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# The Basis of Happiness

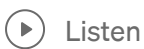
String of Wisdom-pearls from Chanakya Sutrani



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चाणक्य Chanakya, also known as कौटिल्य Kautilya or विष्णुगुप्त Vishnugupta, was an ancient Indian philosopher, teacher, economist, and political strategist who played a pivotal role in the establishment of the मौर्य Maurya Empire in the 4th century BCE. His timeless wisdom is encapsulated in the ‘अर्थशास्त्र Arthashastra’ and “चाणक्य सूत्राणि Chanakya Sutras,” providing profound insights into the realms of politics, economics, ethics, and human behavior. Among the many pearls of wisdom by Chanakya, the

following aphorisms stand as a guiding principle, emphasizing the foundational importance of wealth in the pursuit of happiness and prosperity.

Chanakya explains the secret of Happiness as (almost like a) sequence of equations, a string of dependencies. He connects concepts like 'Happiness', 'Wealth' via word 'मूलं (mulam)', which means 'at the root of' or 'because of' or 'due to' or we can say, 'at the basis of' or simply 'is by'. 'सूत्राणि (sutrani)' means set of short verses almost like formulae. Here we go ...

### **सुखस्य मूलं धर्मः**

*Happiness is by Righteousness*

If you behave righteously, happiness will come to you, both at the individual level or at the level of company or state or even country. Interpretations of or morality can change across regions or cultures but understanding of 'what is right' i.e. righteousness is common across the spectrum. If person A becomes happy when s/he does W, which in turn say affects person B positively, then when B does the same thing and if that makes A happy then that's a righteous thing.

### **धर्मस्य मूलमर्थः**

*Righteous conduct is by Wealth*

If you want to be on the path of righteousness, you need to have resources, wealth. Without that behaving dutifully is not possible. In Marathi there is a proverb 'आधी पोटोबा मग विठोबा' (adhi potoba mag vithoba) meaning you can not teach duties righteousness on empty stomach. Basic needs at least need to be fulfilled before one can think of doing duties, moral and ethical things.

### **अर्थस्य मूलं राज्यम्**

*Wealth is by State*

To earn wealth, you need to have power, governance in hand, basically, the King or the State. The State involves all its pillars, the legislature, the executive, the judiciary and of course the media. All tools for prosperity of the self and the nation are needed, via State, to build the Wealth.

### **राज्यमूलमिन्द्रियजयः**

*State is by Control on Senses*

The power comes from conquering the senses. King should work not for own pleasures but for the public. Same, CEO for employees. Expect integrity and no corruption. The head (Prime minister, CEO, Manager or Self) needs to exercise control over not just physical senses but also enemies like काम *kaam* (lust), क्रोध *krodh* (anger), मोह *moha* (delusion), लोभ *lobha* (greed), मद *mada* (arrogance), मत्सर *matsara* (envy). Only upon this control, the head can govern the enterprise well.

### **इन्द्रियाजयस्य मूलं विनयः**

*Control on Senses is by Humility*

To control the senses one needs to leave the ego and have utmost humility. One needs to have rationality of what's possible and what's not and have courage to admit the same. No arrogance of results and no depression of failures. Accept all with humility and decide the next steps. Ethics, sacrifice for greater cause and morality are other aspects of the desired behavior.

### **विनयस्य मूलं वृद्धोपसेवा**

*Humility is by devotion to the Elderly-Wise*

Humility comes when you see much better role models, such as wise-elderly in the society. Serving them or learning from them is the key. A guru or a mentor is necessary to look up to. In modern times, these mentors need not be present with you physically, you can learn from them via books, stories, etc.

### **वृद्धोपसेवाया विज्ञानम्**

*Devotion to the Elderly-Wise brings Effectiveness*

Wisdom comes in serving the wise-elderly, directly or indirectly and unconsciously. So, role of guru is immense. The wise-elderly have years of experiences which are hard to get by reading just books of procedures. Practical knowledge comes via apprenticeship. 'विज्ञानम्' means logic, process planning, management for effective problem solving.

### **विज्ञानेनात्मानं संपादयेत्**

*Embody self with Effectiveness.*

In any field, have skills, logic and management so as to improve yourself only. If you keep on doing good, you will become better. One step closer in the evolution to

become the best. The Growth mindset, ever-learning attitudes are the keys. Be a student, always.

### समपदितात्मा जितात्मा भवति

*Evolved Self becomes Self-Winner*

The one who has evolved by improving continuously, eventually wins himself/herself. One can earn money, get coveted jobs, build great industries, rule the world but if s/he does not win the own-self there is no use. The final aim in life is to win yourself.

### जितात्मा सर्वार्थे संयुज्यते

*Self-Winner is always Successful in all aspects*

The one who has won himself/herself can be considered successful. Then you are not lured by short term wins for self but long term prosperity for all. This is embodied in the term often used for छत्रपती शिवाजी महाराज (King Shivaji) as 'श्रीमंत योगी shrimant yogi' (wealthy ascetic).

See how precise, concise and pragmatic formulation is this. No mincing of words, no philosophical mumbo-jumbo, easy to understand and practical.

## References

### Chanakya on Management (Marathi) (Marathi Edition)

Now in Marathi Canakyas Arthasastra deals with the different aspects of managing a kingdom, including management of...

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## Rishi Chanakya Arthashastra Session 1

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