it we try to establish communion with the divine which is the source of all knowledge and all activity. The spiritual process combined with our own endeavour and effort will release tremendous energy which will help us lead our lives in the best way, leading to the realization of ourselves and helping us to reach the goal which we have set before ourselves.

About two thousand and five hundred years ago, Confucius, the great Chinese philosopher, said that people determine their conduct through one of three methods, *viz* :

(i) **Through Meditation**—This is think before act method. Before taking an action, think deeply and try to understand its implications, *i.e.*, pros and cons of the proposed action and then, as the second step, the doer determines the shape and mode of action. The third step is, of course, to do the action in the planned manner.

(ii) **Through Imitation**—This is not taking the first two steps, as mentioned above, but, without going into the propriety or impropriety or the pros and cons of the action, as we may call it, the doer begins to copy a particular person or a group of persons. This is just as following a tradition or drifting in the current of a particular fashion.

(iii) **Through Experimentation**—This is to do a thing in one's own way. In this mode of action, emphasis is often laid on a novel way and give a new lead to the society. Without taking advantage of the experiences of other persons and thinking pros and cons, the person concerned decides to have personal experience of a thing or a situation. The person, who chooses this method to determine his conduct, more often than not, thinks thus—other persons did not know how to act properly in this situation and failed, I will show how to act in this situation and get success.

The first of the three methods, referred to above, is the most dignified but at the same time the most difficult. This gives great leaders to

the society. The second one is the easiest. It involves no risk. Many people choose to follow it. This is the method of the ignorant. The third one, that of experimentation, is the bitterest because it implies pain, toil and often failure. Most of the people choose the third method and suffer. Persons of this class want to experiment with every situation and want to have new experiences. If the craze for experimentation were not there, the pain and sufferings should not have been there and the process of facing failure and sorrow must not have continued.

Meditation is a spiritual process which draws its energy from the divine which is the source of all knowledge and all activity. The best thing would be to combine meditation with experimentation to obtain the best results.

Perhaps people of this class, choosing the method of experimentation, act like the spider and create a web of problems for themselves. Needless to say, persons, who do not take benefit of the experiences of other persons are like the sailor, who does not change his course even after receiving indications of danger from the boat or the ship caught in a danger zone and struggling for life. The man was wise who said, "Fools rush in, where Angels fear to tread." The greatest foolishness is to think others fools. Let us learn to take every one as our teacher.

Most of us belong to the category of those persons who think we would succeed where others have failed. Persons belonging to this class can be put in two categories—those who

think others to be fools and those whose line of thinking is—let me also try and see if my efforts bear fruits. As we know, man learns through mistakes. Mistakes and the bitter experiences associated with them are of much value. Mistakes are of use when the doer learns lessons from them and makes necessary amends. As is rightly said—a wise man is he who draws lessons from his mistakes and does not commit a mistake for a second time; a foolish man is he who commits again and again the same mistake; one, who does not commit mistakes is a dead man, because he has done nothing in life. As to err is human, so the method of experimentation may be bitter, but it does have its place in the scheme of evolution. Those who want to do something positive and constructive will do well to set their line of conduct through either the method of meditation or through the method of experimentation. The best method of determining one's conduct is to combine both the methods and draw one's own conclusions. Mahatma Gandhi is a glaring example of this class of persons. He, through deep meditation heard the voice from within and then proceeded on the way of making experiments of Truth and Non-violence. Although, there were occasions, when he committed Himalayan blunders, yet he did not leave the way of experimentation till his last breath.

To get success in life, your method of conduct must be based on firm determination born of sincere meditation, prudently framed planning and a strong will to suffer and be strong.