



Think up meaningful New Year resolutions and introduce lasting changes in your life. For inspiration, log on to speakingtree.in

MASTERSTROKES

In 2012, there will be higher awakenings; shifts in consciousness and new beginnings at all levels
Guruji Krishnananda

My words create my world. I will use the word 'challenges' not 'problems'; 'I'm on top of the world' not 'Okay and fine'; 'Lessons learnt and not 'failures'
TT Rangarajan

Life is neutral. It is neither good nor bad. It is what it is. It is for each one of us to create life we want to see
Shuddhaananda Brahmachari

The secret of harmony is respect the other person in non-essential matters; yield!
Dada J P Vaswani

In prayer you try to talk to God; in meditation, you try to listen to him. Listening makes much more sense
Sadhguru

Complete surrender is when your universe decides what is right for you while you play Poker!
Master Minood

The most important thing is to learn the art of right thinking. Knowing how to think is more important than knowing what to think
Swami Tejomayananda

The journey is from the part to the whole, from microcosm to macrocosm, from individuality to totality
Manoj Kumar

Whenever you see, remember to see what is; not what you want to see
Vijay Paul

Modernity is not to unlearn the wisdom of the past but to understand that wisdom through new scientific findings
Ram Ram

The musk deer runs everywhere after the scent of musk; not realising it is the source! We run everywhere after happiness; not knowing it lies within
Radhika Mitter

Pledge To Use Your Brain

JOHN KNIGHTS says that learning begins as soon as we are born. It should be a lifelong journey thereafter, according to him

The world and all humanity will benefit if we all continue to proactively learn all through our lives. Too many of us get into a fixed mode of being based on our genetic make-up and early experiences in life. The danger is that as we mature, we tend to repeat the same experience and mistakes over and over again rather than truly learning from them through reflective practice.

We need to improve leadership — this will have more impact on our planet than anything else and because the sad truth is that most people stop learning once they become senior leaders, so they never reach their full potential.

Potential is an interesting concept because as we move towards our potential, it increases and, therefore, learning and development should be thought of as a life-long journey rather than a destination.

Fundamentally, learning is achieved by self-awareness, understanding of others, management of emotions, understanding how our brain works and by bringing one's conscience (values) to full consciousness in everything we do.

This brings us to an interesting question — how does our brain work? We have a genetic default brain that has not really changed since Stone Age man. When we are born, our brain is essentially the same as a baby born 50,000 years ago.

The essence of leadership is about change. Some people are content to accept the latest psychological theories and research on behaviour, whereas oth-

ers will find comfort that neuroscience actually supports those theories and gives them even greater credence.

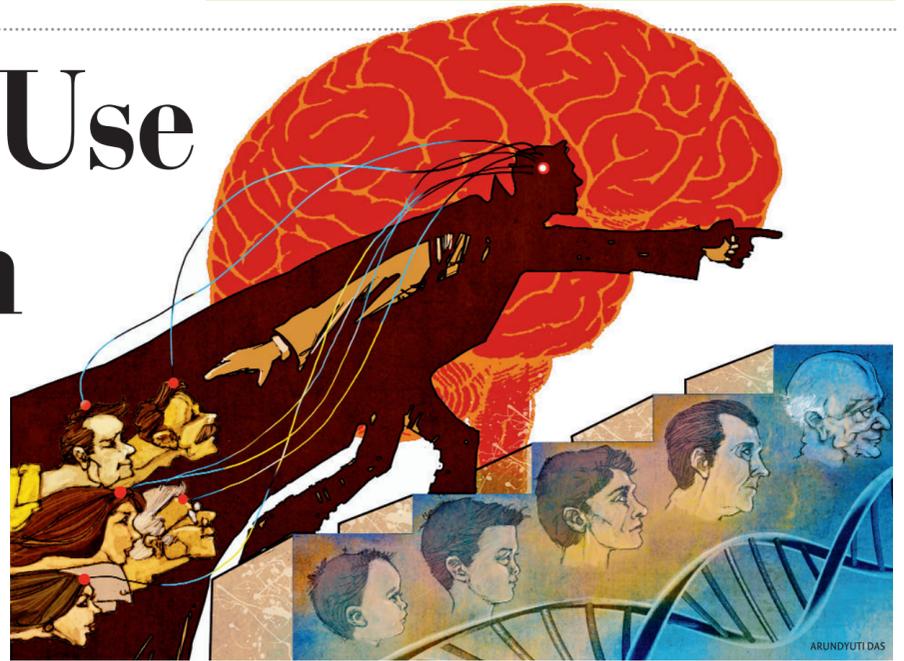
The human brain has developed genetically at a much slower pace than society which provides a behavioural conflict. Genetically, how the brain works is all about the inter-relationships between energy, memory and neural wiring, which defaults the brain to resist change, while at the same time wanting to be creative.

There are three kinds of neural connections. Serial connections (like a row of Christmas Tree lights) provide our IQ, instinct and learned habits.

Associative connections are where bundles of brain cells connect with each other creating new intra-serial wiring — this provides our emotional intelligence and conceptual thinking. Synchronous neural oscillations is where wave motions form in all the parts of a brain that relate to a particular event providing unitive and holistic thinking which ranges from the relative simplicity of understanding the totality of a coffee mug up to the high order of things such as the meaning of life.

Our default leadership style is "know everything and tell people what to do". This is not effective in today's world, not only because the brain resists being told what to do (it takes so much of the brain's energy), but also because information (knowledge) is too abundant to be controlled or used by one person.

Any change is most effectively implemented by the individual having an insight and thus developing their own solution. The insight also uses up a lot of energy but simultaneously releases



adrenaline-like chemicals that sustain that energy.

Continued focus and attention keeps neural circuits open and stabilise the new neural connections (created by insights) thus becoming memorable and a new habit. This is how behavioural change occurs.

The conclusions for enabling improved personal performance and leadership include the following:

- Leaders must support individuals and provide them with the right environment to reach their own solutions through insights.
- Leaders telling people what to do, do not provide sustainable effective change.
- To learn new behaviours, leaders must provide the opportunity and environment for their people to focus on and spend time learning new behaviours in order to sustain change.
- As the essence of leadership is change, it is equally important that the leader uses this approach for personal change to enable change among his followers.
- Coaching, group facilitation, reflection, action, learning and experiential learning, as well as contemplation and meditation are all excellent techniques to support people in finding their own solutions, embedding change into habits and sustaining new behaviour.

● Happy people have more insights especially when in a calm frame of mind. Combine this with a happy environment where people think about future possibilities rather than past performance and you have a formula more likely to lead to sustained change.

● The final conclusion of all this is that leaders should engage their people in the development of vision at the conceptual stage in order to effectively implement sustainable visionary change. ■

This stirred an intellectual debate on speakingtree.in

Strong Foundation For Leaders

These are novel concepts which should serve as foundation bricks for leadership. No wonder, supervisors and leaders are the most hated as they have not moved with the times!

First, Understand Your Brain

I disagree. I think the best leaders understand their people and their brains first, and then comes strategy. Condition yourselves first, then inward reflection is enriched.

Uma Nair

Change Begins With The Self

All managerial activity focuses on others, so look within and start the process of change from the self first!

A Leader Knows His Mind

A leader must first study the whole environment and then condition himself accordingly to lead. A person who is not confident from within can never become a leader. Leaders are always ahead of their followers.

Wisdom From The Masters

As Steven Covey says, "Understand and then be understood." Lao Tzu, the great Chinese sage and authority says: "If your plan is inflexible/It cannot succeed./Unable to bend,/The tree will break. Hardness and stiffness/Lead to destruction./Flow with the process/And live to prevail."

Look Into The Future

To be a leader, one has to see future possibilities more than the past. Leadership is about taking responsibilities.

Ancient Wisdom Is Best

To understand the brain, we have to go to our ancient texts and read the same together with contemporary neurological findings.

Ravi Kannamkulangara Ayypan

Do you have an opinion? Post a comment on speakingtree.in. The best will be featured here



Story Books In Santa's Bag

UMA NAIR gets intellectually inspired by a simple message to Santa from a six-year-old boy

During Xmas, our school hosts the annual fete. This time, our fete was last week. As I wound up in the evening, I got chatting with the computer teacher, Geetu Munjal. "Did you take something for your little boy to eat," I asked.

"I took him two books," she replied. "He gave me a card he made for Santa and I happened to read it. It said: 'Santa, give me books for Christmas!'" she added.

In an age of social networking sites and TV-addiction, here comes inspiration from a six-year-old! His simple note to Santa made me stop and think. Parents can indeed inspire their kids to read even in this audio-visual age. Reading is the best way to start off your child on a high intellectual road. It instills confidence — one of the most valuable things you can give him as a parent. Good readers are successful in school and have better job prospects. They

also learn more about the world.

As children, we would go to Kerala for holidays by train. It took us ages to reach!

My father would plan ahead for the three days on the train. He'd take us to Shankar Market in Delhi to a second-hand bookstore and buy us 20 books. Today, I owe my prowess in English and even my vocation as a teacher to my parents. They encouraged me to read and to enjoy the written word. ■



to the authors who wrote the books I read.
Fool On Earth

Lessons From Childhood

What you learn as a child shapes you as an adult. There is an astute saying in Tamil, "What cannot be bent at the age of five cannot be bent at age 50."

Reading Expands The Mind

Childhood lessons are the root of knowledge. There are millions of books to read. Each book is a fount of learning. Reading with understanding expands the child's 'power of thinking.'

Go Beyond Your Course Book

In the era of SMS and Facebook, reading is losing its importance. Nowadays, we read only what is related to our sphere of work. Novels, biographies and books by eminent authors are biting dust in libraries. The desire to read beyond my course books overcame me last year and now I am collecting books by Premchand, Dinkar, Vivekanand, Jawaharlal Nehru and many other great writers in Hindi and English and I am enjoying it!

Reading-Inspired Learning

Knowledge gathered from exposure to books of all kinds brings about an internal transformation which helps you live in the practical world!

Sunil Dutt

Books top Xmas wishlists on speakingtree.in

Igniting Young Minds

Make reading a habit. Reading new books inspires young minds to think.

Sid Varma

Each One Gift A Book

Grown ups should inspire kids through example. Gifting colourful and inspiring books to children will be a great service to future citizens.

Narendra Babu

The Power Of Reading

I am a high school dropout. But I completed my education by reading books. So far, I have read more than 20,000 books on various subjects. Most people with my educational qualification work as peons. But I am a general manager with a salary of over two lakh per month and with lots of post-graduates working under me!

I am sharing all this only to highlight the importance of reading. I dedicate my success

Jungle On My Mind

UDAY KUMAR wonders how to clear the cloying jungle from his mind that allows preying animals to roam free

I always ponder over the dense jungle inside my mind on which wild animals like lust, desire, anger and immorality prey. How do I find my way out?

SEEKERS CUT THROUGH THE OVERGROWTH

It's Okay To Falter

Read these lines from *Bhavani Ashtakam* written by Adi Shankaracharya: I am in this ocean of birth and death, I am a coward, who dare not face sorrow, I am filled with lust and sin, I am filled with greed and desire, And tied I am, by this useless life that I lead, So you are my refuge and my only refuge, Bhavani.

If Shankaracharya felt that way, can we think differently?

Alpana Agarwal

Live With Life's Dualities

Make these animals your friends and use them for enhancing the experience of life. These attributes can be used positively. Read the *Bhagavad Gita*. It gives you the entire science of self-control. Self-realisation, right action, karma, yoga, meditation, jap, mind control, enhancing the understanding of love, rightful sacrifice, courage, following the truth, being fearless, and not allowing stress in life — you learn about all this. You also learn to adopt equanimity and understanding — and about the duality of life and how not to get affected by it. Accept some facts and keep your honour intact. Do rightful action. Do your *swadharma* — that is, mind your own

business. Now that you know the *Bhagavad Gita*, read and implement it in your life.

Sandesh Saboo

You Have Touched A High

If you have realised the villainess that is in your mind, you are already in the realm of spirituality. You need to be aware and alert of your mind and its workings. The anger, greed, violence, and all your insatiable desires will find this jungle slowly falling apart and light entering your mind.

Arun Kumar

Soar Above All Weakness

The beasts are prowling on the ground. Elevate yourself and soar to the level of the eagle that soars high up in the sky. To the eagle, all the jungle is just a green ocean of treetops. Sway with the breeze, but be calm and serene.

Namranjana Jain

Our Minds Are Weak

The superficial layer of our mind is full of dirty things; to get healthy, pure and refreshed, practise meditation under a real spiritual master. Ignore negative traits and have faith.

Arun Kumar Laha

You Already Know

Your thoughts are rare and speak volumes of your spiritual insight. The jungle within you is on the verge of vanishing.

Kamal Sharma

Spiritual CONNECT

Are You A Spiritual Seeker Seeking To Improve Yourself and the World?

Are you sick and tired of all the lollipop spiritual stuff dished out by the so called best-selling books and all the lollipop Gurus who are more interested in politics and power than God? Are you frustrated for not getting answers to your questions, and personal and precise guidance when you need it? Do you think it sucks to be a part of a large group of thousands of people where internal politics kills the real purpose of spiritual growth and learning? Would you like to be a part of a small core spiritual group? Are you absolutely and fully ready to realize God, cost what it may cost? Are you ready to know the truth however harsh or shocking it may be? If so, we should meet. My name is Dr Amit Jain, and I am the Director of CFEL, Center For Enlightened Living. We are about to embark on a journey to create a select group who will be specially trained to become spiritual guides who will lead India and the world to a new age. We are looking for spiritual seekers, of any age young or young at heart, male or female, married or single, who seek illumination and enlightenment, who have a keen interest in knowing the secrets of God and this Universe and who have a will to do good. If you have ever wished to live in a better world, we definitely want to meet you. For more information call 9811352455, or email cfeelite@gmail.com. We must warn you though, if you already belong to a sect and already believe in a Guru or path then you'd be better off following that Guru or path then getting to know us.

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