

CONSERVING FUEL

Importance of conserving fuel and the environmental consequences of its excessive use. It emphasizes that fuel is a finite natural resource, and the process of its formation takes millions of years. You stress that fuel is a valuable and limited resource that plays a crucial role in modern human life. The growing global population and increasing demands for comfort have led to a rapid increase in fuel consumption. You describe the natural process by which fossil fuels are formed over millions of years from buried organic materials under high temperature and pressure. The combustion of fossil fuels is highlighted as a major source of environmental pollution, leading to the release of harmful gases and contributing to global warming.

The message mentions that the combustion of fuels leads to increased levels of carbon dioxide (CO2) in the atmosphere, which is linked to changing weather patterns and global warming.

Solar and wind energy are suggested as renewable and sustainable alternatives to fossil fuels. Solar panels are specifically recommended for household energy needs.

Encouraging the use of public transport and non-motorized modes of transportation like bicycles and walking is suggested as a way to reduce fuel consumption.

In conclusion, your message advocates for the responsible and sustainable use of fuel resources while promoting the adoption of alternative energy sources to mitigate the environmental impact of fossil fuel consumption. It underscores the importance of individual and collective efforts to conserve fuel and protect the environment.

The Power of Mindfulness: From Mind Full to Mindful

■ RITUAGARWAL

In today's fast-paced world, where the hustle and bustle of daily life can often leave us feeling overwhelmed and stressed, the practice of mindfulness has emerged as a powerful tool for finding peace and balance. From corporate boardrooms to meditation retreats, mindfulness has garnered widespread attention for its ability to transform the way we think, feel, and live. But what exactly is mindfulness, and how can it help us shift from a state of "mind full" to "mindful"?

At some point in your life, someone probably told you: "Enjoy every moment. Life is short." Maybe you've smiled and rolled your eyes at this, well-intentioned relative or co-worker. But the fact is, there's something to it. Trying to enjoy each moment may actually be good for your health.

The idea is called mindfulness. This ancient practice is about being completely aware of what's happening in the present-of all that's going on inside and all that's happening around you. It means not living your life on "autopilot." Instead, you experience life as it unfolds moment to moment, good and bad, and without judgment or preconceived notions.

At its core, mindfulness is the practice of being fully present in the moment, without judgment. It involves paying deliberate and non-judgmental attention to your thoughts, emotions, sensations, and surroundings. Mindfulness encourages us to observe our experiences without getting caught up in them, creating a mental distance that can lead to greater clarity and emotional resilience

Many of us live in a constant state of "mind fullness," characterized by racing thoughts, multitasking, and an ever-growing to-do list. This state of perpetual mental chatter can leave us feeling stressed, anxious, and disconnected from ourselves and those around us. It's as if we're on autopilot, reacting to life rather than living it.

According to Buddhism ,The sati of the Buddha is directed inwards. If you let a goat graze on a large yard it goes in all directions. If you tie the goat to a rope and the rope to a pole, the goat only grazes in a circle around the pole. The rope is like sati and the goat is like our mind. Sati keeps the mind to itself.Sati is that which knows where the mind is, so that you do not get caught up in worldly worries.With sati you build less and less air castles; you are less absorbed with external and internal fickleness because you see it for what it is. In this way you slowly get rid of desire and the suffering that comes from it to an ever greater degree. Sati is not passive relaxation but the watchdog of the mind that is always alert. The watchdog is constantly alert to what your mind, and by extension the body, is doing.

Mindfulness provides a way out of this cycle. By intentionally focusing our attention on the present moment, we can break free from the trap of mind fullness. This transformation involves several key principles: The first step toward mindfulness is awareness. Recognize when your mind is racing or when you're lost in thought. Becoming aware of your mental state is the foundation of mindfulness. Mindfulness encourages us to observe our thoughts without judgment. Instead of labeling thoughts as good or bad, simply acknowledge them and let them pass like clouds in the sky. One of the simplest ways to practice mindfulness is by paying attention to your breath. Focus on the sensation of your breath entering and leaving your body. When your mind wanders, gently bring it back to your breath. Engage your senses in the present moment. Notice the colours, sounds, and textures around you. When eating, savor the flavors and textures of your food. When walking, feel theGround beneath your feet. Mindfulness involves accepting the present moment as it is, even if it's uncomfortable. By accepting your current experience, you can respond to it more skillfully.

Practicing mindfulness regularly can yield a wealth of benefits:Mindfulness helps reduce stress by calming the mind and reducing the fight-or-flight response.With practice, mindfulness can enhance your ability to concentrate and make better decisions. Mindfulness has been linked to increased feelings of happiness and overall well-being. By being fully present with others, you can improve the quality of your relationships and communication. Mindfulness can help you manage difficult emotions and develop emotional resilience. A major benefit of mindfulness is that it encourages you to pay attention to your thoughts, your actions and your body. For example, studies have shown that mindfulness can help people achieve and maintain a healthy weight. It is so common for people to watch TV and eat snack food out of the box without really attending to how much they are eating.With mindful eating, you eat when you're hungry, focus on each bite, enjoy your food more and stop when you're full.

Mindfulness offers a path from mind full to mindful living. By practicing mindfulness, you can cultivate a greater sense of awareness, peace, and clarity in your life. It's a simple yet profound shift in perspective that can lead to a more fulfilling and balanced existence. So, the next time you find yourself overwhelmed by the demands of life, remember the power of mindfulness to transform your mind from "full" to truly "mindful."

So, before you roll your eyes again, take a moment and consider mindfulness.

In a day, when you don't come across any problems - you can be sure that you are travelling in a wrong path -Swami Vivekananda

Hard Skill: Technical Perspective and Prospects

■ DR. RAJKUMAR SINGH

Hard skills are specific, teachable abilities or knowledge that are quantifiable and can be measured. They are typically job-specific and are acquired through education, training, or experience. They are often used to perform tasks or complete specific functions within a job. These skills are essential for performing technical or specialized tasks efficiently and effectively. Its main aspects include: a. Technical Skills: These are skills related to using specific tools, software, or machinery. b. Data Analysis: Skills related to gathering, analyzing, and interpreting data which can also include data mining, statistical analysis, and data visualization using tools like Excel, R, or Tableau. c. Project Management: Abilities to plan, execute, and oversee projects. This includes skills like project scheduling, resource allocation, and risk management. d. Language Proficiency: Mastery of one or more languages, whether it's a programming language or a foreign language. e. Digital Marketing: Knowledge of online marketing strategies and tools, such as search engine optimization (SEO), pay-per-click (PPC) advertising, and email marketing software. f. Accounting and Finance: Skills related to financial analysis, bookkeeping, financial modeling, and understanding financial statements. g. Data Entry: Accurate and efficient data entry, often requiring proficiency in software like Microsoft Excel or specialized data entry tools. Hard skills are important for job performance and are often listed on resumes or job applications to demonstrate a candidate's qualifications for a particular role. However, it's essential to complement hard skills with soft skills to excel in most workplaces, as a well-rounded skill set.

Origin and development of hard skill

The concept of hard skills has evolved over time, primarily driven by changes in technology, industry, and the nature of work. Its development owes to several factors which largely include: a. Industrial Revolution: The Industrial Revolution, which began in the late 18th century, played a significant role in the development of hard skills. With the advent of mechanization and factory-based production, there was a growing need for workers who could operate machines, understand technical processes, and perform tasks with precision.b. Craftsmanship: Before the Industrial Revolution, many skills were passed down through apprenticeships and were considered traditional crafts. These skills were highly specialized and involved hands-on training in areas such as blacksmithing, wood-

working, and textiles. While these skills were still "hard" in the sense of being specific and teachable, they were often passed down from one generation to the next. c. Technological Advancements: As technology advanced, new hard skills emerged to meet the demands of modern industries. For example, the development of computers and the internet led to the rise of hard skills related to programming, network administration, and digital marketing. d. Formal Education and Training: With the growth of formal education systems and vocational training programs, hard skills became more structured and accessible. Schools, colleges, and training institutions began offering courses and certifications in various hard skill areas, making it easier for individuals to acquire these skills. e. Specialization: As industries became more specialized, so did the hard skills required within those industries. f. Globalization: The globalization of industries and markets increased the demand for specific hard skills that could be applied in a global context. Proficiency in languages, international trade, and cross-cultural communication became valuable hard skills. g. Rapid Technological Change: In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, the pace of technological change accelerated, leading to the constant evolution of hard skills. This required workers to adapt and continually update their skill sets to remain competitive in the job market. h. Digital Transformation: The digital transformation of businesses and organizations has led to the emergence of new hard skills related to data analysis, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and software development.i. Automation and AI: The increasing use of automation and artificial intelligence in various industries has led to the development of hard skills related to programming and maintaining automated systems. As industries and technologies continue to evolve, so will the specific hard skills required in the labour market, highlighting the importance of ongoing learning and skill development.

Prospects of hard skill

The prospects for individuals with strong hard skills are generally quite positive in today's job market and will likely remain so in the future because: a. High Demand: Many hard skills are in high demand across various industries. Employers are continually seeking individuals with expertise in areas such as technology, data analysis, healthcare, engineering, and skilled trades. b. Job Security: Proficiency in specific hard skills often translates into job security.

■ G. L KHAJURIA

Thou art the lustre in the moon and effulgence in the sun, thou art the taste in water and warmth in the flame; bereft of thou, the world would be devoid of substance(Panchastavi)".And the mother earth and all her manifestation of charming natural gifts like lushgreen forests of higher and lower strata intermingled with blooming flowers and with them the mother earth smiles. This is an unutterable truth and is the greatest strength-(Mahabharata).

The enchanting and thrilling upper Bhyunder valley was brought into limelight far back in 1931 by Frank Symthe, member of the successful Kamet expedition who gave the name 'valley of flowers' and made it world famous. Frank Symthe was so enamored by its charming and enchanting valley that he visited it six years later; explored it extensively with utmost curiosity. As a consequence, therefore, he wrote a fascinating description in his famous travelogue- 'The Valley of flowers". He also collected more than 250 varieties of seeds and plants for the botanical garden of Edinburgh.

The valley of Flowers lies between the main land of Alknanda and Dhuli Ganga, in the Zanskar ranges of Garhwal Himalayas. The river Pushpavati which flows through this valley has its source in the huge Tripta glacier which extends upto the most famous Ghori Parvat peak which is a flattish valley about 5kms long and 2 kms wide stretching East-

■ DR. BANARSI LAL

The Earth is the most unique planet because it developed the most intelligent life called as the human race. It is the priceless gift from God. Environmental and climate literacy is the engine not only for creating the environmental and climate laws and policies but also to promote green technologies. It is worthwhile to mention here that our Earth planet is losing the 15 billion trees every year i.e. around 56 acres of forest in every minute. Many species are going extinct rapidly. With our efforts we can protect hundreds of species. Lack of environment education has led man to be harsh to nature. There is dire need to empower everybody with the knowledge to inspire action in defense of environmental protection. "The Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs but not every man's greed"- Mahatma Gandhi. Our Earth is the most beautiful planet and is the only planet in the solar system that has life. Man has relationship with the mother Earth. There is dire need to protect the mother Earth because the whole world is facing the problems due to environmental degradation and global warming. There is need to connect the people with the nature across the globe for the safety of present and future generations. It is estimated that if the present consumption and production pattern remains the same with the rising population at an alarming rate then we will need three planets to sustain our ways of living and consumption.

The Earth is the principle source of all the essential nutrients for all the living organisms on the planet. We need to conserve the Earth natural resources including air, water, soil, minerals, plants, animals etc. All the things we need to survive come from the natural resources. There are 7 continents on planet earth. Every human being has only one dream which is to live better, to eat better and to consume better. But most of them do not care for the planet Earth. Now we are more than 7 billion but we have only one planet to live and survive. We have limited food, limited place and limited shelters. If we keep on using nat-

West. The most convenient entrance to the valley is from South Where Pushavati flows through a very deep gorge. Besides, two more routes preferred by the shepherds and trekkers branch off or offshoot from the valley. The one from the western side leading to Hanuman Chatti via kant khal pass and the other from the eastern side leading to Ghamsali village via Lakshman pass and both these places cover three days trekking distance from the valley itself.

The river Pushpavati is joined by river Lakshman Ganga which flows down from Hamkund lokpal lake at Ganghariawhereafter it takes the name Bhyunder Ganga which joins Alaknanda at Govindghat.

Govindghat is situated on the main 'Rishikesh - Badrinath 'Pilgrims route at the right bank of Alaknanda and is at an elevation a rounding 1800- 2000mits from Mean sea level(MSL). Around 278 kms road journey through the river one reaches Govindghat from Rishikesh - The foothill town which is as wall the main rail/motor head to the valley of flowers together with other enchanting and pilgrimage spots for the religious and tourists alike.

At Govindghat, the road leads to the Bhyunder valley which further branches off the main road. Gangharia, the last human outpost and the main base camp for the valley of flowers are the Hamkund Shrine. It is around 2- 3 kms from Govindghat and can be trekked on foot or by ponies. This track runs along

Bhyunder Ganga. One has to cross over through suspension bridge at Alknanda-Govindghat. Ahead, one has to trek through bridle-path which takes a steep and continuous climb which de facto is tiring. The view around the vicinity of this spot has a disappointed introduction to the beauty of nature's bounty ahead. It is after a weary plodding around 3kms or so that the valley widens and one comes across some bewildering and breath-taking landscape. The gradient of river is very steep whereas the flow of water is fast. The fog generated by the churned water beating against perpendicular rocks and massive boulders is wafted far and wide riding on the breeze produced by the down rushing water of the river. Its cool touch mops the sweet beads and drains away the fatigue caused by the uphill journey.

On the right side, a water fall more than 150 meters high descend down the granite rock to meet Bhyunder Ganga. And all the time, one is passing through one of the most beautiful forests full of alpine intermingled with maple, walnut mulberry, elm, oak, bird-cherry, horsechestnut, honeybea, Alder, rhododendron etc. The foaming river cascades its way till one cross over to the left bank, a little beyond the Bhyunder village. The route to Hathi Parvat and GhoriParvatemanates from this village. The vegetation changes all of sudden. One is completely surrounded by tall centuries old massive trees of silver fir at Gangharia.

Ghangharia, a hamlet having a Forest Rest

House(FRIH) Tourist Rest House(TRIH) a sacred shrine(Gurudwara) and few shops. This spot is located at an elevation arounding 3,200 meters from mean sea level (MSL) and beyond Ghangharia exist the unspoiled beauty of nature, the valley of Flowers which is barely 4-5 kms trek on foot or on pony. And from here onwards, Hemkund is hardly 4.5 to 5kms trek. Thence onwards, the valley of Flowers veers sharply to the left from the main trail which climbs steeply to the sacred and famous lake. Hamkund, situated at an altitude arounding 4,200 meters from mean sea level (MSL).

The ascent to the valley of Flowers is almost gradual till the valley narrows down into a deep gorge and the forest is compressed between narrow walls of rock.The awesome cliffs guarding this southern entrance of valley are almost rising to more than 1000 meters on either side whichblock the view of the valley. The valley of Flowers is having a wide space. Beginning at an elevation of 3,500 meters, it gradually slopes down up like a winding corridor, to a little more than 3,700 meters till it meets the snout of the glacier. The valley is snow-bound from mid-November to mid-may during which period this area remains frozen and thereby it is impossible and desolate. But as soon as snow starts melting, the rains commence, and that is the miracle which has made this valley famous world over.

(The Author is Senior Forest Officer).

Protect the Planet Earth

economic development of India. The common property resources which are mostly natural resources must be protected for the overall growth of the nation. Such efforts for preserving the natural resources not only lead to optimum utilization of natural resources but also generate more employment for the people. This initiative requires people's participation. For instance, afforestation activities cannot be successful without the help of local communities. The relationship between development and environment is well established. There is dire need of awareness among the people on environmental issues. Environmental quality is an integral part of development. Without environmental ethics development is simply undermined. Natural resources are the wealth of any nation. Presently they are facing environmental hazards due to various reasons.

The population of human beings is growing enormously. Billions of people are using the natural resources quickly. The continuation of life is possible with the natural resources. Sustainable development is focused on any kind of betterment that should not harm the environment so that the well being of future generations is guaranteed and the harmonious relationship environment and development is sustained. The process of sustainable development tries to build social and economic progress satisfying the needs and values of the social groups without foreclosing future options. Rio-Earth Summit (1992) highlights the view that socio-economic development and environment protection are interdependent and mutually reinforcing processes. Recently, the healthy rural environment has encountered divergent environmental hazards as an addition to their existing issues of social and economic hardships. Such threats badly affect the local community which is the impetus behind research for alternative sources such as cultivation in marginal lands. It constitutes a growing class of environment refugees. Sustainable development is felt as a necessary intervention to fight against poverty,

unemployment and other complicated problems. Sustainable rural development can promote growth and equity simultaneously and also promote the development of democratic process at the grass root level by creating awareness on social forestry, soil conservation, population control, protection of tanks, rural energy management, biodiversity, popularization of eco-friendly activities etc. Sustainable development on the one hand benefits local people and safeguards the flora and fauna of a particular region on the other. Common property resources can generate more employment opportunities.

The sustainability of development for the people should dexterously and lucratively aim at motivating the people to get involved in community action and to ensure their participation in diverse and numerous environmental protection and optimum utilization of natural resources. People's participation plays an inevitable role in driving the fruits of development schemes. It is an important instrument to augment the empowerment of the people. It increases the worthiness of the project by means of achieving a steady and balanced growth from within the best use of natural resources. Environmental issues cannot be solved unless the local people take part in it. Their participation will help in promoting wildlife conservation, afforestation and also in employment generation. Protection of environment is mainly in the hands of the people. On this particular day, let us pledge to do whatever we can to do to protect this beautiful planet. We can avoid using our car on this day and save petrol and free the atmosphere from some pollution. We can recycle the papers and stop using plastic bags. We should make collective efforts to protect the mankind. Taking care of Earth is not just responsibility; it's necessity. We have to be not only technologically and economically literate but also environmentally literate. Protection of nature must be prioritized.

(The writer is Sr. Scientist & Head of KVK, Reasi SKUAST-J).