

New Trend in Philanthropy



**English Version of
Abridged Gujarati Translation of 'We Gave Away A
Fortune' and Other Articles by Sonal Parikh**

English Translation by Hina Manerikar

**: Publisher :
Mumbai Sarvoday Mandal and Trusteeship Foundation**

Message of Gandhiji

Whenever you find you are thinking about yourself, or you are in a dilemma, recall the face of the poorest and the weakest person you have seen and ask yourself whether the step you are contemplating will be of any benefit to this person. Will that person be able to take control of his life and his future by the action you are about to take? In other words, will your actions lead the hungry and intellectually bereft individual towards swaraj? If you ask yourself this question your confusion will be resolved.

Mahatma Gandhi,
'Purnahuti' Part 3, page 83

Financial Support by
Praleen Public Charitable Trust

Printed by
Sahitya Mudranalaya Pvt. Ltd.

City Mill Compound, Kankaria Road,
Ahmedabad - 380 022

Phone : (079) 25469101-02 Fax : (079) 25469103

E-mail : smpl99@gmail.com Website : www.sahityaprint.com

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FOREWORD

We are thankful to Shri Suryakant Parikh (Chairperson, National Sanitation & Environmental Improvement Foundation and a Freedom Fighter) for giving us permission to print extracts from the book *We Gave Away a Fortune*. We thank Smt. Sonal Parikh for translating these extracts into Gujarati which were printed as a booklet called *Daan Aapvano Abhinav Prayog*. We are grateful to Trusteeship Foundation for providing funds to print this booklet.

It gives us great pleasure to reproduce parts of this book along with a brief outline of Gandhiji's thoughts on Trusteeship. We also include some thoughts of some wealthy persons in our country who have been inspired to share a part of their wealth for the good of our society and have signed the 'giving pledge' initiated by Bill Gates and Warren Buffet.

By a wider circulation of this booklet we hope more and more wealthy and also not so wealthy persons will be inspired to contribute in whatever way they can. Unless disparity in the society is eliminated we cannot have peaceful co-existence on this earth. In India we say if not a rose, at least a petal of a rose is also a welcome addition to this new trend in philanthropy. As we also say in our country, give in any form *tan, man, or dhan*. (physical work or giving voluntary time, mentally / intellectually /or by wealth)

By publishing this booklet, we hope to give back some of the debt we owe to society.

T. R. K. Somaiya
Mumbai Sarvodaya Mandal,

Indiraben Doctor,
Trusteeship Foundation

TRADITION OF GIVING

Mahatma Gandhi believed that it is an act of violence to ignore the poverty of others. This violence will continue until there is disparity in the society. Not only is India the poorest country but the disparity between the rich and poor is very wide. Many people in the West and some people in India are setting an example of philanthropy. The principles of trusteeship show how the rich are not owners of their wealth but are the trustees, who can and should use their wealth for the welfare of the disadvantaged. These principles are discussed in this book.

Vinobaji had toured the area affected by Naxal violence and appealed to the people to donate one sixth of their land under his bhoodaan movement. More than 42 lakh acres of land was donated by the people which was redistributed to the landless in that area and as a result violence abated. Land reforms were also introduced. Vinobaji's campaign received a good response. After Vinobaji, the activity ceased and violence once again slowly increased. Poverty and violence are directly co-related. Gandhi went to the extent of saying that poverty itself is a form of violence.

Some wealthy persons in Europe and America and now also in India are realizing the worthlessness of status, fame, money and have got fed up with the rat race of modern times. They are seeking a simple meaningful life. A striking example of this philosophy can be seen in the life of Oscar winner, the Gwyneth Paltrow. There are many examples of NRIs now returning to their homeland and engaging in meaningful constructive work.

Gita talks about *swadharm* (one of those words difficult to translate) or loosely translated as ‘self duty’ – one’s selfless duty – towards the society and the universe. We are indebted to many thousands of people living and dead in this universe, as said by Einstein. We take birth and just keep taking from others, returning this debt is *swadharm*. All our problems of poverty and environment arise because we do not do our duty. One trembles at the thought of the day when these deprived people will rise and rebel.

We are inspired when we see people from different walks of life making sacrifices and using their wealth for the benefit of the downtrodden. We have a tradition of philanthropy in our country which has disappeared in the modern times. We publish this booklet to reach out to the people to rekindle this spirit of giving.

The Gujarati booklet ‘*Daan Aapwani Parampara*’, translated by Sonal Parikh, is an abridged translation of the book *We gave away a fortune* with additional information about Gandhiji’s and Vinobaj’s concept of trusteeship as well as brief introduction of people who have pledged to use their wealth for the upliftment of the less fortunate.

Indiraben Doctor
T. K. Somaiya

Philanthropy, Voluntarism and Changing Times

Alan Pifer

No man of vision will seek to tie the endowment which he gives to a fixed cause. He will leave to the trustees, as time goes on, the judgement of modifying or changing the nature of trust so as to meet the requirements of the time. Any board of trustees is likely to become indifferent or careless or make wrong decisions. In the perpetual trust, as in all human institutions, there will be a fruitful season and slack season. But as long as it exists, there will come from time to time, men into its control and management who will have vision, energy and wisdom by which the perpetual foundation will have a new birth of usefulness and service.

IN THESE WORDS, Andrew Carnegie, the great Scottish American industrialist, set forth a timeless and immutable percent of Philanthropy. From his extensive experience in the art of giving, he understood thoroughly that if the great fortune, at the time the world's largest, he was committing to the public was to continue to serve constructive purposes into the far distant future, he must build the capacity for flexibility and self-renewal into the very fabric of the institutions he created. In the final analysis, this could be accomplished, he saw, only by giving a broad discretion to his Trustees and their successors down through the years and to use the funds as they thought best in the light of the needs of their times. This could not guarantee perpetual vitality, but it was the best hope for it. To be alert therefore, not only to the requirements of its own times, but also to future needs, has always been the hallmark of responsible philanthropic Trusteeship.

THE PLEDGE OF 40 AMERICAN BILLIONAIRES

Bill Gates and Warren Buffet had announced that forty American billionaires have signed the “Giving Pledge” to give away fifty per cent of their wealth for the benefit of their poor brethren. Bill Gates of Microsoft and the famous investor Warren Buffet had floated the idea of this pledge. The list of those who have made the pledge includes, to mention a few, the New York mayor Michael Bloomberg, media executive Barry Diller, the CEO of Oracle Larry Ellison, Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen, Investor Ronald Perelman, hedge fund investor Julian Robertson Jr., Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook fame, eBay founder Pierre Omidyar.

The Forbes list estimates Bill Gates’ wealth to be 53 billion dollars and is the second richest person in the world. Gates and his wife Melinda founded the ‘Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation’ in 1994 donating 28 billion dollars. Warren Buffet ranks third and he pledged to give 99% of his wealth to this Foundation. Both of them have pledged to give away most of their wealth during their life time or after their death.

Bill and Melinda Gates have been having dinner appointments with the wealthy people to persuade them to sign the giving pledge. Signing the giving pledge does not require them to part with their wealth, but only requires them to make a promise to use their wealth for socially relevant causes.

Warren Buffet vouches for the widespread support they have received for their cause. He explained that the giving pledge is an effort to discuss how the rich and wealthy could

use their wealth fruitfully. He further added that the support he received for this cause has given him immense pleasure and even more satisfying was to see the people come forward to donate half their wealth.

The list of persons who have pledged their wealth can be seen on the website www.givingpledge.org.

Extracted from *Sandesh*, 5 August 2010

CHRISTOPHER MOGIL'S THOUGHTS - PARAPHRASED

One day in 1978, Christopher says, he received a call from a lady. What she said puzzled him. The lady on the phone said "if you have any problems in deciding where to invest your money, you can get in touch with us. We shall give you excellent advice". That is when Christopher discovered that he had been left a legacy by his grandmother.

He was stunned, but also thrilled. Having suddenly received this windfall, he was also confused because at that time he was working on a modest salary with an organization involved in social activities in West Philadelphia.

The more he thought about the sudden riches he had got, the more confused he got. With this money he did not need to work any longer to live the simple middle class life, but there were so many questions crowding in his mind; how could he enjoy this wealth when so many people were living in dire straits. Should he use this money for himself or should he spend it on his friends to ease their lives? Or better still use it for making the world a better place? How could he ensure that the money does not go down the drain? Such and many other questions were bothering him.

Mogil says he started experimenting. He initially donated 200 dollars to an organization with which he had worked earlier and also gave some money to an organization working for social transformation. Then he started donating half or third of the income he received by investing the money and managed his survival with the balance amount. In spite of this, his conscience kept bothering him and questioning why he did not give away even more of his income? Why should he have this special privilege? Should he give away all his money?

At this stage he needed to talk and discuss this issue with

someone, but he found that most people did not talk freely about money matters and therefore he too kept discreetly silent. He could not even discuss this with his own family members.

Christopher goes on to narrate about meeting once a year to discuss issues of democracy and equality. He then attended several seminars organized by Haymarket People's Fund and The Funding Agency, among others, where he could unhesitatingly ask questions related to money. But the discussions were limited to ways of multiplying your wealth and donating a part of that to some worthy cause. It was naturally assumed that people would want to retain a substantial portion of their wealth for themselves. Giving away a substantial portion was never raised.

In the spring of 1986 at the Haymarket Seminar, one lady picked up courage to ask the assembled group "has anyone of us ever seriously thought about giving away our wealth?" Silence fell over the assembly. Christopher raised his hand and seeing some others also raise their hands encouraged him. Four of them formed a group and met separately to discuss in great detail about who should be joined in their endeavour, how to explain the matter to family members, what should be the criteria for making such decisions, and such other issues. But as the seriousness of their intention to donate a major portion increased, matters became more complex. They wanted to discuss the matter with people who had already put into practice their intention of donating their wealth so that they would not make the same mistakes if they had made any.

So this small group started their research. How to locate the wealthy who would be interested in parting with their wealth for the good of the society? Such people do not put out advertisements nor are there any meeting centers where they assemble. However, gradually they found such persons. They met them. As word of their project spread, people started contacting them. In four years they met and talked to forty

donors willing to donate from thousands to billions of dollars and were greatly inspired by them. These great men from an openly consumerist and capitalist society convinced them that it was possible to live according to their values and ideals and by doing so feel more enriched.

With the permission of his grandfather, Christopher Mogil founded an organization called Chutzpah Fund with the money he had received from his grandmother.

When friends heard about their project of meeting people, they persuaded him to reproduce his experiences in a book form. They wanted him to proceed with his project in a systematic manner. He spent hours in front of the computer, contacted several friends and the result was this book.

Through this project he understood how one could lead a meaningful, self-respecting and dignified life as a part of this universe. He does not for a minute think that by donating his wealth he has made any big sacrifice. On the contrary it makes him happy and gives him a great deal of satisfaction that he has been instrumental in giving a gift to the needy. Having done his duty, he feels he has achieved a lot of happiness.

Christopher writes that by donating my wealth "I am not making any great sacrifice, on the contrary I experience pleasure similar to what I would feel while giving something to my loved ones. I feel the satisfaction of having done my duty. Now our lives have become more meaningful and rich."

This book is based on Mogil's personal experience and meetings with people and has been written to guide those who have surplus wealth and are interested in bringing about a change in the world.

Christopher Mogil is an American philanthropist, and author. His book, *We Gave Away a Fortune* won a 1993 American Book Award

Charity can bring about a magnificent change

Your wealth can bring about a lot of change. If you are considering donating a significant portion of wealth, then here are some questions for your introspection.

1. Are you clear about the reason and motive for donation? Are you sure there is no ulterior motive or guilt complex behind your action? Is it goodwill and inspiration?
2. If it is goodwill and self-inspiration, then the next question is how much wealth do you want to keep for yourself? What kind of life style do you want to adopt? Do you know of people leading alternative life styles, different from the usual common lives people lead?
3. Do you make your financial decisions yourself or in consultation with others? It is a good idea to discuss financial matters when making decisions about donations.
4. What is your equation with society? Law, environment, peace, which of these issues interests you? Are you aware from where one can get information to do solid work on these issues? Are you willing to be personally involved with the activities you wish to fund? Will you be funding it with cash or do you plan to issue share certificates or in any other form?
5. Do you wish the donation to remain undisclosed or would you like to make it public? There is no right or wrong, or good or bad way of making charity. As we go along new issues will crop up.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to make your decision

making easier. Keep all your options open, be alert and reflect on what you hear all your life, but now you have to make firm decisions and stick to them.

– **Liesel Brockle van**

* * * * *

Mahatma Gandhi said that there is enough on this earth for everyone's need but not for everyone's greed. How true! Even if a person has wealth more than he can use, he still yearns for more and more wealth. As a result this beautiful earth of ours is getting worse than hell. Some people have accumulated so much wealth that it deprives others of necessities of life.

Such inequitable distribution of wealth not only leads to fatal and detrimental consequences, but is also unjust. Such thinking makes many wealthy persons undertake charitable activities in an effort to help the underprivileged.

The tradition of giving is not new to India. Who has not heard of *daanveer Karna*? However, the concept of charity in our country is different from the Western concept.

Of course a person is inspired to donate due to sentiments. It is necessary that beyond sentiments, the donation should be properly channelled so that it has long-term benefits and therefore it is imperative that there is a method and definite thinking behind the activity of giving.

The book *We Gave Away a Fortune* contains stories about wealthy philanthropists. The book has the power to inspire a flow of donations and also discusses the methods and process of donating.

When Christopher Mogil, one of the writers of that book, found out that he had inherited a large amount of wealth, he was put in a quandary because he wondered when there is so much poverty around, how could he enjoy this wealth? He decided to use the wealth for bettering the life of the needy. But how was he to achieve this? After some experiments, he found the process of giving was not as easy as it seemed. There were many practical problems to overcome. He attended several seminars where these issues were discussed. However, he found that most seminars discussed how to multiply the wealth. At one such seminar, one woman raised the question of why do we not consider ways to donate our wealth? This led to like-minded people coming together. They deliberated on various aspects of philanthropy; who are deserving beneficiaries? What criteria to apply? What are the pros and cons of different conclusions?

Within a time span of four years they met forty donors and after discussions concluded that giving away wealth has no negative impact, on the contrary the results give happiness to the donors and gives their life a meaning. Everyone unanimously agreed that even in a society steeped in consumerism and capitalism it is possible to live a life of high values which leads to immense happiness and peace of mind.

Twenty-nine year old Edorah Frazer gave away 80% of her wealth in charity. She lives on her income as a teacher and councilor. Not only does she have no regrets for giving away the money she had inherited but considers it as one of the most powerful acts of her life. When her father died she was 16, she was completely unprepared to inherit half a million dollars. She felt isolated and confused in contemplating her

responsibility toward her wealth. At the age of 25, when she was given control of the principal, she felt much clearer about what to do with it. The excess money gave her a guilt complex and made her feel that she was also responsible for the economic disparity in the world. After she came across the Haymarket People's Fund donor conferences, where she found a network of like-minded wealthy young people, she decided to redistribute her inheritance. She set up a donor Funding Exchange in New York to fund grassroots groups working on youth, anti-racism and environmental efforts. She kept \$100,000 of the inheritance to help support herself during her first years as a teacher and for a down payment on a modest, straw bale home. She is aware that giving away her wealth was not going to remove the disparity, but she has the satisfaction that she is one of the many who are trying for equitable distribution of wealth. Edorah said that "she was brought up to think that one's wealth is to be hidden from others because if they find out, they will hurt us. But by concealing our wealth we are only hurting ourselves."

A philanthropist named Chuck Collins gave away 90% of his wealth. Chuck, at the age of 16, was told by his father that he would be inheriting a large fortune. Chuck at that time worked at the Census Office so he had to go house to house for his work. During this time he saw poverty and housing problems from close quarters. Realizing that his fortune was an outcome of an exploitative system, he decided to donate his wealth.

Chuck Collins now directs the 'Institute of Policy Studies' Program on Inequality and the Common Good. He is also the co-founder of 'United for a Fair Economy' and 'Wealth for the

Common Good', a network of wealthy individuals who advocate fair taxation to support the larger good. He is also the author of *99 to 1: How Wealth Inequality is Wrecking the World and What We Can Do About It*. He has joined Bill Gates, Sr. to co-author *Wealth and Our Commonwealth: Why America Should Tax Accumulated Fortunes*.

Millard Fuller, and the founder of Habitat for Humanity International [HHI] sees "life as both a gift and a responsibility. My responsibility is to use what God has given me to help His people in need." He founded HHI in 1976. His leadership helped forge Habitat into a worldwide Christian housing ministry. They built modest affordable houses on a no-profit, no-interest basis, for families with low incomes. Former U.S. President Bill Clinton called HHI "...the most successful continuous community service project in the history of the United States." Mr. Fuller passed away in February, 2009 at the age of 74

Fuller's business expertise and entrepreneurial drive made him a millionaire at age 29. But as the business prospered, his health, integrity and marriage suffered. These crises prompted him to re-evaluate his values. His soul-searching led to reconciliation with his wife and to a renewal of his Christian commitment. They decided to sell all of their possessions, give the money in charity and begin searching for a new focus for their lives. This search led them to a Christian community where people were looking for practical ways to apply Christ's teachings. As observed by Dr. Martin Luther King, he said that he was working to empower his people.

Harvard runs a factory of money printing youths, the outcome of which is no good. Only a simple life can give us

peace of mind and good health. It is wrong to think that we have got money because we deserved it, and those who do not have it, is because of their bad luck. If we are endowed with power and wealth our responsibilities also increase. It becomes our duty to protect the have-nots.

Fifty-five year old Sally Bingham founded the 'Kentucky Foundation for Women'. She says she grew up with the understanding that she was superior to the blacks and the poor. The family and society was male dominated. I was never taken on the board of the companies that the family ran. I was given a smaller share of the family wealth. I used to think that if we are rich we should give back some of that to the society. However, I was not interested in the charitable institutions. I wanted to do something for the women so I instituted the Foundation for which I gave an initial amount of one million dollars and every year we donate 250 thousand dollars. We run a shelter home for women and support artists who find it difficult to grow in this competitive world.

Joe Collins, the co-founder of 'The Institute for Food and Development Policy' devoted to activities related to global hunger and food, says that "when I was born my father was 74 years old. He had seen many of the events that I read about in history books. My father died when I was 13 years old. He had left behind a financial empire which I was to receive on reaching adulthood. In the meantime I decided to become a priest and campaigned against the Vietnam War. When I got my wealth, I donated the whole amount towards eradication of hunger. I did not get married. This was to be my mission in life."

Audre Lorde, an Afro-American poet, said if we look on

the inside of our shirts or behind our electronic gadgets, we will realize how many of our everyday use things are made by the labour of non-whites who are paid abysmal low wages. Had they been paid fair wages, many of us would not be able to afford these things.

Many of the giant global firms are exploitative and run unethically. There is no just economic system designed for the mankind. Consuming or wasting more than we need is destructive of future generations and the environment. The wide disparity between the rich and poor cannot but lead to bloody revolution. The only solution to this problem is self-restraint, self-sacrifice, and charitable activities. Everyone is entitled to education, health, house, clean air and water and a means for earning a living.

Andrew Carnegie also believed in giving but he thinks that the process should be practical and effective and that is the responsibility of those managing the trust. They should ensure that the funds that they are donating go to the deserving needy persons.

In 1980, the son of a Patel family thought of sending his parents on a world tour on the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary. The senior Patel told the son to instead use that money to set up a medical centre in the village. From then till today, the family has donated 300 crore rupees. The senior Patels, Chhotuhai and Savitaben, their son Dr. Kiran Patel and daughter-in-law Dr. Pallavi Patel have expanded their activities to run schools, hospitals, gardens, tube wells, horticulture and various socially relevant activities in the rural areas.

Azim Premji the chairperson of Wipro has committed to donate 8,846 Crore rupees. Anil Agarwal Foundation has

constructed a Vedic University by donating one million dollars.

The TATA group, Anand Mahindra, and N. R. Murthy are also well known for their charitable work.

These examples remind us of Mahatma Gandhi and his concept of trusteeship. While Gandhiji had full faith in the basic goodness of humans, he was also aware that there is a streak of greed and selfishness too. He said that the wealthy in the society have a special responsibility towards the less fortunate. He told them that their wealth does not really belong to them; it belongs to the people. Take and use what you need, give away the rest.

Christopher himself founded the Chutzpah Fund. All these experiences have been narrated in this book. The sole aim of the book was to encourage acts of charity in the world and inspire individuals to pledge their wealth.

If you want to give away your wealth, then you have to work out how much will you give away and how much will you keep for yourself? How much will you leave behind for your heirs? On the one side you have people like Phil Millers who want to keep a great amount as a tool of power and on the other hand you have people like Joseph Collinger who believe the world needs every extra dollar that you have and to keep even an extra dollar than you need is a crime, a sin. You have to decide where your place is between these two extremes. The following may act as a guide to help you decide.

1. Take control of your finances
2. Find sources of security besides money
3. Use your money for your values

4. Encourage your friends to work for the society
5. Develop inter-class relationships

We will become more at ease if we can remove the mask that is put on our faces due to our wealth which will, in turn, allow us to move in the correct direction. We have power even in such a situation – a power higher than worldly power – to be able to work with others and power gained by seeing our work having an impact on others. Excess of money and the superiority complex takes us away from truth and distances us from our friends. Therefore, be clear, truthful, develop self-confidence and also learn to enjoy your own company. Make your mind and body healthier and stronger. Read, think. Money cannot keep away old age and death. What does help is acceptance of the natural changes of our lives, therefore cultivate good health and mind.

Sixty-four year old Charles Gray felt a great sense of relief after parting with his wealth. The freedom he experienced due to this act allowed him to reconnect with humankind with a sense of fulfillment.

Nelia Sargent, was blinded at the age of 20. Her father died the same year and she inherited his wealth. She loaned this money to social organizations. After 5 years this loan was converted to a donation after which she led a simple life. There is no other way to keep away from violence emerging from traditional economic systems. Nelia says she has been trained to look after herself as a blind person and makes a living through cane work.

A couple, Joe and Terry Havens donated their wealth and chose to live in a log cabin in West Massachusetts in pursuit

of a spiritual life. They said they found it more difficult to give up their art collection than to give up their wealth.

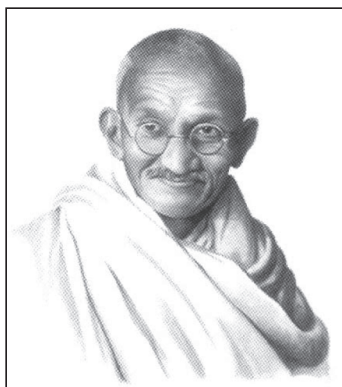
In August 2010, Bill Gates and Warren Buffet announced that 40 billionaires had signed the giving pledge and committed themselves to give away half their wealth in charity. The list of people who have signed the giving pledge includes the New York mayor Michael Bloomberg, media Executive Barry Diller, co-founder of Oracle Larry Alison, Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen, Investor Ronald Perelman, hedge fund investor Julian Robertson Jr., Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook fame, eBay founder Pierre Omidyar, to mention a few.

The Forbes list estimates Bill Gates' wealth to be 53 billion dollars and is the second richest person in the world. Warren Buffet ranks third in the list. Both of them are inspiring other millionaires to give their wealth in charity instead of leaving their wealth to their children and are receiving very encouraging response. Detailed information can be found on the website www.thegivingpledge.org

Gates and his wife Melinda founded the 'Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation' in 1994 donating billions of dollars.

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Gandhiji's Concept of Self Imposed Simplicity and Trusteeship



Mahatma Gandhi's concept of Trusteeship is a better means to achieve equitable distribution of wealth and reduce poverty than the western idea of charity. According to Gandhiji, we are all in a way 'robbers'. To accumulate things beyond our requirements is a type of 'robbery' as by doing this, we are depriving someone else of those things. This is also a type of violence. Nature is naturally balanced. Nature does not discriminate. His basic philosophy was that nature has provided sufficiently for everyone. There is enough for everyone's need, but not for everyone's greed. There is need to distinguish between 'need' and 'want'. If everyone took only what they 'needed' there would be no shortage and no poverty. So what is the solution?

The path to alleviate poverty and reduce disparity in society is two-fold: 1) keep and use only what you need and 2) follow the principle of trusteeship.

In a speech given in London in 1931, Gandhi said that he had to pass through acid tests and face dilemmas when trying to keep away from untruth, unethical behavior, and the gains from political activity while still remaining in the 'quagmire of politics'? Though initially he found this very difficult, with the passing of time, this became a source of happiness for him. Resolving this moral dilemma was a big load off his shoulders.

“I could now devote my total energies to the service of the people”, he said.

Gandhi further clarified that if you have understood my message, you will eat simple food and only as much as your body requires, you will be satisfied with small living quarters, and keep your other ‘needs’ in life to the minimum. You will realize that if you follow this principle and possess fewer assets you will become purer and truer person. You will also realize that this body, given to you for a short time, is meant to be used towards service for others and not for your indulgence. Then your attitude will change towards clothes, food and clothes used for our body and for our survival.

Your predisposition towards your thoughts also should be aligned with your attitude towards material things. A person who fills his mind with useless knowledge is hoarder of information. The Gita in the 13th chapter says that knowledge which does not lead towards enlightenment and god are meaningless, but that does not mean that a person is to remain inactive or that one’s mind is to be kept empty. Every moment of your life should be filled with activity, but that activity has to be *satvik* (pure) and free of worry of the future.

In the Indian culture there is a special grace and dignity to keep our needs to the minimum. Parsi poet Malbari has said that the real wealthy is the one whose patron or master is god. There are countless people in India who consider it a virtue and are happy with simple living. Just as it is natural for the wealthy to be prideful and arrogant, it is natural to find qualities of patience, devotion to god, and ‘godliness’ in those living in simplicity. Realizing this maxim of life, one wealthy person had written to Gandhiji that he prayed to god

to keep him poor and keep him away from greed of storing things for himself to the extent that he should not have desire to even store the next meal.

We have no right to hoard anything we do not need as long as every Indian does not have sufficient to eat and enough clothes to wear. In fact, Gandhi said, our ideal should be to achieve parity in living standards where every individual in the world should be able to live a decent life with minimum of efforts. But what is decent living standard? Simple living and high thinking should be our real *mantra*. As our 'needs' increase, our values start deteriorating. Happiness is not in possessing material things, but in being content with what we have. In this sense, man is his own friend or enemy; his salvation or bondage is in his own hands.

The idea of physical labour and self dependence is associated with the concept of voluntary or self-inflicted poverty. Gandhiji coined the term '*jaat maihanat*' (self labour or self dependence) after reading about "bread labour" in Ruskin's book *Unto the Last*. Tolstoy says, each one should labour for his own daily bread. Gandhi said, "If everybody lived by the sweat of his brow, the earth would be a paradise" (*The Mind of Gandhi*, page 200). The third chapter of *Gita* says those who eat without *yagna* are eating stolen food. Here the word *yagna* implies physical work. Even the Bible exhorts people to earn their bread through their own perspiration. If everyone earns their bread through their own labour, class differences would disappear. There would not be high and low class in society.

Trusteeship advocates that even if the rich have their wealth, it would not belong to them, but remain with them in trust to be used for the welfare of the needy. Gandhiji used

several arguments and examples to show that the individual who understands the importance of labour automatically understands the truth about trusteeship and even follows it in his life.

Gandhi further elaborates that non violence will not take root in a person until he understands the real concept of self-labour. This is called constructive work. This is the essential means which will make one capable to take the path of non-violence.

Such a person is self-dependent. Just like the different body parts work in unison but are also independent of each other, so is the society. A person should not require a servant to do his work for him. He should take care of his own needs. One should only bite as much as one can chew.

A man's duty is to serve others selflessly. This is not possible unless the one has mastered control over one's senses. A wealthy person who is free from hatred, selfishness and negativity can be a great asset to the society. From this rises a sense of paternalism and concept of trusteeship. The wealthy class should think this out, live happily, earn millions but ensure that you are aware that this wealth belongs to the people, to the society. If they do not understand this they will be slaves to their consumerism and become very unhappy.

According to Gandhi, trusteeship is the only answer to the present disparities and violence in the society. Whatever we have, we have received it from god. Therefore, wealth cannot be a personal property. It has to be used for the welfare of the whole mankind. The animal world lives on a day to day basis taking only as much as they need. In the nature no one hoards. Humans should do likewise.

Be a manager or administrator of your wealth. If you use your intelligence and skills to earn money through correct means then it is only right that that wealth be used for welfare activities. That is the right path, that is your duty, and that is the essence of all religion.

Several practical issues arise from this kind of thinking and these issues are discussed. After a detailed discussion in 1935 with the head and founder of the International Voluntary Service founded by Pierre C risole, Gandhiji even went to the extent of saying that the wealthy should not even accumulate money for their children. If they give them a good education, prepare them to make a living and become self-sufficient, then the next generation will also be ready to follow the principle of trusteeship and work towards their own and society's welfare.

It was Gandhiji's dream that in an independent India the poor would have all the same facilities and conveniences as the rich would have. He had cautioned that if the rich do not use their money and power for the benefit of the poor, then it was bound to lead to violent and bloody revolution.

There were opponents to Gandhiji's concept of trusteeship, but he had only one thing to say to them: my aim is only to establish an ideal economic equality. And if I want to bring about this equality, I have to empathize with the poorest among the poor. All his life Gandhiji endeavored to reach this state. The rich had no influence on Gandhi. On the contrary, many wealthy were with him adopting voluntarily to live an austere life and implementing the concept of trusteeship.

He said the rich should become the security of the poor. Non-violence and private wealth are mutually exclusive, they

cannot go together. They have to select one of the two. The draft on trusteeship prepared at a meeting at Aga Khan Palace in 1952 by Pyarelal, Narharibhai, Kishorilal in the presence of Gandhiji was briefly as follows:

1. Trusteeship is a tool to turn the present capitalist economic system into one which is more equitable.
2. It is an opportunity for the capitalist class to change their attitude which will provide peace and happiness
3. The trusteeship concept does not accept the principle of private ownership of wealth. The society allows a person to keep only what is necessary for his or her survival.
4. Use of ownership and wealth can be regulated only by the rules of trusteeship.
5. There is no scope for self interest or neglect towards society.
6. There should be limits set for minimum wages and maximum income. The disparity between the rich and poor should be fair and appropriate with the objective of eliminating the same altogether over a time.
7. Nature of production of goods should be based on the needs of the society.

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Message of Geeta – Selfless Duty

Self less duty (Swadharma) means do work without any expectation, free yourself from all kinds of desires like money, fame, power, position etc. while doing any kind of work for society.

A person performing selfless duty never competes or compares himself with anyone else. Never desires anything at the cost of others weakness. He will never exploit any persons' helplessness or weakness.

BHOODAAN, SAMPATTIDAAN AND GRAAMDAAAN OF VINOBAJI



Vinobaji's Bhoodaan
(land donation) movement

Vinoba Bhave was Mahatma Gandhi's alter ego and a satyagrahi in his own right. Any book on the importance of philanthropy can not be complete without referring to Vinobaji's bhoodaan movement. After

India became independent, Vinoba founded the Sarvodaya movement to create a society living on value based and healthy principles.

Riots and violence during the British Rule was one thing, but why should these occur after independence? Vinobaji understood that riots and violence is a result of poverty and injustice. He saw bhoodaan as a solution and thought that if there is no economic disparity and injustice then violence will automatically abate. This was the thought process behind his bhoodaan movement.

The landless, agriculture labourers after doing back-breaking work received one twentieth of the crop, one blanket and one pair of shoes. How could this be enough to feed him and his family? It would have been appropriate if the government would make land available to these landless, but Vinobaji had his doubts about this happening. When he saw that his doubts proved right, he put forward a proposal in the town of

Poyampalli that those who have large land holdings should donate a part of their land to the landless. Responding to his call, Ramchandra Reddy donated 100 acres of his land. This was the beginning of bhoodaan.

Bhoodaan was a movement where those with surplus land donated one sixth of their land to the landless. Vinobaji used to call it a bhoodaanyagna. (land sacrifice). The idea behind the movement was that no one should remain landless in the village. Sunlight, air and water are provided by nature / god and belong equally to all. Similarly land is also god-given and therefore all have a right over it.

Bhoodaan (land sacrifice) was only the first step. His ultimate goal was renunciation or dissolution of the concept or feeling of ownership. While there should be no landless in the village, there also should not be any ownership of land either.

He walked all over the country (pad yatra) for 13 years to obtain land for donation. His movement created a stir in the whole country. He used to say that there was a tradition in the country to give one sixth of one's produce to the king. But now we are a republic (rule of the people). Five crore landless poor are the kings, so they should be given one sixth of what you possess.

Hearing about this movement, one poor farmer walked all night to reach the place where Vinobaji was camping during his padyatra. He expressed his wish to donate one sixth of his land and feel a sense of achievement and satisfaction. In another village, a poor labour woman, inspired by Vinobaji's appeal donated a part of her earnings. Vinobaji believed that every human being has compassion and whoever has surplus

land or money should donate it and repay his debt to society. Umpteen such incidents occurred during the thirteen years of his tour of the country.

In the first two months alone, he obtained 19,043 acres land as donation (daan). The word 'Daan' means equal-division (samvibhaajan). Giving a new interpretation to the word, Vinobaji said – referring to 'de' – the one who gives is 'dev' (god) and 'raakhe' (keeps) – the one who keeps is a demon (raakshash). In his padyatra (journey) of 13 years, he obtained 47 lakh acres of land which was distributed among the poor landless.

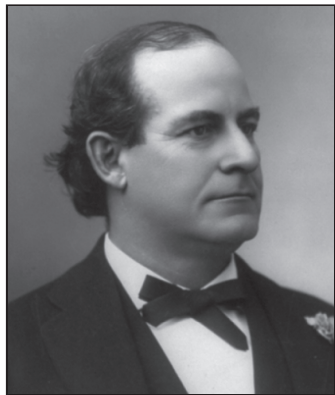
Vinobaji had also envisioned graam daan, villages where there would be no private ownership of land and the land would belong to all in the village. 8,500 acres of land was given for graam daan. He used to say, "Bhoodaan is an experiment in non-violence. Land is only a symbol which is the gateway to purification of our heart, a change in our behavior, and reforming of society. So in a way, this is a move towards our own spiritual upliftment, our own salvation. To dissipate our desire for ownership is the need of our modern times. It can bring about peace and non-violence which is necessary in this world. I call it 'sankatmochan yagna' (sacrifice for deliverance from distress or difficulty). Through this we can unravel individual's and society's problems of violence and create a society free of exploitation."

Vinoba was 56 years old when he set out on his journey for bhoodaan. He was almost 70 when he ended his padyatra, but there was no ebb in his enthusiasm. He continued dissemination of his dream, encouraging and urging people towards graamdaan, talukadaan, Zilladaan, and donating one's wealth.

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William Bryan : Listening to Inner voice

William Jennings Bryan (1860 – 1925), a leading American politician was a dominant force in politics. He was a devout Christian, a prohibitionist, a supporter of democracy and took a pacifist position on the World War. He was one of the best known orators and lecturers of the era. Referring to a speech on 'Price of the soul' given



by Bryan at a gathering at the Chicago Law School in 1909, Swami Anand, while translating this speech, wrote that this speech was relevant to all societies at all times. In that book Swami also referred to Archbishop of York Coggan's speech.

Dr. Coggan in his speech had said it is not desirable if improvement in material existence makes people distance themselves from religion. It is easy to lose one's soul in our materialistic world. After providing the best upbringing to children, if we remain apathetic towards their spiritual development, their soul will be destroyed. They will become shallow and get buried in the quagmire or vice. People have to bravely raise their voice against all vices, specially crime, lust, violence, and this has to be done by well-off wise people.

Jesus exhorts in the Bible that you may have earned a fortune but if you have sold your soul to amass that fortune then what is it worth for? What have you gained? He has left it to us to answer this question. Each one should ask his or her own conscience. We are busy in our multiplications and

divisions setting aside our conscience because we think questions of soul relate to the other world, to after-life. But it is not so, it is very much a question of our life on earth.

We will grow and improve our character to the extent we keep ourselves aloof from the material world. The moment we silence our conscience for material transactions, mortgage our souls or compromise with it, our downfall begins. Our conscience guides us and tells us our limits at every step, tells us our limits to greed and selfishness and what we should do with our surplus wealth, but we gag our conscience, do not listen to it, and are happy with our short term gains. The root of all this is money. We need money to fulfil our basic needs of food, shelter and clothing and we have to earn to meet these needs. Money per se is not a bad thing, but the love of money is what destroys people. It makes us forget our compassion, duty, our higher duty, everything. The trait of a true human being is to put a limit to our accumulation of wealth beyond what is required for our basic need as long as there are poor needy persons in the society. Be assured that if a person wants to collect more wealth than his needs, he has also to work that much more for the society.

Everyone has a right to use what he has earned through reasonable returns on his work, but what would be considered reasonable profits or earnings? Jefferson and Lincoln have done so much for their country that any sum would not be enough to pay for their work, but they and others like them have never asked for anything in return for their work. They were so busy and involved in their work that they had no time to accumulate any wealth. Those who have collected millions have no time to do anything else.

Just like weeds obstruct growth of crops, similarly is a life spent on fulfilling our materialistic desires do not allow truth to prosper. We should be industrious but use our money wisely; we should not give in to greed to accumulate more than our needs

What is considered wise use? What do we ultimately need? Sufficient food, proper clothing, and a place to live, rest. What more can a rich man need? Therefore set a limit to everything. Use the surplus for good deeds. Do not fall into the trap of desire to leave wealth for your children, because that wealth more often destroys them.

The world is full of temptations and also opportunities for virtuous deeds. We have to decide which path we want to take. This is true of any individual, any political party, or a nation. We all have to be tested on the scale of our deeds. Jesus Christ said the highest among you shall perform virtuous deeds and wash the feet of others.

So many nations in the world have made the mistake of thinking of themselves unconquerable on the strength of their wealth, might and power and have disappeared from the face of this earth. If we do not want to face the same fate, then it is time to wake up and learn to live our lives based on time-tested eternal values. Justice and ethics are the shield of the nation.

William Bryan

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WARREN BUFFET – RENOWNED CELEBRITY



One of the richest persons in the world, Warren Buffet has donated 31 billion dollars to charity. It would be difficult to find anyone in the corporate world or those dealing in stocks and shares who have not heard about him. There are very interesting facets of his life that are worth repeating.

Buffet bought his first shares at the age of 11 and he regrets it! He thinks he started late! From the money he saved from selling newspapers, he bought his first piece of property at the age of 14. He still lives in the same house he bought when he got married 50 years ago. He thinks this house provides him with all that he needs. There is no high fencing or wall around his house. He drives his own car; he does not have a chauffeur. He does not have security surrounding him. In spite of owning the largest company manufacturing private jets, he does not own one nor travels in one. He does not socialize with high society people. After returning home he enjoys making popcorn for himself and watching TV. He does not carry a mobile phone and does not have a computer on his desk.

His company Berkshire Hathway is a conglomerate of 63 enterprises. He writes only one letter once a year to all the CEOs of these companies which lays down the goals of the

following year. He does not keep regular phone contacts with these CEOs nor does he meet them regularly. He has laid down two rules for his CEOs which they have to follow. The first, his shareholders must not suffer a loss of even one dollar and the second, not to forget the first rule.

Bill Gates, the second richest man in the world, met Buffet for the first time in 1991. When Gates arranged the meeting, he believed that he had nothing in common with Buffet, so he had scheduled only a half hour meeting with him, but when they met, their meeting continued for 10 hours! From then they became close friends and Gates considered Buffet to be his mentor.

Buffet's advice to the youth is: keep away from credit cards and invest in yourself.

Isn't he an amazing personality?

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THE FIRST STEPS TOWARDS CHARITY – BILL GATES



The whole world today knows about the ‘giving pledge’ of Bill Gates and Warren Buffet, but do you know what or how he was inspired in this direction? Fifteen years earlier one Ted Turner donated one billion dollars and laid the foundation for such activity. Turner had donated this money to UN to fight global poverty.

The wealthy and rich of the world consider appearing in the list of the richest people in *Forbes* and *Fortune* Magazine a matter of great pride and achievement. Some of them do part with some of their wealth for charity, but only towards the end of their life and that too in the form of art galleries and museums. They spend billions for artistic paintings and sculptors of pretty women but hardly spend anything to improve the existence of women in the world who need help.

Charity made by Turner brought an important change in the trend of making charity. Philanthropists like Rockefeller and Carnegie adopted Turner’s method. Turner threw an open invitation to millionaires that they should be more generous and that proved effective also.

The co-author of ‘Philanthropic Capitalism’, Mathew Bishop, says an extraordinary era of huge donations has commenced with this event. Turner appealed to Bill Gates, Warren Buffet and others to come forward for this good work. Journalists started asking these wealthy people why they are not donating more of their wealth.

Gates and Buffet were the most influenced by Turner's appeal and donated huge amounts for activities related to health and against poverty. Gates will be remembered for his contribution in the field of computers, but more he will be remembered and respected for his fight against malaria, malnutrition, AIDS and poverty.

Later Gates and Buffet started the campaign for 'giving pledge'. This campaign inspires the wealthy to give away at least half of their fortune for charitable work. The thought behind the campaign is that after receiving so much from the world it is their responsibility and duty to give something back to the world.

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TED TURNER

Ted Turner donated one billion dollars and laid the foundation for the modern trend in philanthropy. He had donated this money to the United Nations Foundation for a wide range of causes from malaria to polio and from environment to family planning.

With Turner's donation, an important change took place in the world of philanthropy. Great industrialists like Ford and Carnegie soon adopted this method. Turner made a public appeal to the rich and wealthy to donate generously and one can today see the success of his efforts.

Turner's gesture resulted in drawing attention of the well-off towards plight of people of poor countries which started a new trend. These donors do not just sit at their desk to write cheques, but they also want to direct their commercial activities which will benefit tormented people.

If we study the trends of charitable work of two decades from 1990 to 2010, we will see this turn in people's attitude has brought about significant results. Lives of lakhs of people are saved due to these contributions.. Ted's friends say he is a sensitive, empathetic human being. He has donated land for public parks in New York and millions for other good deeds which he does not even count.

Though Ted does not hesitate to advise and inspire others to donate. He even believes that one need not have to be rich to bring about change. We meet so many needy people on the road every day. We can be that person's brother or sister and help that person in whatever way we can. Everyone can do this at least.

The Murthy Couple

A Wealthy Couple devoted to Simplicity and Service of the Society

Sudha Murthy is renowned for her social work and her writings. She started her career as a computer scientist and engineer and today she is the chairperson of Infosys, a world famous software company which she and her husband Narayana Murthy set up in 1981. She also teaches computer science.

Sudha Murthy social work comprises setting up orphanages, training gram sevikas, donating computers and books to schools, establishing libraries notable among them being the 'Murthy Classical Library of India' at Harvard University. She is also a member of the health initiative founded by Bill Gates. She has a large class of fans of her literature. A TV serial was made based on her novel '*Dollar bahu*'.

Sudha Murthy, born in 1950 to a doctor father, graduated as an engineer with a gold medal and started her career with TELCO, one of India's largest automobile manufacturing companies. She was the first woman engineer at TELCO where she met Narayana Murthy and tied the knot with him. Recipient of several awards as well as a Padma Shree, she has made social work her goal in life. Her daughter has married



a American national of Indian origin. The couple is also involved in social work in England.

Even though wealth of Murthy's net worth is over 500 crores, they lead an extremely simple life. They travel in economy class in airplanes. Other people accumulate wealth and donate, but this couple does not accumulate wealth. They have given one crore to 'Akshaya Patra' – a free lunch scheme.

Narayana Murthy, a leading entrepreneur and co-founder of Infosys, set up the company in 1981 and was the chairman till 2011. An engineer by training, he set up Infosys with a capital of only Rs. 10,000 given to him by his wife Sudha.

Like his wife, Narayana Murthy is also involved in several philanthropic activities. He is an advisor, mentor, and member of various charitable institutions. He is the chairman of the governing board of 'Public Homes Foundation'. He has been honoured with several awards, including Padma Vibhusan.

The Murthy couple are followers of Gandhian Principles of simple living and high thinking. Integrity, honesty and perfection are their mantras. They ask "what deeds should we perform so that people will miss us when we are not in this world?" They exhort others to ask themselves this question and behave accordingly.

They think that the best way to alleviate poverty is a free market. They say, we work to encourage value based behaviour, love for the nation, and establish institutes to help the have-nots, manufacture goods which are useful to the needy and work with ethical management practices.

The Murthy couple strive for the education, health, and nutrition of the poor and find opportunities to utilize their talents and skills.

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KANTISEN SHROFF : Industrialist and Social Worker

The name of Kantisen Shroff is synonymous with Trusteeship. He is an entrepreneur who transformed the face of Kutch, an arid region of Gujarat. His parents brought up the five siblings on Gandhian principle who were trained to be self-dependent, to be compassionate and live in a community environment coexisting with others.



With a view to obliterate the difference between master and servant, Shorff laid the foundation for Excel Industries at a time when the British were ruling India. He introduced over a hundred products useful to the country.

His association with Vinobaji and Jayaprakash Narayan made him realize that the Western economic systems are devoid of human values. Therefore, we should put up industries which will strengthen the village economy and make it self-sufficient. Inspired by Vinobaji, Shroff, at the age of 50, retired from Excel and founded several charitable trusts to help farmers in ways to improve crop productivity including rain harvesting, dams, better seeds and multitude other ways. With the help of Ramkrishna Mission, he founded the 'Research and Training Institute' to train the local youth in agriculture and other skills. He has made major contributions in the area of flood control and famine-like conditions in Kutch. He organized relief during the major earthquake and typhoon. His efforts

to help people by leading 'Kutch Sankat Nivaran Abhiyaan' after the earthquake are noteworthy.

His wife, Chanda Shroff, works with the Kutch women in preserving their very fine and unique art of embroidery by helping them in designing and marketing of their embroidered creations.

Over the years, as he got familiar with the wild life, environment issues, and the people of Kutch, he started twelve different industries where the trusteeship principles are strictly followed. He believes that he is not the owner, but only a trustee.

Kantisen Shorff's guiding principles in life are faith, integrity, dignity, synthesis, co-operation, co-ordination. He believes that one always gets a response to good work. His methods of working with the community, the people, with concentration, faith and determination are still relevant today in the twenty-first century and are a solution to many of our problems today.

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Azim Premji – opening a window of charity by following the footsteps of his Mother

Emulating his mother, Azim Premji initiated charitable activities. The third richest man in the country, Premji's journey in this world is inspiring for many industrialists. Starting his career with marketing hydrogenated fat, he is today a leading entrepreneur in the Information Technology sector. Now he has taken another giant step by donating a very substantial portion



of his wealth inspiring others also to do so. Donating 2 billion dollars to his 'Azim Foundation', he has become the first Indian to become a member of the Bill Gates 'giving pledge' campaign. When this campaign started in 2010, it was limited to the wealthy class of Americans, but now billionaires from all over the world are joining the campaign.

Premji's personal holding in Wipro is a little more than 78% valued at more than 13 billion dollars. He believes the rich in the society should make significant contributions for the upliftment of the deprived in the society. He is a supporter of the Gandhian philosophy of Trusteeship. Gandhiji believed that the rich should consider themselves trustees of their wealth, not owners and that wealth should be used for the welfare of the deprived classes.

Like business, generosity also runs in his blood. His mother too, runs a charitable hospital for the polio and cerebral palsy

afflicted children in Mumbai. When signing the 'giving pledge', he said it was not easy for his mother to run this hospital. It was neither easy to raise money for this good cause nor to manage such a hospital efficiently. But she faced the challenges and continued.

Premji further adds that he was greatly influenced by Gandhiji. He says "...very often it is more difficult to use money well in philanthropy than it is to give money in charity," That is why I set up an institute to work with the government to improve the government run schools. He says "We want to be sure that we don't substitute the responsibility of the government. We must supplement and enhance what they do and not substitute what they are doing." Eight hundred people are employed in the Azim Premji Foundation working in the poorest areas of the country. His plans for the next five years are to increase this figure to 4 to 5 thousand.

Courtesy: Janmabhoomi, February, 2013

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Simple Living – Fulfilment of Life : Gwyneth Paltrow

That money and fame is not everything in life is what the famous Hollywood actress, Gwyneth Paltrow believes. Gwyneth has worked in a number of films and won Oscar awards. After a difficult period in life, she is now happily bringing up her children. She cooks for her family herself making healthy food on Jewish dietary principles, avoiding junk food.



She does not serve unhealthy food like biscuits even to her guests. Having made her name in Hollywood, she now accepts roles only in value based films. She is satisfied with what she has. She says she has no ambition of becoming the biggest movie star nor is she interested in status, wealth, or fame, but wants to lead a meaningful and value based life. Many celebrities in the West have now realized the emptiness of the rat race in life.

She is involved in several charitable organizations and wants to devote her life to remind the young generation of Americans about values in life.

Christopher Mogil' book, *'We Gave Away a Fortune'*

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Selected Pledge Letter Excerpts

The following excerpts have been taken from letters written by pledge signatories on their personal motivation to give.

Please visit www.givingpledge.org to view these letters and others in their entirety.

1. **Michael R. Bloomberg:** “If you want to do something for your children and show how much you love them, the single best thing by far- is to support organizations that will create a better world for them and their children, And by giving, we inspire others to give of themselves, whether their money or their time.”
2. **Eli and Edythe Broad:** “Those who have been blessed with extraordinary wealth have an opportunity, some would say a responsibility – we consider it a privilege – to give back to their communities, be they local, national or global.”
3. **Warren Buffet:** “Were we to use more than 1% of my claim checks (Berkshire Hathaway stock certificates) on ourselves, neither our happiness nor our well-being would be enhanced. In contrast, that remaining 99% can have a huge effect on the health and welfare of others.”
4. **Bill and Melinda Gates:** “We have been blessed with good fortune beyond our wildest expectations, and we are profoundly grateful. But just as these gifts are great, so we feel a great responsibility to use them well. That is why we are so pleased to join in making an explicit commitment to the giving pledge.”
5. **Peter G. Peterson:** “As I watched and learned from my father’s example, I noticed how much pleasure his giving

to others gave him. Indeed, today, I get much more pleasure giving, money to what I consider worthwhile causes than making the money in the first place."

6. **David Rockefeller:** "Our family continues to be united in the belief that those who have benefited the most from our nation's economic system have a special responsibility to give back to our society in meaningful ways."

When people say to me, "why should you give this much?" I say to them, "the way I see it the question is : why should I keep this much ?" We should not put the burden of reasoning on the giving and more than the keeping.

– **Carol Bernstein-Ferry**

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When I give food to the poor, they call me a saint. When I ask why the poor have no food, they call me a communist.

– **Dom Helder Câmara, Brazilian Archbishop**

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You are bound to get an underlying feeling of being isolated when you are greedy.

– **Philip Slater**

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Teresina provides a beautiful example of inner security. She knows what her capacities are and believes in them. She can embody those values in what she does and in the way she lives. That's security. It is utterly different from financial

security. It is security of satisfaction, of knowing one has lived a good life.

– Joe Havens

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I detest all that is wrong with this world. I have started feeling that I, too, am to some extent, directly or indirectly, responsible for this state of affairs. Since I belong to the upper crust of the society that exists in this unjust system, I feel, I am also guilty. This system perpetuated by the wealthy is not right.

– Elinor Goldfarb

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Everytime I hear people say, “People will hurt you somehow if they know you have money”, my feeling is, “Not as much as you are hurting yourself”.

– Edorah Frazer

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Everyone should introspect and evaluate one self. What is our life style? Only if we live our life with values of integrity, honesty, discipline, regularity, truthfulness, compassion, kindness, co-operation, friendship, then only will we be able to move ahead in our lives. Gandhian principles incorporate these values and that is the true meaning of life. That is true wealth.

– Kantisen Shroff,

Shrujan, Bhujodi, Dist. Bhuj-Kutchh

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An Extraordinary Example of Application of Trusteeship Principles

By Rajnikumar Pandya, *Janmabhoomi Pravasi*, 31 August, 2014

A unique way of donation

A young man residing in America happened to read Narayan Desai's Gujarati volumes on Gandhiji's life titled '*Maaru Jeevan ej Maari Vaani*'. (My Life is My Message). After reading this book he wept all night. Gandhiji's mantra "You are not the owner of your wealth but just a trustee

of that wealth and what is for the good of the whole society is good for me" touched his heart in such a way that it changed his whole life. He realised that you experience far greater and lasting pleasure in spending money for the needy compared to the momentary pleasure and happiness you feel after spending more than required for your needs.

To spread this message of Gandhiji and publicise these book, he has donated 75 lakh rupees to the Navjeevan Trust. He, in addition, regularly provides lakhs of rupees to other institutions undertaking constructive work, all this anonymously without expecting any publicity in return.



While I am not allowed to mention the name, I cannot resist talking about this anecdote. About a couple of years ago, an American reader of Janmanbhoomi, who probably would not even remember meeting me, sent two cheques of twenty-five thousand dollars each. These two cheques were meant for organisations about which Janmabhoomi had written about.

After a few months this gentleman sent two more cheques again for 25,000 dollars each of which one was meant for Malavai Education Trust in Kukeri, 15 kms from Chikhli, in South Gujarat. This trust provides free education from primary level to computer education and residential facilities to more than 300 tribal children, either orphaned or of single parent. The second cheque was for Navjivan Trust with a request to send the four-volume Gujarati book on Gandhiji, "Maru Jeevan ej Maari Vaani" (My Life is My Message) authored by Narayan

Desai to secondary schools in Gujarat.

The book comprising four volumes, “sadhanakhand”, “satyagraha”, “satyapath”, “sarva-arpan” runs into 2,202 pages with five print editions. The full book in four volumes cost Rs. 1,500/- . From the amount received from this gentleman, Navjivan Trust supplies this book at concessional rates and bears the postal charges too.

This gentleman says that after reading these four volumes, he had wept. The message in this book that you are not the owner of your own wealth, but only a trustee of this wealth had become a part of his existence and he ardently wished to spread this message among as many educational institutions and thinkers as possible. And that is what these cheques were for.

A list of schools was obtained from Rasikbhai Varsani, the President of the Secondary Board in Gandhinagar, out of which 1,100 schools were selected and the list sent to Navjivan Trust for supplying the book. The list included schools located in small hamlets in the far flung corners of the state.

After some more time we received an email informing us that for the third time he is sending two cheques of 25,000 dollars each; one for Shantaba Vidyalaya (Malvi Education Trust) in Chikhli and the second again for the Navjivan Trust to send the volumes to the schools that were left out in the previous round.

After 15 -20 days, on being informed that the cheques had not arrived in India, and we suspected pilferage during delivery, he phoned to say that he was instructing the bank to ‘stop payment’ on the lost cheques and he was couriering two new cheques for the same amount. Surprisingly the supposedly lost cheques arrived and on being informed about this, the gentleman said he was withdrawing his ‘stop payment’ instruction to the bank and that both sets of cheques were to be given to the trust and if there is any balance left after distributing the books to all the schools, that should be used to distribute the books to other thinkers. That meant two cheques

of 50 thousand dollars!

The story does not end here. This unique philanthropist had visited Ahmedabad a few months earlier and put up at a very ordinary hotel justifying his action by saying it was just a matter of couple of days stay so why spend money on an expensive hotel.

The ninety year Kumar magazine has the tradition of giving a medal made from an alloy of five metals (panch dhatu) to the best article. In the year 2003, Kumar had made this medal in gold from the donation received from a Mumbai based bibliophile. But the price of gold had shot up five fold. So the magazine publishers were in a dilemma. Now they could not revert to making the medal in alloy, nor was there any possibility of their affording making the medal in gold. This question was troubling the publishers. In the meantime this gentleman (age 44) arrived from America and his meeting was arranged with Dhirubhai Parikh, the editor of Kumar. Dhirubhai narrated the management's problem with a lot of modesty. The gentleman put his hands into his bush shirt pocket, pulled out a cheque leaf, borrowed a pen from the editor and wrote out a cheque for four lakh rupees! Kumar's difficulty was over.

Then the two left to go to Mitalben Patel of Vicharta Samarthan Manch (an NGO working for nomadic community) to present a cheque of four lakh to them. He then left for his hometown in South Gujarat. After two days, poet Madhav Ramanuj, who is closely attached to this organisation called to say that "for some technical reason we cannot accept this cheque. I am returning the cheque with a request to do the needful to provide another cheque; we do not have the contact details of the donor."

In the meantime, when this gentleman had donated money to the Chikli Institute few months ago, he was asked about the name of the donor to be put on the class rooms that were constructed from his donation. But he said he was not

interested in putting any name on the plaque in the classroom, saying that he had not given money to make a name for himself. He was however, persuaded when explained that it would be an inspiration for others. Now, coincidentally, this gentleman who normally resides in America happened to be visiting India and was at his home town only 30 kilometres away from the institute which had received the cheque and the inauguration of the class rooms were to be done during the time of his stay in India. The head of the institute went to him to request him to attend a function to uncover the plaque on which his father's name was inscribed. He said it was embarrassing for him to do that; he had not given the money for publicising his name. The head of the institute tried to persuade him saying that he had given 50 lakh for this purpose so why should he be shy, in fact, he should proudly sit on the dais and the unfurling should also be done by him. He refused to budge and told the head that on his behalf the head of the institute to complete the formality and pull the string to uncover the plaque.

After the inaugural function, this writer while returning went to meet this donor at his hometown to return the cheque of Mitalben mentioned above and requested him to write out a new cheque for four lakh in a way that would not face any technical difficulty. He hunted out a cheque book from one of the drawers and wrote out a cheque for 10 lakh! And said in his Parsi Gujarati accent, "Now there will be no problem; you can present the cheque to the bank".

This is the end of the story till the end of this day. But I don't think that this is the final end. Tomorrow is another day. Time is endless, infinite. Water is abundant, but in this ocean full of water how many such jewels would you find which sparkle with Gandhian thoughts, a lover of literature, devoted to the service of mankind, but yet shy and humble?

* * *

A young gentleman founded a trust on the birth of his daughter. On the daughter's first birthday, this gentleman wrote a letter to her.

Dear daughter,

God has sent you to me as a boon and blessing. I will try and live a life which would be an ideal for you. I am not very rich. I don't even have much savings. Even then, I gave up my corporate job to live a simple life and have decided to spend as much of my wealth and time as possible performing good deeds on this earth. This decision of mine has given me a lot of peace of mind and a feeling of living a worthwhile life.

Those who have not been successful in this rat race existence of ours, those suffering from deprivation and pain in this cacophony and hectic life, are our brothers and sisters. Isn't their pain our pain? If we have more than they have, shouldn't we help them?

I am not saying that wealth, prestige, status, fame are useless, but these things do not come with us when we leave this earth. At the end of life what remains is the place we have made in the hearts of other people. That is why I believe that being of help to others is not only our duty, but being in a position to help others is a great honour and privilege.

We cannot decide where and to whom we should be born, but we can decide how we are going to spend the life that we have received. There is no pleasure greater than what we get when we bring a smile on another's face, make another person happy or when we help others in some way. And to do this is not really very difficult either. We can start by helping a needy person around us.

Your father
From the internet

MY DUTY TOWARDS FELLOWMEN

‘A hundred times everyday,
I remind myself that my inner
and outer life depends on the labours
of other men, living and dead,
and that I must exert myself in order
to give in the same measure,
whatever possible, money or in any other way,
as I have received and
I am still receiving.’

- *Albert Einstein*