

## LOSING CHILDHOOD

Children are forgetting to talk, play, jump and read after getting mobile, computer, laptop. It is not understood that how to take back the mobile which was caught in his hand during the Corona period? Earlier, where children used to eagerly wait for the bell of their sports in schools, used to look forward to painting, drama, music competitions and all kinds of activities, now they are not interested in these activities but only in the screen of any electronic device. On the one hand the children they have such state-of-the-art techniques in their hands, and on the other hand, they have to be victims of various kinds of crimes continuously. These include sexual crimes, economic crimes and all kinds of cyber crimes. In nuclear families, most of the parents are busy in their day-to-day work, because there is compulsion that if they do not work and have a job, then how will the house run, how will the children be brought up. That is why most of the children of such families are dependent on day care centers or helpers. Absence of grandparents in homes made the children even more lonely What is it? After all, how can children talk to their parents who are busy day and night? Many times it happens that the child wants to say something, insists on something, then in order to listen to his problem, instead of solving it, he is coaxed with a chocolate or a toy, or scolded and silenced. Are being given. In most of the crimes against children, the same thing comes to the fore that they could not tell their parents about the crime in time. Many times children even commit suicide due to fear of criminals and parents They keep on regretting. The stress and quarrels of the parents also have a very bad effect on the children and they cannot get out of the bad memories of their childhood for the rest of their life. Experts say that parents should never fight in front of their children, but in families where parents separate, get divorced, children are more likely to be in trouble. How can their problem be solved instead of being ignored or scolded? How can they escape the violence? How will children be free from the problem of loneliness? Some suggest that if orphanages and old age homes are combined, the loneliness of children and the elderly will be reduced.



OFF 'D' CUFF

### Adversity Always Brings Choices

Adverse circumstances spare none of us. All through life, we come across adversity. We come across events, circumstances, situations and people, whom we don't like. We come across failures and heartbreaks, dejections and frustrations, loss and ruin, disease and ill health, grief and sorrow, and anxiety, fear and stress. But adverse situations need not be just a pain in the neck. Every adverse situation lends itself to many choices, and depending on what choice we make, we can create a different reality, and our life can move on a different path. Once we make a choice, we will get the results of that choice. If we want different results, we have to make different choices, not keep cursing our fate, our destiny and our lives.

When faced with any adverse event or situation, we have, broadly speaking, four choices.

1) Denial and defense

We can choose to deny the whole situation as if it is not really an issue. If we suffer from a broken relationship and heartbreak, we can deny it by saying 'Oh, its nothing. Anyway, I was not really having any great relationship with that person, and I was myself thinking of breaking the relationship". If that is indeed the truth, then the adversity is no longer an issue, because we got what we wanted. But if we are lying to ourselves, if we are denying the hurt, the trauma and the suffering, we cannot be happy. We may be able to apply a lid to the issue and suppress our emotions about the issue, but these will fester, linger and grow, and will eventually burst out, as another problem or a disease or bring us back to a similar issue.

Going hand in hand with denials and lying to oneself, is defense or getting defensive. Someone says something to hurt us or criticizes us or points out our mistakes. Instead of listening to them and giving it a long thought, and deciding whether they are right or wrong, we immediately jump to our own defense. No, I did not say that, no, I did not do that, I was doing correctly, I forgot, I got distracted by a phone call, I had too many things on my mind etc. - --we land up giving a list of excuses which is supposed to justify our mistakes and make them okay.

2) Blame

The second choice we make, when faced with adversity, is to blame. We either blame ourselves, fall into self-pity and a victim mode (I'm so stupid, I'm useless, I'm always making mistakes, my life is cursed, I'm born with all these issues etc.) or we blame others. "It is because of you, or because of my mother or father or brother or spouse, or the weather, or my profession or the govern-

- P V Vaidyanathan

## Grow trees for greening the catchments

■ PROF. (DR.) R.D. GUPTA

As many of the catchments of streams and rivers viz, the Devak, the Ujh; Basantar and Manwar and tributaries of the river Tawi and Chenab, are totally deforested. Heavy deforestation of the catchments of these rivers has brought about a change in climate and bare slopes of the sub-mountains in the catchments. Bare catchments have not only resulted in the reduction of water of these rivers / streams but also depleted fresh water resources like springs/baulies and lakes. Even a little rainfall in catchments causes in swelling of the rivers and siting up of their bed owing to heavy and rapid erosion of catchment areas. The whole of the area, therefore, calls for catchments treatment.

Among the various catchment treatments, tree planting and planting of grasses are preferred. It

is because forest trees and grass cover play a significant role not only in checking soil erosion/runoff losses but also maintain balance in physical landscape through the regeneration of degraded / eroded lands. While planting the trees their local species should be given priority to grow. Such trees already stand mentioned in the sub-heading of Afforestation or Greening the area by plantation. Now a days if our forests are in peril so are the grasslands. Both men and animals contribute their destruction. A survey conducted about 50 years ago, classified 80 percent of country's grasslands as "very poor" in forage production. The grazing areas are shrinking and deteriorating due to depletion of the edible grasses for the livestock. In certain pockets of Kandi belt of Jammu, grasslands already become limited and live stock have to depend upon the vegetation of

forest species and bushes. Goats have become popular because they eat both shoots and roots which means further degradation of the grasslands. In light of the above, the grasslands require to be ameliorated by way of planting more local grasses like Khabbal or Dub(Drub) grass (Cynodondactylon) which is a perennial grass and grows throughout the year. Its growth is more luxuriant during the Kharif season, particularly in monsoon period. This grass is a very popular for grasslands/grass plots. It is also a very useful fodder particularly for milch cattle and horses. Swank grass (Fanicumcolonus), Dilla or Moth grass (Cyperusrotundus) and Chhinder grass (Elusineflegellifera) are the other grass species which can be grown as fodder for the Kandi belt of Jammu.

Areas having steep topography require a well

planned integrated and rational land use in forestry / agro-forestry horticulture and agriculture. Hill tops and steep slopes must be placed permanently under forest species. Planting of forest trees liketali (Dalbergiasisso), kikar (Acacia nilotica), Chir Pine (Pinusroxburghii) and Buffel Grass (Cenchruscliaris) at higher slope (>25%) have found very suitable in checking soil erosion and conserving water in comparison to similar sloppy areas where indiscriminate felling of trees and cultivation for growing hill millets with age old practice and the problem of soil erosion has been aggravated. A good soil binder Sanatta (Dodonae viscoso) has been found very beneficial in conserving soil moisture and controlling soil erosion.

(The author is former Associate Dean-cum Chief Scientist KVK, SKUAST-J).

## Save Surya Putri

Down below, the river loses its water table and is hugely encountered by garbage dumps, debris and other waste material of unprecedented nature . How this nectar of old golden days is to be kept clean is the clarion call of the day? And then what steps are warranted to restore back this most reverential river to its glory is doubtlessly, a paramount need of the hour. A few steps suggested are:

Averting encroachment: All out efforts are warranted to be taken to remove encroachments around the river Tawi and in this context the Forests, Revenue, JDA and MCD and other NGO's would have to come to the prefrontal.

The exercise needs to be initiated right from Nagrota downwards upto Ware House Beliehrana and Soura Chak on both the banks of the river so that the sylvan surroundings of the Tawi is restored back to its pristine beauty.

Discouraging garbage dumping: The tippers, small carriers loaded with waste filth, debris, ply thence and other non-biodegradable wastes of all hues are dumped into the river making it filth-ridden. These waste materials are mostly an outcome of the marriages and other ceremonial occasions and the same is true of waste material of hospitals and medicare centers. The safest and healthiest way out is to recycle this waste material. Catchment area treatment: All the catchments right from the origin of the Tawi, down below RS Pura where it mixes with Rivi warrants to be treated by way of massive afforestation works, coupled with soil conservation

works. In the forestry parlance, the campaign should start from top to bottom as the barren tops are benefit of vegetative cover and unless, these are well clothed. The entire exercise shall prove futile. And in achieving this mission a multidisciplinary approach on the part of forests , soil conservation, agriculture, horticulture and sericulture departments has to take intense at this resections . This will enhance scenic beauty of the area.

Vehicular cleansing : Does anyone of us claim that Tawi river is having clustered service stations for vehicles which of all hues intrude into it for cleansing?And where have the concerned authorities gone? They probably seem to have gone under deep slumber. So, at this juncture all -out efforts are needed to be taken to unit a blanket ban on this ugly practice which otherwise tantamount to desertification of river Tawi a pride of Jammu.

Fish Culture: Some natural springs and ponds do exist on the left bank of the Tawi river where there is ample scope of fish culture and the department of fisheries have to take a forward stride.

Massive afforestation along the Tawi banks:Arboriculture alongside the Tawi shall provide picturesque panorama to the people.

Bathing Ghats: On the left bank of the river exists idol of Lord Hanuman amongst a cluster of many temples. The place is also known as 'Hari Ki Puri' where people of all hues throng for holy dip on the occasion of pious days. In case these steps are taken, there is hope that the Tawi will flow majestically once again.

(The author is former Dy. Conservator of Forest, J&K)

## World worries about disability more than disabled people do

■ VINOD CHANDRASHEKHAR DIXIT

3rd December is observed as The International day of Persons with Disabilities. The day aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities. Additionally, it also aims to raise awareness of the situations of persons with disabilities in all aspects of political, social, economic and cultural life. Disability is one of the most important issues in the contemporary society. In 2006, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was also adopted. It aims at working towards creating equal opportunities for persons with disabilities through the implementation of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development. Disabled people are people who have mental or physical limitation so they depend on someone to support them in doing their daily life needs and jobs. Although disabled

people are a minority and they are normally ignored, they are still a part of the society. Disability is somehow an obstacle in every disabled person's life. It is considered as a physical or mental condition that limits a person's movements, senses or activities. Modern societies have recognized the problems faced by these individuals and passed laws that ease their interactions. It is not common to find such immense willpower in the general population. Therefore, disability leads to a tough life owing to its emotional demands on its subjects.

Each type of disability needs different kind of support and assistance. But the most important thing is the positive attitude and self-confidence. If a disabled person has these two qualities, no disability can stop him from achieving success in life. According to WHO "More than 1 billion people experience disability, and this figure is predicted to rise, due in part to population ageing and an

increase in the prevalence of non-communicable diseases." Having a disability should not mean being excluded. More than a billion people worldwide have some form of disability; many children. Whether affected by the disease, landmines, or other injuries, children with disabilities in developing countries often find themselves isolated, alone, and with little hope.The statistics show that the proportion of disabled people in the world rose from 10 percent in the seventies of the last century to 15 percent so far. The number of handicapped exceeds a billion people all over the world, occupied about 15 percent of the world's population. Nevertheless, today, the problem of people with disabilities and their discrimination persists because many biases and prejudices are resilient. In this regard, education is particularly vulnerable to the problem of the integration of students with disabilities into the learning process. Disability is the complex notion that involves lim-

ited opportunities and special needs of people but it does not mean the inferiority of individuals compared to those, who do not have disability.It does not matter whether the individuals is handsome or talented, like Tom Cruise. At the end of the day, he will always be a disabled man. This attitude obscures one's accomplishments and may even discourage some people from accomplishing anything.It is a shame that people do not care about the capabilities of the disabled persons. For a long time, the disabled people have been labelled as "deviant" or "other." It is to be remembered that a man can achieve whatever he wishes to. If he wills, he sets aside all physical, psychological and mental disabilities provided with strong reason, commitment and resolve. Disability can never be an obstacle to success if one stands against it. Let's ensure divyangians are able to access health care, education, employment opportunities and participate fully in the society.

## 'Mental Health' - Not 'Destination' but 'Process'

■ MAHADEEP SINGH JAMWAL

If we will ask a person stepping into the 'Senior Citizenry' what his primary goal is? Quick response will be 'I want to remain mentally fit' with 'sound health'. Our psychological, emotional and social well-being impacts every area of our life. Especially in old age, maintaining our mental fitness is vital to living a happy, healthy life. But unfortunately, millions of oldies lacking mental fitness leave them feeling hopeless, helpless and alone. Mental health is an area where oldies are embarrassed. They don't want to talk about it because somehow they feel they're a failure or they're embarrassed for their child, but mental health, I feel, is something that we have to talk about. Let us start with determination that I am bent, but not broken. I am scarred, but not disfigured. I am sad, but not hopeless. I am tired, but not powerless. I am angry, but not bitter. I am depressed, but not giving up. It's so important that we all speak up on mental health. Here we find those 'Senior Citizenry' with strong family or social connections are generally healthier than those who lack a support network. If we have to understand in a simple way what is 'mental fitness' and 'sound health', mentally fit means the ability of an individual to perceptible understand and communicate specific information pertaining to his or her health, safety, and medication, having the skills and practices to improve and sustain state of wellbeing and perform at our best and cultivating awareness of how we think, behave and feel. Mental health is not a destination but a process. Physical fitness relates to the body's ability to function and it counts for body composition, flexibility, muscular system, muscular endurance and cardiorespiratory endurance.

If we have to understand in a simple way, what it means to be 'Sound Health' means it is not just 'Physical Fitness' but it is also the 'Mental Health Fitness' and balance of these both aspects of health leads to 'Sound Health System'. An individual mentally fit is an individual mentally alert. Mental alertness enhances cognitive functions as we age.

Mental alertness is a state of high sensory awareness where we can focus and concentrate on a task at hand, as well as perceive and act fast in any situation. It relates to reasoning, capability, awareness, perception, and imagination, and therefore staying mentally alert is vital for productivity levels. We need, ultimately, to be able to view mental health with the same clear-headedness we show when talking about physical health. Taking care of our mental health is as important as maintaining our physical health, staying mentally fit means living in the moment and enjoying life with our near and dear ones. "Alert presence is the garden of personal growth"- Joseph Rain.

If we live with alertness, we live rightly. Mental alertness enhances our survival instincts. A person's mental fitness indicates their ability to think clearly and to make decisions effectively and efficiently.

Those having 'Mental Health Fitness' are emotionally strong individuals and have better strength to fight depression, anxiety, stress and negative thinking. A mentally alert individual interacts with the world in a different way. Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) study says that about one in seven persons in India suffered from mental disorders of varying severity in 2017.

These include depression, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia, bipolar disorders, idiopathic developmental intellectual disability, conduct disorders, and autism. Research found that depression is highest in older adults that contributed 33.8 per cent of all mental disorders. According to research, there are many factors that might affect mental alertness. These factors include general fatigue, age, body weakness, or other deficiencies. We need to boost mental alertness to remain rejuvenated and refreshed. Fitness exercises, meditation, yoga and counseling, are great ways to maintain good mental health.

When we crisscross our eating habits, both good and bad, it triggers unhealthy eating that guides us to switch over to healthier habits. It is a proven fact that good nutrition plays a major role in helping us to lead a healthy lifestyle combined with physical activity. Getting enough rest when our body needs it and making sure we get at least seven hours of sleep each night is an important key to improving mental alertness and cognitive abilities.

Mental health is a catalyst in every aspect of our life. It's not just a little issue that we can put into a box. Our present circumstances don't determine where we can go; they merely determine where we start. Our mental health goes through cycles with changing times, like our physical health. Sometimes, things are great and other times, not so much. This realization makes it easier for many to talk about their mental health difficulties. Mental health needs a great deal of attention. It's the final taboo and it needs to be faced and dealt with.

I will end up with a message from 'Demi Lovato' for those feeling lacking in mental health "You don't have to live that way. You don't have to struggle in silence. You can be un-silent.

You can live well with a mental health condition, as long as you open up to somebody about it, because it's really important you share your experience with people so that you can get the help that you need."

(The author is President Senior Citizens' Club (Regd) Udhampur).

### PROGRESSING J&K

#### Through Mission Youth, Govt drive socio-economic empowerment compared JK youth

#### Over 30k youth provided direct livelihood means during 2021-22

J&K Government is laying special thrust with Mission Youth programme on skilling & self-employment of youth with targeted schemes to drive a socio-economic transformation.

Government has instructed for impact assessment of initiatives and called upon stakeholders for exploring all avenues for enhanced corporate engagement in Youth empowerment and skilling programmes/schemes.

According to officials more than 30,000 youth, including more than 12,000 girls, have been provided with direct livelihood means during the year 2021-22.

Mission Youth has also partnered with reputed institutions/ organizations of the country including BSE Institute, ICICI Foundation, Ashok Leyland, Wipro etc. with an aim to facilitate skilling of youth in high employability potential sectors like BFSI, Robotics, Artificial intelligence, etc. and more than 10,000 young boys and girls were provided with market-driven skill development trainings during 2021-22.

Highlighting the achievements of Mission youth, the CEO informed that under Mumkin scheme, during FY 2021-22, 3651 vehicles were provided to youth for self-employment against the target of 2022 vehicles.

Under Tajesswini, about 2443 Young girls were provided assistance under the program during FY 2021-22 against the target of 2022.

More than 11725 youth, including 5237 girls were provided with customized market driven trainings. 910 Candidates, including 251 Girls, are being provided with necessary training to qualify the recruitment process for joining Armed Forces as Agni Veers.

Under Parvaaz Scheme, coaching of youth is being sponsored by Mission Youth in reputed institutions. Coaching for civil services and NEET JEE is provided under this scheme

Pertinently, Mission Youth is an ambitious programme of UT administration aimed to positively engage youth in socio-economic development of J&K through a multi-pronged strategy involving all necessary systematic interventions particularly in the areas of Skill Development, Livelihood generation, Education, Recreation and Sports. The thrust areas under Mission Youth is Targeted implementation of existent Livelihood Generation Programmes; Establishment of Residential Coaching Institutions for Competitive Examinations & Professional Courses; Establishment & Operationalization of District Youth Centers in all 20 Districts of J&K; Education, Career Counseling & Market-driven Skill Development Programmes; Recreation, Social Engagement & Sports; Youth Innovation Promotion Programmes.

Mission Youth is also working on creating a database of all unemployed youth along with their bio-data so as to help them in finding decent jobs under this program as per their skill set and core capabilities. To sum up it would be apt to say that Mission Youth has transformed the youth development scenario in J&K in a remarkable manner.