

## True aspirations

Most of us forget our new year resolutions simply because they are made only once a year. Or, perhaps they are too difficult or too frivolous for us to take them seriously. Or, maybe only the head resolves, but not the heart. After all, even as the years pass, like it or not, we have tasted a yearful of lessons, if we choose to reflect on them.

However, there are some universal resolutions that we can make every day of our lives, such as before turning in. These are failsafe resolutions reminding us that we are still an evolving process like the days we have been living: sometimes the sunrise is beautiful, sometimes not; sometimes the day is clear, sometimes not; sometimes the afternoon is cool, sometimes not; sometimes the evening is peaceful and night restful, sometimes not. But we pass through them all the same.

The great difference we can make is how we pass through our days. Here are five vital daily resolutions, reminders of the moment, that we can use to centre ourselves in the peaceful eye of life's storms.

"May I be well and happy!" Happiness does not always come to us. We need to invite it in to stay: I *want* to be well and happy, I *am* well and happy. Since the opposite statements work, too, we might as well keep in mind the positive ones. As we think, so we are.

The breath is the most precious thing we have. More correctly, we *are* our breath. If we breathe *happily*, we become happy; if we breathe *peacefully*, we are peaceful. We have learned to walk, but we might still need to learn to breathe, or to remember to truly breathe.

Breathe in, visualize the most beautiful place we have been to. Breathe out, picture the most wonderful people who have touched your lives.

"May all be well and happy!" Whomever we meet, even the unfriendly, we should welcome them into our hearts, "May you be well and happy!" It is written across our faces. People may not read or heed it at first, but this is how others' goodness can surprise us. Our lovingkindness is the key, the passepartout, to the door to true happiness.

"May the suffering be suffering-free!" We may not always be able to help others in need, but we can keep an open heart to them, wishing them well that they may quickly rise out of their difficulties and miseries. Often enough, we may be able to stretch our hands out in kindness and succour. This works best when we feel the joy of giving. For, such a peace builds up a firmer foundation for deeper meditative bliss and liberation.

"May the joyful ever joyful be!" Then there are those who seem to be better off than we are. For various good reasons, they are enjoying great wealth, fame, power and goodness. Even if we think the reasons are not good enough, we must accept that jealousy does not help. For, our fortunes are outrageously uncertain, and the more we are preoccupied with them, the less satisfied we are with them -- and ourselves.

For true happiness is not really in what we have, but in what we really are. A fulfilling life is to fully enjoy the moment. For, the past is gone, and the future never comes. If we are at peace with the moment as it arises, then we are wealthy beyond measure. For, the real meaning of "wealth" is a state of well, being well. If we truly live now, then we have freed

the past and tamed the future.

“Whatever good we do will fruit in time.” Our greatest weakness is a moral one, that is, to think that there is no point in doing any good. The second weakness is to think that we can be happy only by and for ourselves. And thirdly, that we can be forever happy with the world. The world -- what our senses (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind) create and sustain for us -- is ever shifting. The world is time and space: we have *been* all these years, we have *moved* far distances to come to the here and now. Yet, the moment I say this, it is gone. We have changed, and we will continue to change.

Goodness is basically an understanding and acceptance that change is about becoming better. Even if there are hiccups and upheavals in between, the ground will level again if we work at it. We are capable of great healing and goodness. The sky is not the limit, our heart is. A loveless heart, a hating mind, is small and limiting. A loving heart, an open mind, is capable of boundless truth, beauty and peace. That is why we love the beautiful.

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