



When Ego, Intellect, Soul Align



Smita M Gupta

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**When Ego, Intellect, Soul Align**



# Dedication

I dedicate every word of this book to the Divine Goddess of Knowledge, **Saraswati!**

My mother **Mrs. Madhulata Gupta** for the gift of life, her support, and virtues.

I owe to my Motherland **India**, to be born on the same soil that carries the seed of spirituality and teachings of Great Souls across the World.

I bow down to **Time** for teaching me the power of every moment.

I deeply revere my **Spiritual Master** for awakening me to find “Guru Tattva” in everything and everyone around me.

I am grateful to **Life Energy** within me that connects me to this **Universe!**



# 3

## **When Ego, Intellect, Soul Align**

**Celebrating the Uniqueness in Every Child!**

***This is a story for children and there is a child in each one of us...***



***To commemorate 150 years of Mahatma Gandhi Birth Anniversary...the 3 Super Kids of New India have arrived!***

**Illustrated & Authored by  
Smita M Gupta**



**GOYA PUBLISHING**

Delhi | Kolkata | Hyderabad



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GOYA PUBLISHING

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## Acknowledgment

Life is like a book! We ink every chapter of our life through our own experiences embedded in our consciousness by the learning we take through people, events, environment, place, time, etc. Similarly, every chapter and word of a book reflects values added in an author's life through many people actively or passively involved in the process of 'Authoring.'

I have completely enjoyed this journey of thinking and inking and sincerely hope you enjoy as much as reading it. My dear '**Reader**' I deeply appreciate and '**Thank You**' from the bottom of my heart for including me in your life by choosing my book amidst many others and allowing me your precious time. I hope my words impact you positively.

I thank the **Supreme Power** for making me the medium to reach you through my book.

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I bow down to **Mahatma Gandhi** for the ideation of this book and for a constant soul check on how many values I imbibed in my life personally through his teachings in the process of writing this book.

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And finally, I thank all the adversities in my life that helped me evolve into the person I am to be able to author my first book. Life, I am grateful to you!

**Smita M Gupta**  
***India***



## Note from the Author

The source for the quotations of Mahatma Gandhi used in this book is from the internet, from the sites mkgandhi.org and Google.

This is a work of **fiction**. Unless otherwise indicated, all the names, characters, businesses, places, events and incidents in this book are either the product of the author's imagination or used in a fictitious manner. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, or actual events is purely coincidental.

The concept of the monkeys is a total work of imagination.



## Activity

At the end of every chapter, there are some questionnaires for self-awareness and realization checks. The reader can finish the entire story first and then come back to the activity part of each chapter.

There are pages provided at the end of the book to write the answers.

There is an illustration after every chapter. The reader needs to check the particular emotions they have after reading that chapter, give identity to those feelings with specific colours, then colour the illustrations accordingly.

## Let's Connect

Email: [3vibetribe@gmail.com](mailto:3vibetribe@gmail.com)

Linkedin: [www.linkedin.com/in/smita-gupta-prdcn-dsgnr-](https://www.linkedin.com/in/smita-gupta-prdcn-dsgnr-)

Instagram: [smitagupta30](https://www.instagram.com/smitagupta30)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/3-A-Tribe-of-Super-Kids-102167554626229/>

Website: [www.smitamgupta.com](http://www.smitamgupta.com)



## Preface

**‘3’** Came to existence with my thirst for knowledge. It is a number that represents ‘Guru.’ (Which in Sanskrit means Remover of Darkness). The English word ‘Guide’ found its source from this Sanskrit word. To realize that ‘Guru Tattva/Essence’ or the ‘Divine Principle’ within us, we need a guide. History has witnessed India as a ‘Spiritual Land’ where numerous Spiritual Masters, Leaders, and Great Souls were born. At every Age, these Great Souls have awakened the divine principle within us and removed our inner darkness of ignorance through their light of knowledge.

One such Great Son of our Soil was Mahatma Gandhi, fondly revered as ‘Bapu’ or ‘Father of Our Nation.’ The word ‘Bapu’ or ‘Father’ brings a sense of security in every child’s heart. And the Nation felt that same sense of security just being in his aura. His transformation based leadership has evolved and awakened people in India and around the world, both during the pre-independence and post-independence period of our country.

India has progressed in leaps and bounds post-independence and has emerged as a New India on the global map. It has developed in every possible sector, especially Technology. Our childhood was very different than the children of this Digital Era. We are currently living in a time where children have become slaves to technology. We cannot avoid that, but the excess usage of cellular

phones, tablets, the internet, social media, etc. distances them away from near ones, real-life connections, and real-life experiences.

Right from the pressure of getting more marks from childhood school days to the chase of more money when they grow up, we, as a society, embed the word 'Competition' in their pure mind and force them to lose their uniqueness by setting a benchmark of someone else. In the process of developing their 'Intelligence Quotient,' we collectively as parents, teachers, society give less focus on the development of their 'Emotional Quotient' and Life Skills, forcing them into being who they are not in a natural way and thus resulting in the emotions that harm their inner self. Their anger, frustrations, aggression is like the seed of violence within that we nurture silently, and that may surface as dormant volcano anytime in the society.

As Mahatma Gandhi rightly said, "I will not let anyone walk through my mind with their dirty feet." He believed both in outer and inner sanitation and the importance of children growing up in their natural innocence so that we won't have to struggle. Ahimsa replaces the inner seed of violence by nurturing their emotional quotient. And for that, we should restructure our educational systems. We should not restrict their learning just within the boundaries of home, school, or playgrounds. To learn Life Skills, one must connect with the real world and explore it through their uniqueness, and the best way to preserve that uniqueness, to develop emotional

quotient, and to learn life skills is through the service work. As service gives that opportunity to naturally connect, think, and feel at the same time towards our environment. It will be like a seed of love and responsibility towards the environment, society, nation, and planet; planted as a virtue in them for a healthier future of both the child and the society. If the schools include a system of 3 hours of weekly service, we could create a whole healthier and happier new generation of Super Kids not just in India but around the World.

This narrative is my first attempt as an author and my tribute to awaken the '**Guru Tattva**' by the teachings of **Mahatma Gandhi on His 150th Birth Anniversary** in context to today's time through ordinary characters in extraordinary situations preserving their uniqueness.

The 3 Monkeys within us that are in conflict with each other...our own Ego, Intellect and Soul, looking for their uniqueness and acceptance in the outer world. Just like every seed has the potential of a tree within it; Every **Atma** (Soul) can grow through their life journey with the potential of being a **Mahatma** (Greater Soul) through service.



## The 3 Monkeys

**Ahem** reflects our inner *EGO*, it is like the shadow that appears with our physical body. The shadow is least when the Sun is right above the head and big when away from the light. Similarly, when our blurred vision is removed by the light of self-realization we become visionary. It is the 'see no evil' monkey within us.



**Buddy** represents the *INTELLECT* or the reasoning and understanding ability hidden in us that listens to the constant chattering going within. It is with the awareness and discrimination that any circumstance can be resolved and intellect befriended. It is the 'hear no evil' monkey residing within.

**Atman** represents the *SOUL*, the constant integrated awareness, the conscious life force or that energy we are. It acts as the source, the inner voice or the gut feeling that guides to who you are and leads to yourself. It is the 'speak no evil' monkey within us.

(Note – Atman cannot be a monkey but here in the story it is just symbolic to the character, playfulness of a child and referral point to the inner voice).



# 3

## Chapter 1

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### A New Beginning



When Ego, Intellect, Soul Align



**“Live as if you were to die tomorrow, learn as you were to live forever!”**

A feminine voice of a Radio Jockey is heard on FM through the car's music system as she announces, 'the Nation celebrates 150th year of Mahatma Gandhi's birth anniversary!' 'Bapu' as he was fondly addressed by everyone and 'The Father of our Nation.' A melodious devotional song by Gandhi, "*Vaishnav Jan To Tene Kahiye...*" fills the atmosphere as this white luxury car proceeds the streets through morning traffic of school and office goers.

It's a pleasant morning of 2nd October and the festive season of Navratri (Indian festival celebrated in honor of Divine Mother and return of Lord Rama from exile) is being celebrated, as we also hear the chanting and ringing of bells in a neighbourhood temple as the car proceeds. The weather conditions in the city are unpredictable due to climate change. The rains yet not receded. It seemed as if it had rained early in the morning as there were puddles on the road, and it is wet while the pedestrians are walking carefully to avoid falling into it. The white luxury car takes the turn into the lane where some school children, both boys, and girls of different age groups, are walking with their escorts towards their school.

There is a garbage vehicle standing a little ahead of the school gate. A lean, older man in his fifties who is partly bald

with some grey hairs on the sides, dusky skin complexion and thin moustache comes out of the school gate with a big-wheeled green garbage bin to throw the garbage in the vehicle. He is one of the oldest employees and sweeper of the school. His name is Ramu Kaka, and he lives in a slum a few miles away from the school. He plays the peon role too. Some parents are dropping the children on the main gate while some kids are still getting off from the school bus stationed outside the main gate of the school. The middle-aged driver with thick dark hair, a thick moustache, dark skin, and medium built body gestures a hello to Ramu Kaka, his name being Raghuram. Ramu lifts his hand and acknowledges him with a smile.

Although it's a national holiday today, the school is open for some celebrations, sports practice and outdoor activities for children. As the luxury white car speeds towards the school gate, its back left tyre goes inside the deep puddle and splashes the muddy water on a child walking next to it. The child is around nine years old, carrying a school bag, a painting of Mahatma Gandhi, he made himself, in his right hand, dressed in his white shorts and white shirt nicely buttoned up with the belt, school badge, a red necktie, white socks, and canvas shoes. He is wearing a fancy black sunglass too. Now, his uniform is stained, so is his painting. He is Ahem, a stout looking boy with neatly oiled black hair and dusky complexion. He removes his sunglasses and keeps it in the chest pocket of his shirt. His face is red with anger, his eyes are big, full of aggression and his one eyebrow is up.

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He runs after the car and screams, “Stop! Stop! You have ruined my uniform and stained my artwork, can’t you see and drive? Come out of the car.” He picks up a stone from the road and aims at the car that is slowing down but has not stopped. The stone hits the wheel, bounces in the air and then hits the school bus’ rear windshield glass, shattering it, making a big hole with some cracks. Raghuram looks behind his driver’s seat as soon as he hears the sound of glass breaking.

The white car stops. A small thin fair boy around eight years of age, brown eyes, dark brown short hair with little Shika, (a small portion of hair behind), dressed in the same uniform as the other school boys, steps out of the car and shuts the car door. He has an apologetic, innocent expression on his face with raised eyebrows and before he is able to utter anything, Ahem holds him by his shirt collar, stares into his eyes in anger and says, “You rich brat, you get me in a black mood, you can only spoil the lives of ordinary people, see for yourself how you have stained my school uniform and spoilt my painting too. It is inhumane to treat pedestrians as ants and worms.”

The little boy is pale with fear as both gaze into each other's eyes and says, “Sorry, the tyre suddenly decided to deep dive.” Ramu Kaka and Raghuram run towards the kids who are in conflict with each other. They both are about to laugh at his comment but then control themselves. Ahem gets angrier and is about to get into a fight. Ramu Kaka frees the

little boy's collar and Raghuram pulls Ahem away from him. The boy adjusts his collar saying, "It feels bad to say but people are so violent in cities." Ahem gives him a harsh look. By this time the driver of the car has also come out and a few people including parents have gathered too. The driver apologetically looks towards Ramu Kaka and Raghuram and says, "I am sorry, I missed seeing the pothole." Ramu pats his shoulder with kindness, looks back at the broken windshield of the bus and then looks at Ahem who is still furiously staring at the boy and says, **"Intolerance itself is a form of violence and obstacle to the growth of a true democratic spirit!"** Ahem, you should channelize your anger towards some bigger cause in life."

The little boy is relieved seeing that people around are helping to bring the situation in control. He smiles and takes two steps towards Ahem and says, "Ahem, I feel guilty towards you, I am really sorry for whatever happened but will be careful next time," he pauses, then stretches his right hand and says, "Can we be friends? Today is my first day at school." Ahem is still adamant and pricey and complains to Ramu, "He ruined my uniform Ramu Kaka." Ramu notices the rebel in him and the aggressiveness in his behavior and says, **"Forgiving is more courageous than punishing, the weak can never forgive, forgiveness is the attribute of the strong!"** Ahem, I am sure you are a strong boy. You should accept the friendship of ah.." he stammers as he does not know the name of the little boy, who then immediately

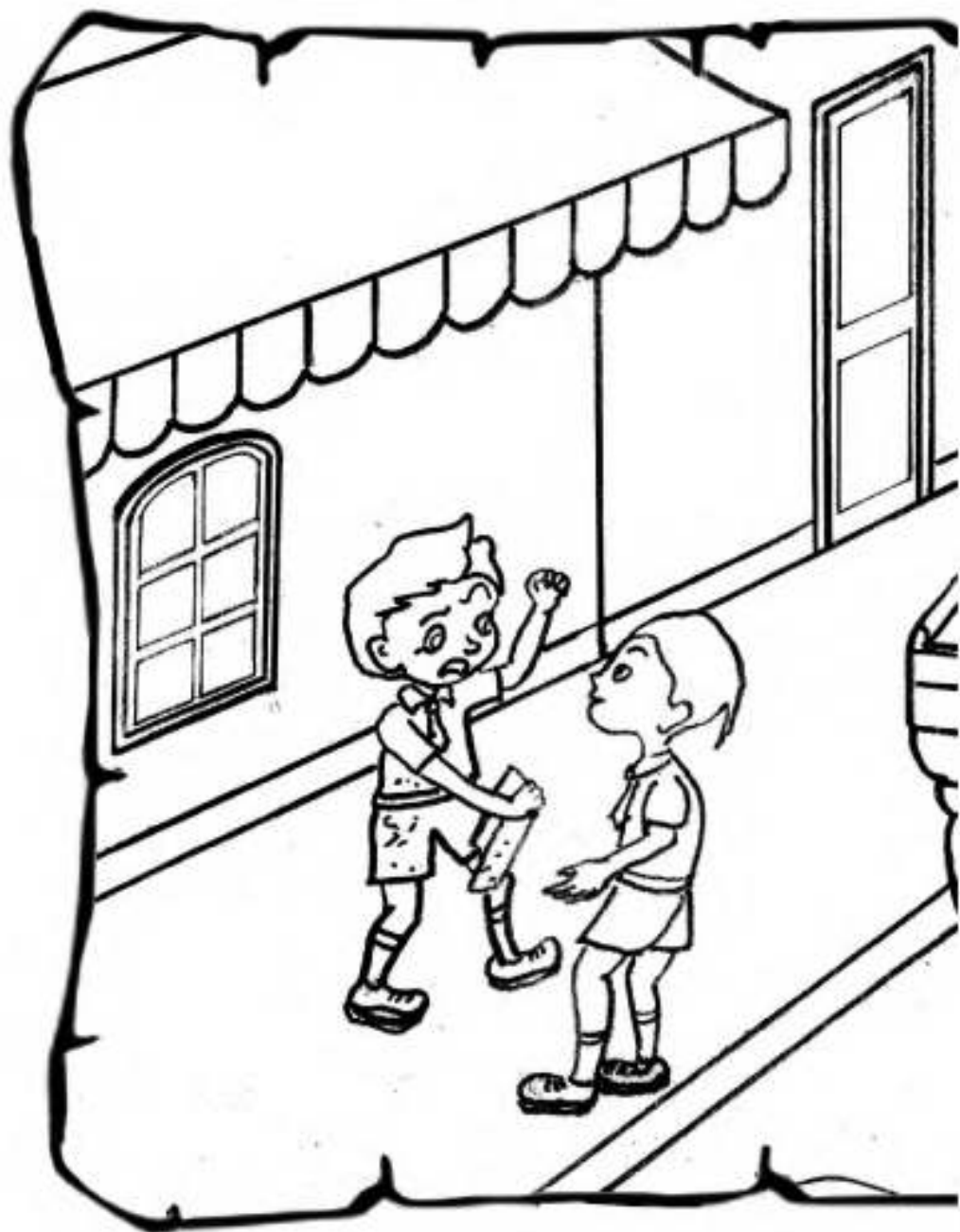
intervenes and introduces himself as, “Atman, that’s my name!”

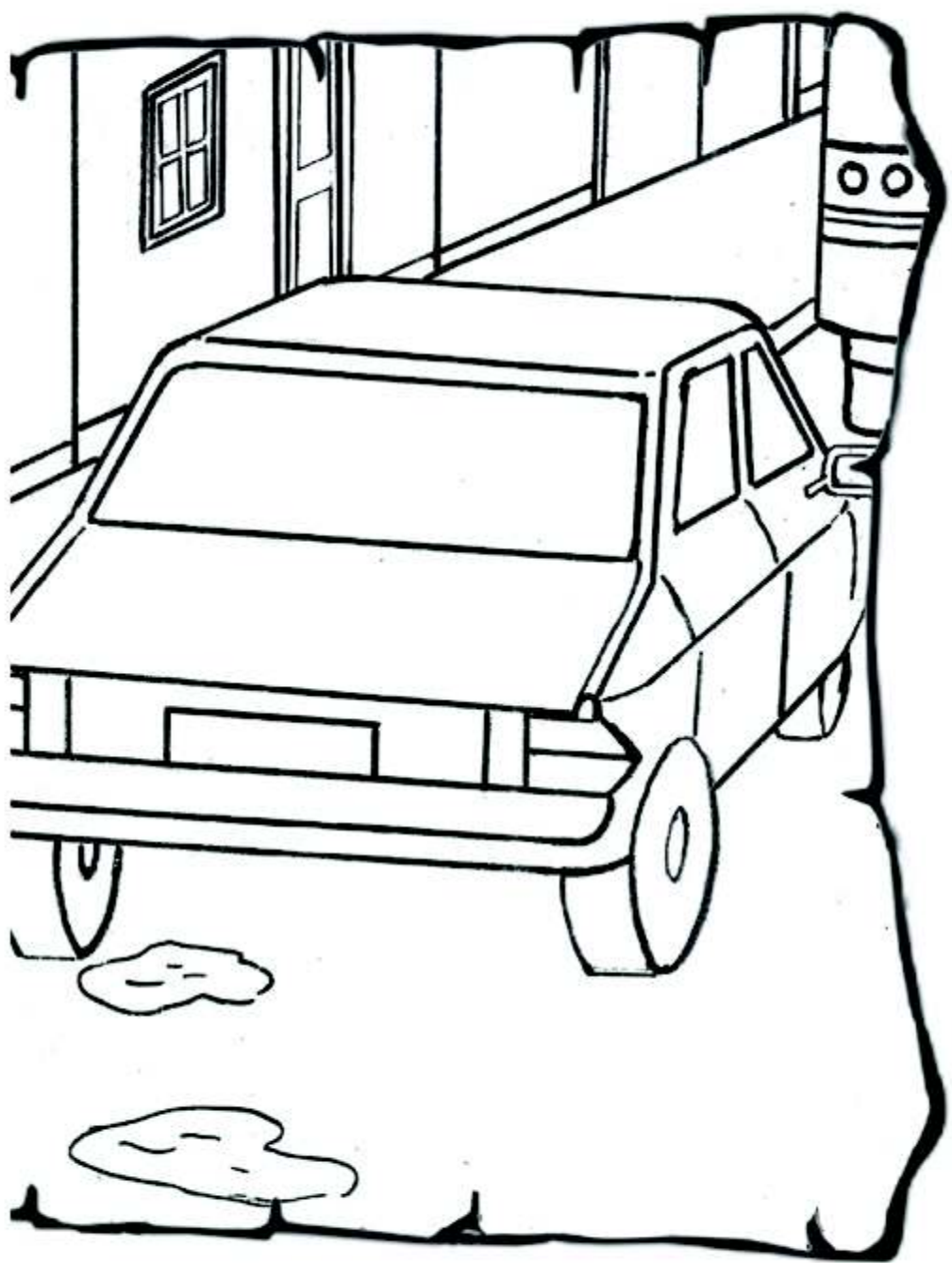
As Ahem is absorbed in his thoughts, cold attitude and hesitant, Atman is about to withdraw his hand. Ahem ponders in his mind, he says to himself, ‘I don’t want people to think I am not strong enough,’ and with a great sense of pride quickly shakes hand with Atman. Everyone is happy as the situation is now under control. Atman looks towards the driver, who then opens the door of the car, takes out his school bag and water bottle then gives it to him and says, “I will come on time to pick you up,” and goes and sits on the driver’s seat and starts the car. While the crowd disperses, Atman, Ahem, Ramu Kaka, and Raghuram walk towards the school’s main gate.

Ramu tells Raghuram as they walk across the bus, “You need to replace the glass windshield of the bus Raghuram.” He promptly replies, “Yes, will do that tomorrow after the administration department gives the approval” as he halts near the bus. While the inner voice in Ahem’s mind plays, ‘These rich boys get everything so easily and have all the comforts, they don’t value ordinary people, it’s a clear way forward that he learns a lesson.’ While Atman’s inner voice says, ‘I wonder how I will stay in this city, I had a bad taste in my mouth today, I don’t know if I will like my new school, this boy is so full of aggression, I hope other children are not like him.’ Ramu Kaka proceeds towards the school’s main gate with the two children. He queries with Atman, “You

seem to have taken a midterm admission Atman,” to which Atman replies, “Yes Kaka, we have just moved and new into this city.” By now they have reached the main gate, and along with a few more students enter through a big yellow metal gate with the arch-shaped big nameplate that read ‘Sacred Heart School.’









## Chapter 1 Self Awareness Activity

***Intolerance itself is a form of violence and obstacle to the growth of a true democratic spirit! – Mahatma Gandhi***

1. Make a list of triggers that make you violent or intolerant.
2. Write down how would you like to respond to the triggers for your aggressive behavior.
3. What can be positive or negative out of your response? Do the positives outweigh the negative?

***Forgiving is more courageous than punishing, the weak cannot forgive, forgiveness is the attribute of the strong!***  
***- Mahatma Gandhi***

1. If someone wrongs you do you forgive or do you hold on to the bitterness?
2. Write down how does it affect you when you forgive and when you don't.
3. What brings more strength to you? Forgiving or Bitterness?



# 3

## Chapter 2

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### Everyone's Buddy



When Ego, Intellect, Soul Align

Kids are entering a classroom where on a blackboard it's written IV A. There is a white screen rolled up. It's a big classroom with two doors. The walls are covered with soft boards pinned up with coloured charts hand-painted by kids on the lessons from their various subjects. There is a big wooden table for the teacher in front of the blackboard with a bottle of water, computer system, chalk, duster and marker in a tray on it. Kids are occupying the desks and keep their school bag on their table and water bottle on a shelf provided aside at the back of the classroom.

Two nerdy boys are standing around the computer system and using the search engine for some lessons, one of the nerd boy, Pappu, fair and short with spectacles and oiled hair, suddenly goes to the end of the class, exits from the back door of the classroom stands behind the door panel, checks if anyone is watching him, quietly takes out his small-sized mobile phone from pocket as it vibrates. He whispers into it, "Mom, I am ok, don't call now, if anyone sees me with a mobile phone I shall be punished, Yes, don't worry, I will keep you updated, bye now. "He disconnects, looks if anyone is watching him, and when he sees someone coming, he walks left towards a toilet door next to the class and starts playing a video game on the phone. Ahem enters the class from the right of the backdoor, pins up his painting of Mahatma Gandhi on the notice board that is between two windows on the back wall of the classroom. Some kids are talking to each other while Atman checks the classroom and section. He then enters the class from the front door. As

he walks around the rows of benches to find a place to sit, he sees other children engaged in various activities. One boy is busy throwing paper airplanes, two girls are playing tic-tac-toe, while two boys are snatching a pencil from each other, another studious boy with spectacles is reading a chapter on Mahatma Gandhi. One boy is sleeping on the desk with his head down and mouth open, while the boy next to him is doodling behind a book. Another boy who was changing the date on the blackboard quickly comes and sits on his bench before Atman occupied that seat. All kids giggle, seeing his hair Shika and one kid tries to touch and pull it too. Atman has not been left with any other choice apart from sitting on the last bench next to Ahem. He smiles at him. Ahem shows disapproval on his face. He gets up and stands near the window behind the last bench and looks outside.

Atman takes out his notebook from the bag. He takes out a picture of Goddess Saraswati (Goddess of Knowledge) and a peacock feather from the zip compartment of his school bag and keeps it inside the notebook. Another boy from the next bench passes a notebook to Atman, he shows a curious gesture and opens the notebook pointing to the peanuts hidden between the notebook pages. Atman smiles and nods in a 'No' gesture to his offer. He then closes his eyes, folds his hands in a prayer position and starts chanting some mantras. All the children turn back and look at him.

Ahem is least bothered and keeps gazing outside the window. A bicycle bell is ringing and Ahem watches that bicycle from above which is very different than normal bicycles. It has the shape of a triangle and at the top point of the triangle, it has the handlebars, the brakes and the bell. Below it there is a front basket with newspaper rolls. On the other slope little above the midpoint is the seat of the bicycle and after a gap, there is a longer carrier that holds a bunch of newspapers. The base two ends have the two wheels. The gap between the seat and the carrier has a little box fitted with the lock to store some items. The bicycle is engineered and crafted very innovatively. A ten-year-old boy in a half-sleeved shirt and blue shorts and a pair of old canvas shoes, is riding it. He is tall and skinny with dark yet glowing skin, he has curly dark hair, wearing an iron bangle on his right hand and an old earphone covering his ears with the wire ends in his shorts pocket.

As he enters the school premises, he stops the bicycle, parks it in the bicycle parking zone of the open grounds, locks it and takes two newspaper rolls and walks towards the arrow showing the direction of Principal's Office. Mr. Major, the Principal of the school, a tall hefty middle-aged man with moustache and spectacles, well attired in a grey shirt, black trousers and a maroon necktie, holding a circular in his hand is walking with another athlete type young smart fair man in his late thirties, wearing a blue sports T-shirt and matching track pants and a good quality headphone around his neck. He is the physical training teacher Mr. Denzil. They both

step down from the staircase of the administration office as they see this boy coming towards them with the newspaper. Mr. Major looks at his wristwatch and says to the boy, "Buddy, here you are! You never fail to deliver your newspaper on time." He gives the circular to him saying, "Can you please give this circular to Miss Gitana in class IV, and before leaving please collect some books kept for you in my cabin." Buddy quickly removes his earphones and keeps in his pocket and remarks, "Sure Principal Sir." He hands over the newspaper to him, takes the circular and leaves towards the classroom building.

As both the men watch him walking away Mr. Denzil tells the Principal, "Sir you always find a way to send Buddy into the classroom." Mr. Major smiles at Mr. Denzil and says, "Is not education the art of drawing out full manhood of the child under training?" He has the right to education, yet to survive he needs to work, he can't attend the night school too due to his ailing father. I am glad Ramu brought to my notice about this bright child in his slum neighbourhoods. I hoped to help him with a donation but he refuses to take any monetary help. The boy has high self-esteem. He will surely go a long way in his life and sail through his tough circumstances with his perseverance and sharp intellect. I am glad he agreed to accept my old phone with all the study materials and listens to it while he runs the errands throughout the day. He pauses and asks Mr. Denzil, "How is the sports day preparation going on Mr. Denzil?" As they walk together Mr. Denzil replies, "It's going good Sir, I have

kept a practice session today too for some kids before they leave for the outdoor activity. They reach the administration office and enter the door.

In the classroom, while the kids are enjoying their free time. Pappu suddenly comes running and says, “Miss is coming, shut the computer.” The other boy standing next to the computer quickly shuts it down and both the boys go and occupy their seats. A beautiful, fair, slim lady teacher in her mid-thirties, with thick long dark hair, attired in a white salwar kameez with orange dupatta(stole) enters the class. She is Ms. Gitana. She has a smiling face and yet appears stern. Everyone gets up quickly and greets together, “Good Morning Miss!” Ahem rapidly walks to his seat. While everyone is standing, the little child who had fallen asleep is still sleeping and snoring. His mate tries to whisper and shake him but when he sees that the class teacher is looking at him he leaves him and stands straight. Ms. Gitana calls out his name. “Rohan! Rohan!” Alas, he seems to be in a deep meditative state aligned to the rhythm of his own snoring. She picks up a piece of chalk from the tray on the table and throws towards him. It hits his hand and he wakes up immediately with a jerk and stands up. The whole class laughs and the teacher asks the children to be seated. She says, “Before I take your attendance I need to introduce you to the new boy in your class from today, please stand up Atman.” Atman stands up and the whole class claps for him in enthusiasm and shouts out, “Welcome Atman!” He is pumped with confidence and happiness and smiles back at

the class and Ahem, who smirks and looks displeased. At that moment another schoolboy speeds up towards the classroom door and knocks and excuses himself, "Miss, may I come in please?" Ms. Gitana looks at him with disapproval and says, "You are late again Latif? I cannot allow you in, you need to be punished. Discipline is important in life. Stand out in the waste paper basket for half an hour." The class children say, "Late Latif" and start giggling. Ms. Gitana gives them a stern look and they keep quiet. Latif feels sad. He keeps the bag aside and with a long face steps into the waste paper basket next to the door outside the classroom which has crumpled pieces of paper, peels of bananas and oranges. The class giggles at him and Ms. Gitana gives a firm look to the class and says, **"Education which does not mould character is absolutely worthless!"** The class is in pin-drop silence.

The silence is broken by Buddy's voice, "Excuse me, Miss!" Ms. Gitana and children look at the door where Buddy is standing, he continues, "Principal Sir has asked to give you this circular." Ms. Gitana says, "Please come in Buddy." Buddy enters the class and hands over the circular and she reads it. Buddy then excuses himself and leaves and Ms. Gitana starts calling out the roll numbers.

As Buddy leaves towards the corridor on the right, he passes by Latif, who out of his uneasiness is giving a constipated look at him. Buddy whispers in his ears, "If you will stand some more time inside the bin you will surely become an



expert in compost business.” Latif giggles with his hand on his mouth. Buddy gestures him to step out of the bin quietly. Latif follows his instruction and they both walk quietly through the corridor peeping into the different classrooms and listen to the lessons given in different standards by their class teachers. They overhear through the backdoors of the classes. Buddy whispers to Latif, “I heard my father saying, better late than never, just seize the opportunity in every adverse situation as **adversity is the mother of progress!**”

Then they both quickly slip into a senior section of ongoing Physics class through the backdoor while the teacher’s face is towards the blackboard, no one notices them as they enter the class. They quietly sink into the last bench and for some time and listen to the knowledge of Newton's Law of Gravity being shared by the class teacher who is drawing a picture of a tree with an apple falling, on the blackboard with a chalk. While drawing he says, “Earth's gravity is what keeps you on the ground and what makes things fall.” They get deeply immersed in it and at that moment the bell rings.



## Chapter 2 Self Awareness Activity

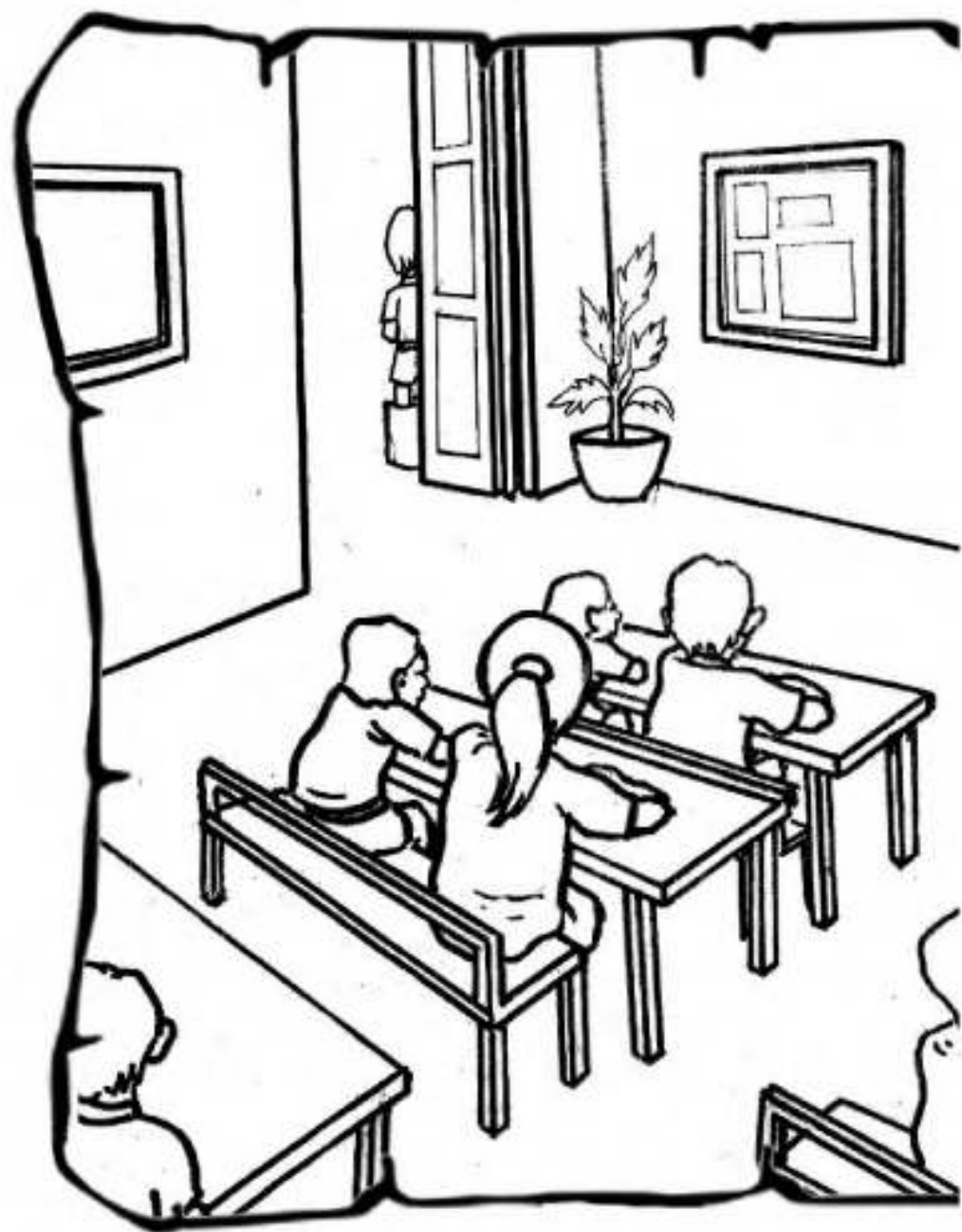
***Education which does not mould character is absolutely worthless! – Mahatma Gandhi***

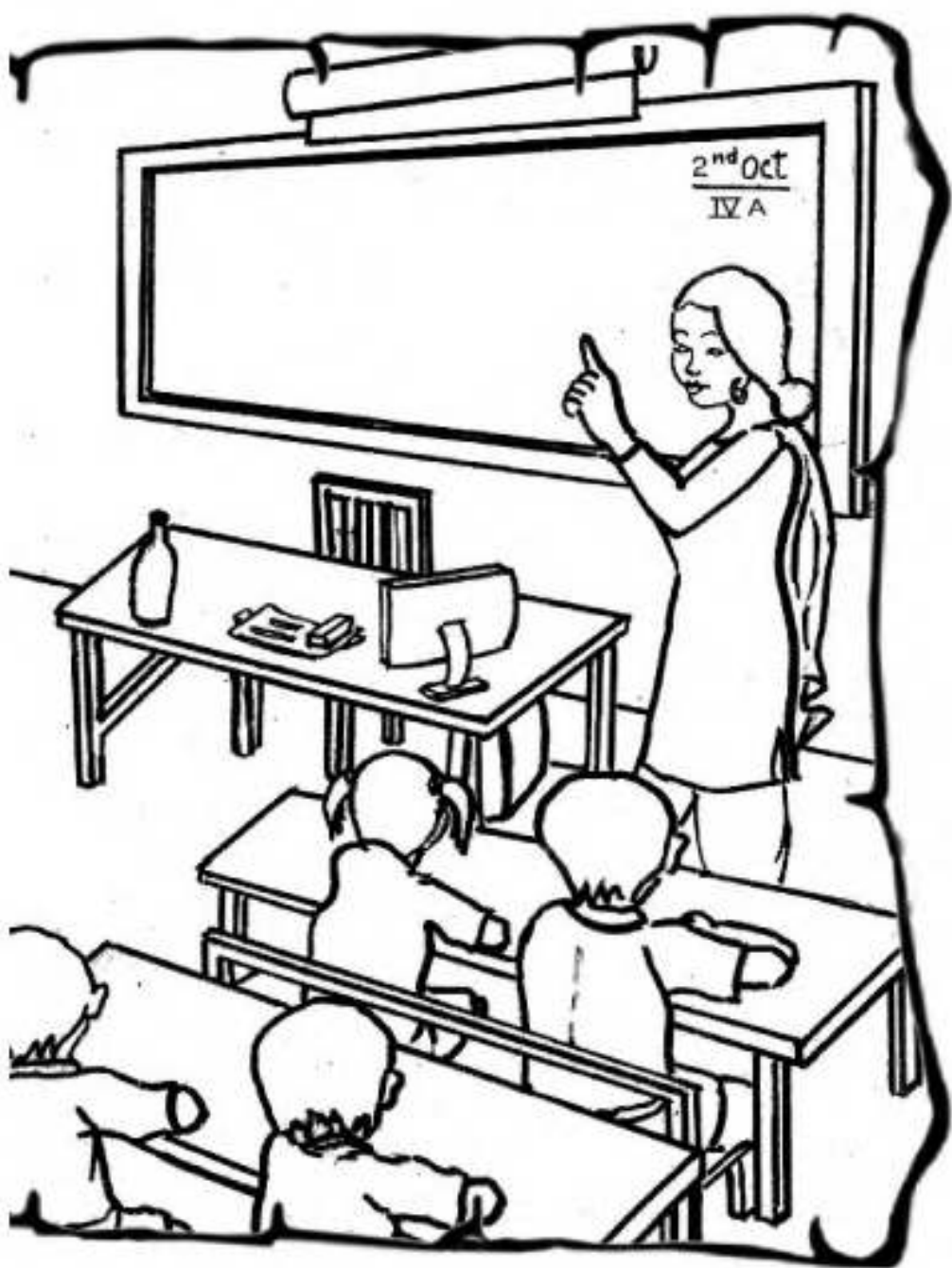
1. Make a list of strengths and weaknesses in your character.
2. Write how can you improve your weaknesses.

***Adversity is the mother of progress! – Mahatma Gandhi***

1. What is the last adversity you faced?
2. What are the changes it brought in you?
3. What did you learn from it?







# 3

## Chapter 3

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### The Game of Life



When Ego, Intellect, Soul Align

A few junior class kids are playing with the ball of Buddy's bicycle in the big school playground which is surrounded by the office, junior section and senior section buildings. Buddy comes near his bicycle, smiles back at the children and keeps some books in his bicycle basket. As he is about to remove the lock of the bicycle, a football comes rolling near Buddy's feet. He glances in the direction of the football and sees Denzil Sir smiling. He kicks it to him like a trained player. Denzil Sir kicks it back and tries indulging Buddy in football practice. By that time children from different standards are also around for practice. Some senior boys and girls are running on the ground, a group of children is playing volleyball in one corner and few girls are playing badminton.

Buddy kicks the football towards Ahem and soon Latif and other children join the game. The ball rolls towards Atman who was watching them play. The game stops. Denzil Sir asks, "You seem to be a new admission, come on kick the ball." Atman replies, "Yes Sir, I am Atman, but I don't know how to play football." Denzil Sir replies, **"If I have the belief that I can do it, I shall surely acquire the capacity to do it even if I may not have it in the beginning."** Atman feels confident and kicks the football towards Ahem, who smirks and looks away. Denzil Sir scolds Ahem, "Be a team player," and blows the whistle tied on his neck with a cord. The shrilling sound breaks the silence. Ahem is nonchalant and passes the ball to Buddy standing nearby. They all start playing again. Latif takes control of the football from Buddy.

Denzil Sir screams at Buddy saying, “Don't run with the ball until you have caught it.”

The ball gets back to Ahem, he stops the ball with his foot. Everyone shouts, “Ahem, pass the ball quickly.” With a revengeful expression on his face, Ahem aims the ball, and with full power kicks it towards Atman. The ball hits Atman just below the right knee and he falls. Everyone is stunned. Some children including Buddy run towards him. He is bruised. The blood has clotted and it's blue in colour around the affected area. He is in tears and says, “I smell something fishy in the minds of people here, the people in my village are way better.” Other children also feel his pain. Latif quickly runs to grab the first aid box. Atman's face has turned pale as he hears the whistle again. Buddy looks angrily at Ahem and remarks, “Your action appears ill-intended, why did you hit him?” Ahem chooses not to respond and looks away haughtily. Denzil Sir blows the whistle and firmly says, “Get up Atman and play through the pain!” Everyone is stunned. Denzil Sir speaks with conviction, “Come on Atman, get up!” Buddy starts cheering and laments, “Yes Atman play!” Soon everyone present in the playground starts to cheer and clap. You can only hear one name, “Atman! Atman!”

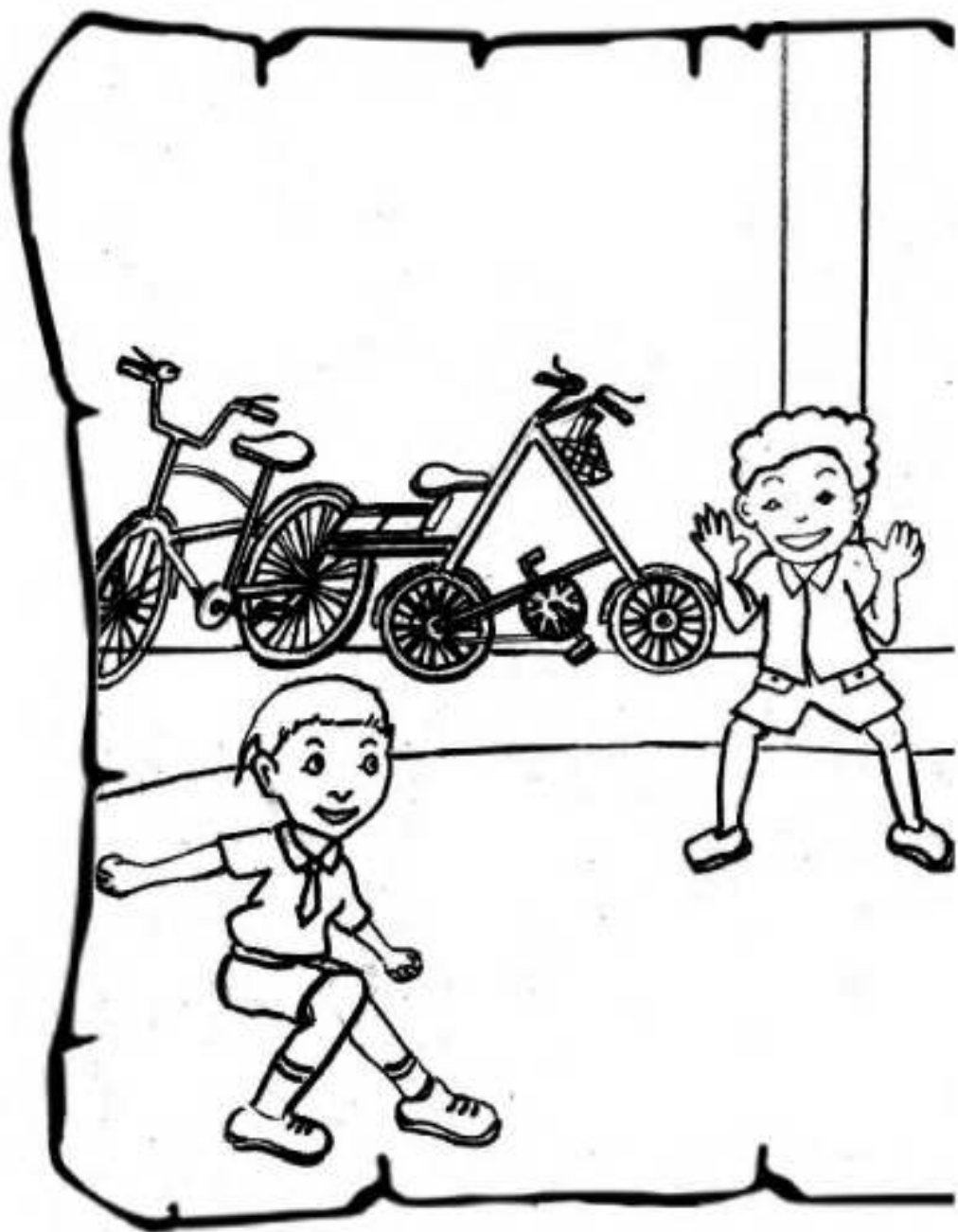
Ahem has an expression of disapproval. Atman feels a little motivated, he gathers his guts, takes a deep breath and chants his mantra, “Om Namah Shivay,” for strength. He then gets up and hits the ball with the full strength of his

body towards Denzil Sir who stops the ball with his feet. All the children start clapping for Atman, Ahem is irritated as others cheer Atman's "heroic" effort. Denzil Sir passes the ball saying, "This time play to win. Whatever you do, give it your full hundred percent." Buddy suddenly remembers that he has to deliver the other newspapers, "Sir, I need to win my bread and butter for today, and later I have to take the doctor home as well, my father is sick, so if you kindly excuse me, I will take a leave." "Why don't you join the school?" Denzil Sir asks him. Buddy replies, "Life is a school for me, it gives me practical lessons, I listen to my inner voice, Sir," and then walks away. Latif comes with Ramu Kaka, carrying the first aid box.

Kaka applies some antibiotic ointment and dresses the wound. The wind carries the smell of food. Latif inhales deeply and exclaims, "Wow, the aroma of ghee (clarified butter), looks like Motichoor Uncle has made laddoos in the canteen." Sir lets the children go, "You all must be hungry, go and get your tiffin boxes and eat it in the canteen. We will leave for outdoor activity after you finish your meal." The children, relieved, close their eyes, inhale the smell of ghee and together shout in absolute ecstasy, "Yummy!" Atman smiles as he feels hungry too!









## Chapter 3 Self Awareness Activity

***If I have the belief that I can do it, I shall surely acquire the capacity to do it even if I may not have it in the beginning!***  
– Mahatma Gandhi

1. Make a list of beliefs you have.
2. Shortlist the positive beliefs and make a note on how can you grow from it.
3. Are you a team player? What are you best in?
4. How can you be persistent in your best quality?
5. Make a list of 3 people around you and one best quality in them.



# 3

## Chapter 4

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### Food For The Soul



When Ego, Intellect, Soul Align

At the canteen, small children are smelling laddoos (Indian sweet) kept in big steel plates on one table while seniors help the kitchen staff pack the sweets in paper boxes. It is a big canteen with several rows of tables and chairs placed neatly, with a kitchen at the end of the hall with a door. The daylight coming through the huge windows all along the long walls on either side of the canteen makes it very bright and airy. The football team children start entering the canteen, about four steps up from the ground floor on a plinth. Other children come and occupy their seats after cleaning their hands in the wash basin in one corner of the canteen. They come towards the table where they had kept their lunch boxes, take their seats, clasp their hands for a minute's prayer and start gobbling their food.

Outside the canteen door, Ahem tells Latif, "Can you please bring my tiffin box when you go to the classroom to get yours?" Latif gasps, "Not until I get my share of laddoos." They both run inside the canteen to satisfy their sweet tooth pleasure. Atman, limping behind slowly, overhears them. A small child is playing near the entrance sliding through the handrail of the steps leading to the canteen door. He suddenly slips off the handrail and Atman reacts in a shock, his face is fearful. Out of reflex, he quickly runs towards the child to hold him, but the child manages to balance himself and does not fall. Atman's face is pale and his eyes are moist, a drop of tear rolls down from the corner of his eyes. His sensitive soul starts chanting and slowly calms down.

Ahem and Latif rush towards the table of laddoos to pick them up, but before they could, a firm voice intervenes, "Don't touch the laddoos, go and wash your hands first and then eat your lunch. After the laddoos are packed, you all will be given your share too." They both look up and Latif withdraws his hand. A heavily built dusky bald and old fat man, wearing dark chequered pajamas with a cream coloured t-shirt is staring at them. He is Moti choor, the head chef of the school canteen. He takes pride in this name given by the children, as he prepares a variety of laddoos, which they think no one else can make as good as him. Stretching his hand above the laddoos, Ahem requests Motichoor Uncle for at least one. Motichoor nods his head a firm NO. Ahem makes a long face.

By now Atman comes and stands near Latif with three tiffin boxes in his hand. He gives the one for Latif. "Thank you Atman, you brought it for us even though your leg was hurt, so kind of you," Latif thanks Atman and walks towards the hand wash area. Atman extends his hands to give Ahem his lunch box next. He snatches his lunch box from Atman's hand and with utter disgust snaps, "Why did you touch my bag without my permission, stay away, is it clear?" and angrily walks away. Atman feels totally dejected and wonders what else he could do to please him after the morning incident. He looks towards the laddoos and asks in excitement, "Are all these laddoos for us?"

By now Ahem and Latif have washed their hands and they come and sit on the table close to the stacked laddoo boxes. Motichoor looks at Atman, he smiles and says, "Well you all will get to eat but after these boxes for service work is ready." Atman is perplexed, "What service? Don't you feel that we are too small to do a job? We should study, right?" Motichoor laughs, "Haha, not that service, what I meant was to serve or volunteer for a cause," he continues, "there is joy in serving humanity, leaders and visionaries have done that in the past and people continue to serve the human race in whatever way they can. It is always good to start young. So, today the school committee decided instead of the regular music, skit and stage program, after the sports practice is done, all different classes will go for different service work to celebrate Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary." Motichoor continued, "His life was his message. Our Father of the Nation believed **the best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others!**"

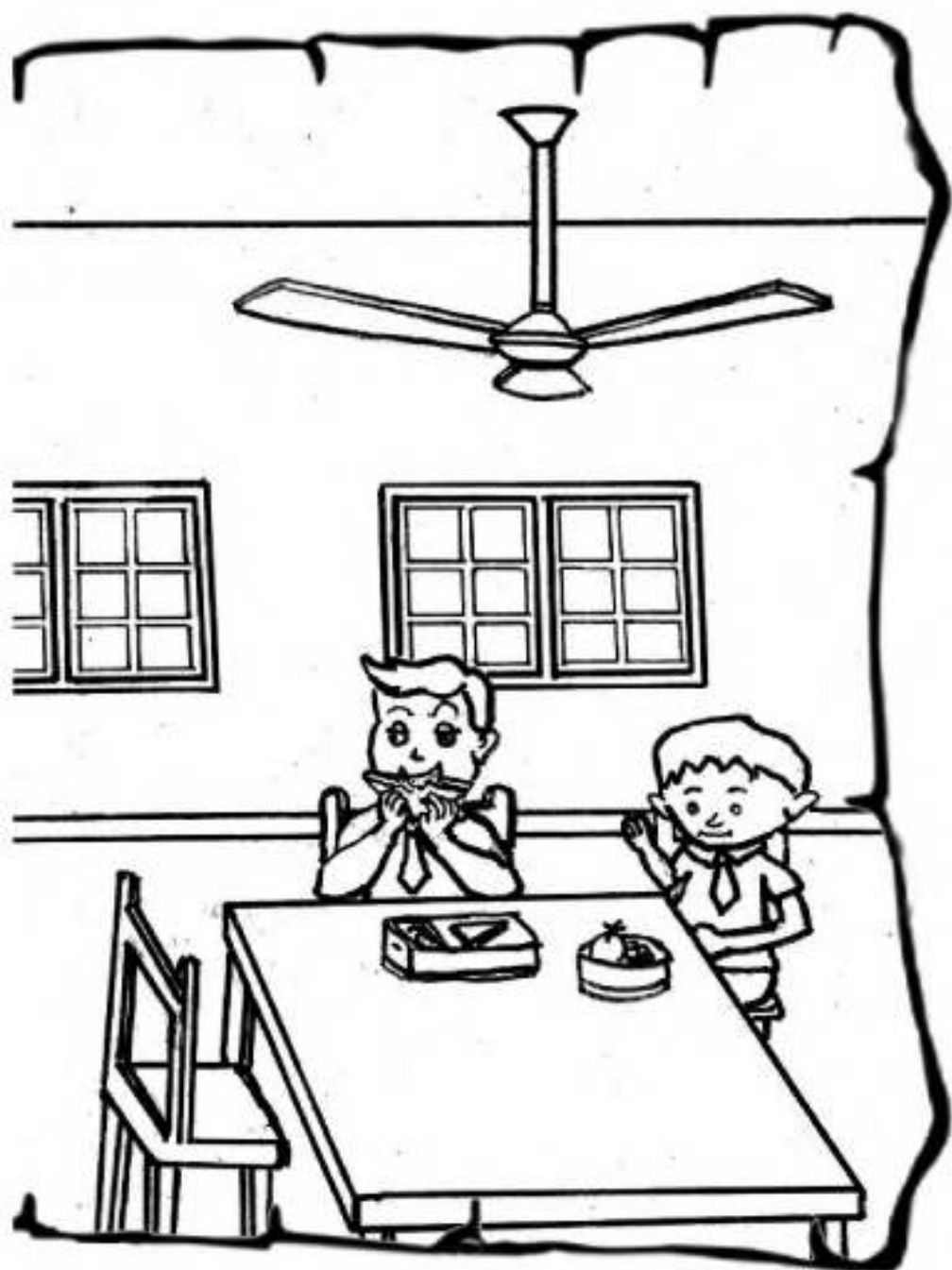
Ahem, who is eating his lunch and at the same time eyeing the laddoos, also hears that and is perplexed. He exclaims, "I see, well I don't want to be lost, then there is no need to find me. Are we playing hide and seek there? Motichoor Uncle, can I have my laddoo please?" Motichoor's laughter fills the canteen. He says, "Hahaha, no you don't play hide and seek there, and don't worry no one is getting lost either. Today you get to taste the flavour of both laddoos and service."

He picks up the plate of laddoos. All the boxes of laddoos for distribution are ready by now. He gives the first one to Atman as he is standing closest to the table. Ahem feels jealous as he is not the first one to receive it. Then Motichoor gives laddoos to Ahem, Latif and other children, including Pappu. Pappu feels the vibrator in his pocket and has a blank expression. He drops the spoon on the floor. Then he bends and pretends to pick it up, but moves in squat position to sit under the table, takes out his mobile phone and whispers, “Mom, yes I am eating, I got laddoo too and one new boy got hurt in football match, now please don’t call, everyone is around, bye.” Putting back the mobile in his pocket, Pappu returns to his seat with the spoon. The children are happy to get their laddoos. A little boy plays a prank with Motichoor. He keeps blowing a party paper horn into his ears knowing Motichoor cannot do anything as both his hands are occupied. All the children continue to laugh at Motichoor’s plight.









## Chapter 4 Self Awareness Activity

***The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others! – Mahatma Gandhi***

1. What does kindness mean to you?
2. How did you feel when others were kind to you?
3. List 3 ways as to how you can be kind to others.
4. List 3 people who have affected your life with their kindness and one learning from them which will stay with your life forever.
5. Have you taught someone that one thing that will stay with them forever?
6. What is that one thing you can teach?



# 3

## Chapter 5

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### Life Is A Journey



When Ego, Intellect, Soul Align

The school bus honks as Raghuram is checking the horn, clutch and gears one last time before he starts. Meanwhile, Ramu approaches the front seat with a big carry bag of boxes of laddoo, and cautions Raghuram, "The roads leading to my slums are very congested, then there are lanes and bylanes. You will have to park it on the local open grounds way before. The children can walk the rest distance in a queue." Raghuram nods, "I was thinking the same, it will be easier that way." Ramu continues, "Have you made anything new? There are always some tools with you and you keep engineering something or the other. What an amazing bicycle you have created for Buddy. It's a priceless possession for him. One day you might invent something big this way." Raghuram smiles. Ramu continues, "It pains my heart to see when intelligent people leave their education to clean up the mess that life throws on them, you were a bright engineering student but you had to give up." Ramu's eyes are filled with pain, "We were not so lucky. Our parents were farmers, where did they understand the value of education." Raghuram intervenes, "It's the same old story of bread and butter Ramu, now I have moved ahead in my life with my responsibilities."

The giggling noise of the kids breaks their conversation and children have already started boarding the school bus one by one. There are few more school buses behind Raghuram's bus and some senior students and other teachers are boarding them. Every class has different service work scheduled for the day.

Ahem, boards the bus and occupies the front row aisle seat away from the bus door. He takes out his sunglasses and wears them in style. Boys and girls take their seats. Some sit near Ramu on the front side seat near the driver. Latif sits on the front row next to the bus door with another boy. Denzil Sir with a newspaper in his hand sits next to Ahem. The seats get filled up soon so Atman gets the second last row aisle seat diagonally opposite to Ahem. Finally, few more kids enter and go behind to occupy their seats.

Ms. Gitana comes panting along with a pretty school girl named Titicksha. She is fair with short hair and wearing a white school tunic with a red collar and a yellow rose in her hand. Ms. Gitana looks for a place to sit but the seats are all full. Denzil Sir quickly folds the newspaper, gets up and offers his seat. She politely says, "Thank you," to which Denzil Sir responds, "It's my pleasure, a **man can never be a woman's equal in the spirit of selfless service that nature has endowed her.**" Ms. Gitana reciprocates with a smile and gestures Titicksha to sit. Seeing both the teachers standing, Latif and the boy next to him get up and go at the back of the bus, squeezing themselves to fit in the last row of seats. Both the teachers sit. Raghuram changes the gear and with the heavy sound of the engine, they embark on their journey.

Ahem feels happy and honoured that the most beautiful girl in the class is sitting next to him. He smiles at her and she smiles back. He is filled with ecstasy and pride. He holds his

head high and with a great sense of attainment, he turns back his head and smirks at Atman, his eyes self-declaring him as the hero and Atman, the loser. Atman responds with a gentle and composed smile. Ms. Gitana starts singing and everyone joins. They sing and clap together. Titicksha exclaims, "Wow! There is so much happiness in the bus." Ms. Gitana replies, **"Happiness is when what you think, what you say and what you do are all in harmony."** **"A good thought is like fragrance!"**, adds Denzil Sir. Titicksha looks at her rose and inhales it deeply. Ahem asks her, "Can I smell the rose too?" She gives him the rose. Ahem again turns his head back and looks at Atman, then pushes the sunglass from his nose bridge towards his nose tip, as if he has won the "Best Student" award. Clueless Atman gives a blank expression. As Ahem brings the rose close to his nose, a bee comes through the bus window and sits on the rose. Ahem screams and throws the rose saying, "Eeeeeeee, Honey Bee, I'm scared, it stings." As the rose falls the honey bee starts flying inside the bus and the children break into total chaos, running around and falling on each other. Atman starts chanting, "Shiva! Shiva!" The teachers stand up from their seats as the children scream and Raghuram halts the bus. Ahem falls on Atman's injured leg and he wails, "Ouch!" Ahem sees the pain on Atman's face. With little reluctance, he apologizes. Atman smiles, **"Nobody can hurt me without my permission!"** Ahem realizes his mistake.

Both the teachers have come behind towards the end of the bus. Everyone is looking right and left, front and back, above

and under for the bee. Suddenly, out of the blue, Denzil Sir says, "Latif, freeze, don't move." Everyone looks at Latif to find the bee sitting on his top strand of hair. He is still. All the children are shocked and gasp with their mouth opens in fear. Latif's face has turned blue. Denzil Sir then tiptoed towards Latif. He rolls the newspaper and with a force tries to hit the bee. Latif closes his eyes and screams. The bee does not get space in the front to fly, so it flies away through the broken glass windshield behind. Everyone takes a deep sigh and Denzil sir says, "Relax, Just be!"

Ms. Gitana queries, "Children what can you learn from the bee?" All of them look perplexed. Ms. Gitana continues, "They draw nectar from every flower. Each one of us should also take the good qualities from every individual around us. Remember each one of you is a unique flower." Children are awestruck. Specially Ahem, it has a deep impact on him. Everyone gets back to their seat and the bus starts again.

The bus meanders through the busy street, cluttered neighbourhoods, then finally stops on an open ground adjacent to the market. All the children get down and make a queue with Ramu Kaka and Ms. Gitana leading it. Denzil Sir is at the back so no one is left behind. They start walking ahead, crossing the pavement along with the busy street-side market, the lanes and bylanes. As Ramu leads everyone with the bag of laddoo boxes, the children observe everything with curiosity. In fact, they touch the products of street vendors on the way. The children reach a big metal



gate. As they enter the main gate of the slums they experience a different world through their eyes.

The lanes have some puddles and are wet in some areas due to morning rains probably. It bifurcates into very narrow by lanes inside, there are houses and shanties clustered together. The bylanes are hardly three feet wide and still, it is occupied with bicycles outside few houses, and water barrels after every two houses. There are hens and chickens running around in those narrow lanes. Amidst the sad congested place, the kids feel happy to hear the chicken's cluck, two kids even try to catch them. Then there are two women. The younger one is oiling and combing the older woman's hair. Every alternate room has a one-foot wide metal staircase leading to the mezzanine floor, which is angled very steeply. There are old terracotta tiled roofs as well as concrete, but they appear weak. If any vehicle passed by, one could feel the vibration. Some tiny tots are playing and some nude toddlers are also running around. Ahem says, "Shame! Shame!" looking at them.

As they go further they see some ladies cooking on a wok on a kerosene stove outside their homes. The kids are puzzled seeing their open-air kitchen. Some of those house doors have one-foot wooden plank from the ground and a toddler is standing behind that holding it. Almost all houses have a faded curtain on the door. The wires are running loose outside and some torn kites are hanging on to them. Some

of the door lintels have torans (decorative door frills) on them.

Ramu Kaka keeps distributing the boxes of laddoos as he reaches the intersection, and they wait till all children gather there along with Denzil Sir. Few young men also come there and they divide the children into three groups of ten to eleven children each. Those young men also join each group. Ramu Kaka leads one group with Pappu. Ms. Gitana has Ahem, Atman and other kids in her group along with Titicksha. Denzil Sir has Latif and other kids in the third. They disperse in different lanes with their team.

The local man is guiding them towards one cluster of houses, some shanties and some concrete. All the houses in the slum look identical in shape but different by colour and weathering. He stops two to three houses before the dead-end wall, knocks the doors and whispers something into the ears of the ladies who come out of their doors. Ahem, Atman and all other kids are curious. Ahem asks, "Are we playing hide and seek here Miss?" to which Ms. Gitana replies, "No children, today as a tribute to Mahatma Gandhi, as a part of service work we are cleaning up this place." By now those women have come out with broomsticks and mops in their hand. Ahem is shocked and other children are confused. Atman has curiosity on his face. The pretty girl Titicksha asks, "But teacher why do we clean it? We don't live here. They can do it themselves." Ahem nods in approval to her question and says, "Things aren't looking up,

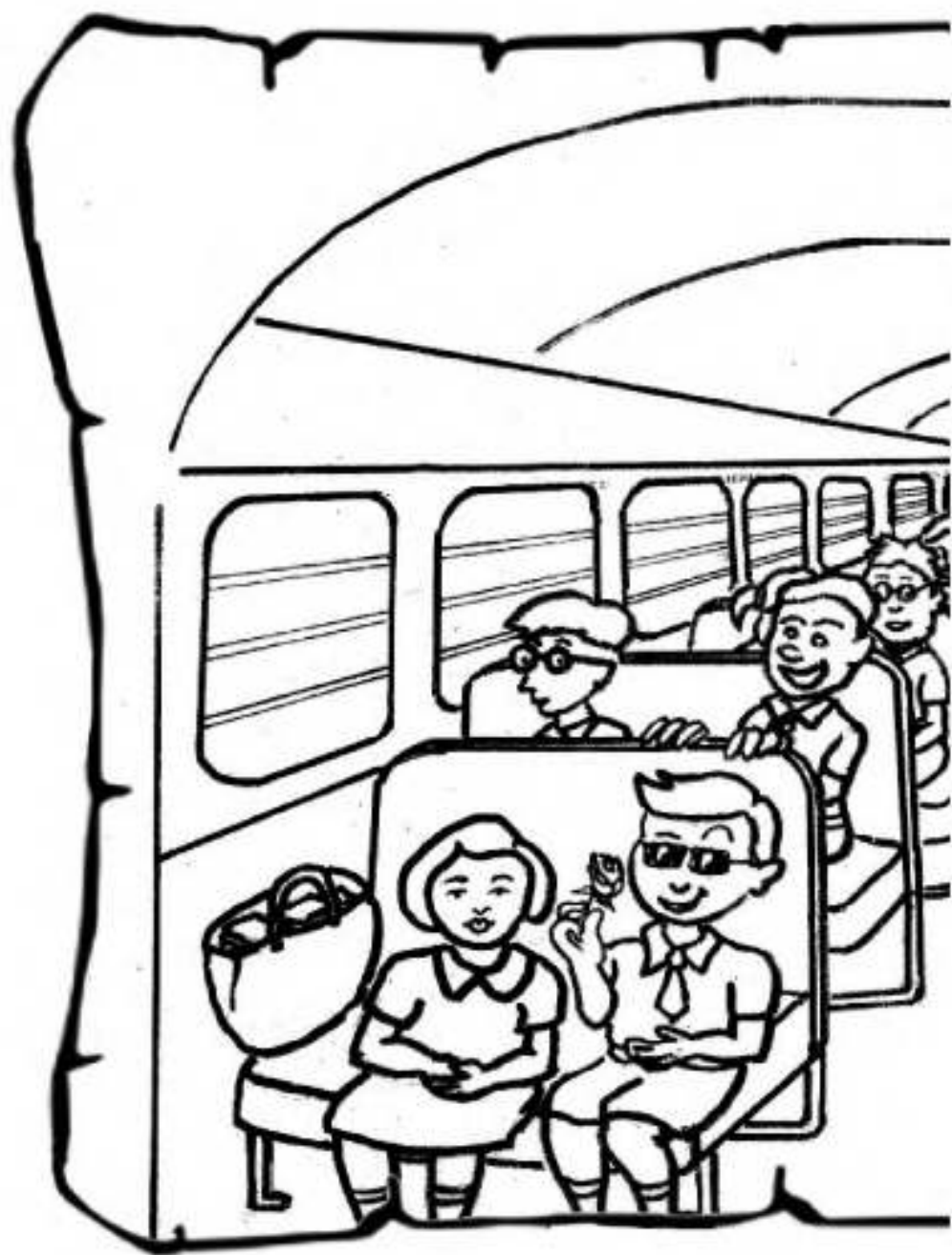
my mother never lets me do anything.” Ms. Gitana explains, “The whole country and this planet is like our living room. It's our responsibility to keep it clean and help others too. When we help others through service we purify ourselves. **When there is both inner and outer cleanliness it approaches Godliness.**”

Atman takes a step forward and stretches his hand towards a woman standing with a broomstick next to him. She gives it to him. Seeing him Titicksha also takes the broomstick from the woman next to her. Ms. Gitana does the same and slowly all the children model each other. They are more than happy to serve, except Ahem. They form a group of two and start cleaning the lane. Some front, some little behind, some in the adjacent bylanes. They are taking it as an adventure but Ahem is still standing near a house against a wall where some bamboos are lying along with some empty paint buckets and brushes too. It seemed the neighbours on the other side, after painting their wall for the festival season, had left it there. He stands alone as all the other kids have moved away with their ‘Mission Cleaning.’

Out of the blue, it starts to rain and the children jump with joy. Ms. Gitana announces, “Children please don’t get wet and go inside the house closest to you.” The young local man helps the kids step into the houses near them. Ahem quickly runs towards the dead-end boundary wall but there is no exit. He holds his nose as it stinks there and the odour

is intolerable. He presses his nose with his fingers and quickly withdraws towards the nearest house and pushes open the last house's door and steps in.







## Chapter 5 Self Awareness Activity

***Happiness is when what you think, what you say and what you do are in harmony!***

**– Mahatma Gandhi**

1. What makes you happy?
2. Make a list of what you can do to make others happy.

***Nobody can hurt me without my permission! – Mahatma Gandhi***

1. Make a list of what hurts you.
2. How do you overcome your hurt?
3. Make a list of what heals you.



# 3

## **Chapter 6**

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### **When The Light Enters Through The Darkness**



When Ego, Intellect, Soul Align



Ahem pushes the door panels and finds himself in a pitch dark room. Even the only small window is shut. He removes his sunglass and keeps in his short's pocket. He can barely see the things around in the room through the partial opening of the door behind. The room floor is dirty. He checks on the right side of the door. There is a counter made of grey cement on which there is a stove of kerosene oil. An earthen clay pot has some drinking water. Scattered are a few steel utensils, essential small containers with basic cooking ingredients like salt, turmeric, sugar and tea leaves. Two spoons and a knife lay nearby. There is a basket with potatoes and onions, a plate with two pieces of bun bread and a bowl of kneaded dough with a lid partly covering it.

Below the counter, there are some aluminium and plastic containers and the blue coloured thick old plastic sheet which is folded and kept. Just above the counter, there is an old aluminium rack with few plates and some basic utensils and some cutlery. A thin metal wire from the corner of the rack is tied to the grill of the closed window and it has few clothes and an old towel hanging on it. At the end of the counter, there is the little square wash area separated by a partial wall. The wash area is raised above the ground level by six inches. It has a huge blue plastic drum half-filled with water with a plastic mug in it. There is an old metal empty bucket next to it and a broomstick in the corner too. There is a streak of a light beam entering through the roof along with the sound of water dripping.

Ahem looks above. The roof is a slanting one with terracotta clay roof tiles supported by rafters. The rafters are very old and the wood is completely weathered, having termite all over. It appears weak and it unfolds a story that it may fall anytime. The walls around are also damp with some termites. He walks towards the spot and looks above. The light through the roof is falling on him as he catches the glimpse of the water dropping like stars from the sky. He is completely fascinated.

A voice breaks through at that moment, “You have arrived it seems. I can hear the sound of water dropping, can you please put the bucket underneath it, else the whole floor will get wet. I am feeling cold and feverish and too feeble to get up.” Ahem turns his head in the direction of the voice and sees a man lying on a small cot, on another corner of the room with his face turned towards the wall. He goes to the wash area, picks up the bucket and places it under the broken roof from where the fine stream of water is falling on the floor. After placing it, he looks up again and the voice of the man is heard once again, “Please wrap me with the blanket. I am feeling too cold and be careful of the water falling from the roof. I hope it sustains for some more days until the local corporation rehabilitation repairs it before the Diwali festival.”

Ahem turns back and walks towards the bed and turns his head towards the feet of the man lying there. His eyes locate a blanket near his feet just above a rolled up mattress

in the corner of the bed. The man's face is still towards the wall. Ahem reaches the blanket and opens it with his little hands and pulls it over the chest of the man lying there and wraps him up. He then looks at the wall which is run down and the layers of different colours of paints can be seen through its weathering. As his eyes follow the weathered colours of the wall above, it freezes on the photo frame of Mahatma Gandhi. He keeps gazing at it for some time.

There is an old round wooden framed clock that shows the time as fifteen minutes past three. He glances at the second's hand of the clock going full circle. Next to the clock is a shelf with some books. There are two biographies. One of Mahatma Gandhi and the other of Swami Vivekananda. There are also a few school books on Science, Maths and English. Under the shelf, there are hooks from where two shirts of a young boy hanging along with a kurta of an adult. His eyes move towards the picture frame of Gandhi once again. At that moment the man coughs and turns his side and Ahem gets to see his face.

He is old and appears to be in his fifties with salt and pepper hair. The beard has more silver strands and his wrinkles and freckles on the face narrate the story of his life experiences. He has a prominent nose. His jaw is chiseled, his forehead is shining but has three frown lines. He appears to be intelligent, has big ears and bushy eyebrows. He opens his eyes and their eyes meet. He shuts his eyelids again and says, "I mistook you for my son, he might arrive anytime."

He continues, "He has gone to fetch the doctor." His eyes fall on the dried stain on Ahem's uniform and he says, "Aah, looks like you were playing in the mud. Ahem responds, "Naah, a car passing by splashed muddy water and stained the purity of my white uniform." The old man smiles and says **true beauty, after all, consists in purity of heart.** Ahem has a moment of deep realization. The old man asks him, "What's your name?" The little one replies, "Ahem." Then he asks Ahem to sit with the gesture of his feeble shivering hand.

Ahem sits on the edge of the bed and the old man continues, "The whole slum calls me Chitta Uncle." He further asks Ahem, "What brings you here? You don't seem to be like the boys staying here, have you come to visit someone and lost your way," to which he says, "We are here from our school looking to do service on Gandhi Jayanti, but it started raining so I came inside."

He pauses and asks with curiosity, "Chitta Uncle, I have a dim view about service, what if someone is not interested in service work that's dirty?" Chitta Uncle cross-questions him, "What if the farmers told you, I will not make my hands dirty in the soil. Would you get all the fruits, vegetables and grains on your plate?" Ahem is in wonder with his eyes widely open. Chitta Uncle further says, "Whatever you do, do it joyfully, **that service which is rendered without joy helps neither the servant, not the served.**" Ahem has developed a great understanding of Chitta Uncle's words. He

further says, “**change yourself you are in control.**” Ahem, further queries, “Don't you feel uneasy in such a dark dingy place?” Chitta smiles and replies, “How you feel and live inside yourself decides your easiness or uneasiness.” Ahem is making an effort to understand what Chitta Uncle just said. He continues, “What you see now is different than how it was. I had a different life before the slums. A hugely successful business with three thousand employees, a big bungalow, several cars, all facilities, international vacations and a loving family but the tsunami inundated it all. I lost everything. That day I realized that pride over material attainments can be washed out in a moment. Our existence means nothing in this humongous cosmos and then I dedicated myself to service for the rest of my life, to uplift the lesser fortunate.”

Ahem is moved and his eyes are moist. He says, “I feel sad listening to your story Chitta Uncle and can relate too. My mother says that my father was also a very rich man before I was born. I have seen the luxurious life of my parents in the photo album but she said that due to the recession and debts taken by him during that phase, he had to sell everything. And now he is doing a job in the same company which he owned once. I feel a pinch in my heart when I see other rich children of my age in a more luxurious life. Is it bad to feel jealous?” Chitta slowly takes out his hand and gently places it on Ahem's hand and looks at him with empathy. He says, “Be grateful son! You might be having many things that others do not have. Mother **Earth provides**

enough to satisfy every man's needs but not every man's greed. True happiness brings more richness than all the money in the world. The future depends on what you do today. Without action, you aren't going anywhere." Ahem's eyes sparkle with radiance. He felt so fueled up as if hundreds of bulbs were lit up together. He is full of enthusiasm. Chitta Uncle continues, **"When the inner lamp burns it illumines the whole world!"** Ahem grips Chitta Uncle's palms and says, "Thank you Chitta Uncle, things are looking up. I am so happy to have come here from school." The raindrops falling from the roof has ceased. He covers Chitta Uncle's hand with the blanket and says, "You take some rest." He then gets up and goes towards the window and makes an effort to open it for some fresh air and light. The rusted bolt makes an eerie noise.

He manages to open the window. The daylight enters the room along with a rotten odour, he quickly holds his nostrils. The rain has stopped and the sky is clear. He watches a bird flapping its wings in the nest and it starts flying. At a distance, he sees a man too, with an axe cutting the branches of a big tree. There are a few kids playing football in the mud and enjoying it completely, though there are heaps of garbage too around them. They are playing through the dirt. The odour is too strong so Ahem steps away towards the wash area. He stretches his hand and picks up the broomstick from the corner and starts cleaning the dirty floor with a big smile.









## Chapter 6 Self Awareness Activity

***Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs but not every man's greed!***

**– Mahatma Gandhi**

1. What are your needs?
2. List the needs of 3 people you love. Have you helped them with their needs?
3. What is your greed? Do you feel jealous if others possess your material of greed?
4. Count and note down all your blessings.

***The future depends on what you do today! – Mahatma Gandhi***

1. Make a list of 3 things that you want to have.
2. Note down the actions needed to fulfill your 3 wants and take out one hour every day for it.



# 3

## Chapter 7

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### Uncertainty Expands



When Ego, Intellect, Soul Align

Atman is meanwhile already cleaning the lane outside with his broomstick to remove the dirt and garbage fallen from the roof on the grounds due to the rains. Ms. Gitana, with her broomstick in her hand, steps out of one house along with two more kids, who have their mops and broomstick in their hands. She peeps on to the opposite door and says, "Come, children, it has stopped raining, so we go to the next lane and clean that up." She keeps knocking the door of the houses on the way and asks the children to come.

She crosses Atman and says, "Atman, come, we will go to the next lane as we have to finish the service work by 5 o'clock. So that we can return to school on time. All the parents will come to fetch by 5:30 in the evening." He replies, "Miss I am coming, I shall just finish this cleaning taken in my hand." She loves his commitment and says, "Okay." As she proceeds to the intersection of the lane she counts the children and murmurs to herself, "Two missing... aha Atman and Ahem." She shouts out to Atman, "When you finish cleaning, just check in those houses, Ahem must be in one of them. Bring him along with you. We are in this lane on the right." Atman replies as an obedient boy, "Yes Miss!" and soliloquies, "Now that I feel is a tougher job than any service."

Ahem meanwhile has finished cleaning inside the house and left the garbage in the wash area corner. He keeps the broomstick in its place. He sees the bucket accumulated with rainwater, looks up on the roof and thinks. Then he

picks the bucket and keeps it in the wash area. He picks up a rag from the wash area and cleans the water on the floor. He does everything carefully so that he does not make much noise as Chitta Uncle was sleeping again. His eyes fall on the piece of the plastic sheet below the counter and he looks above at the broken roof tile. He turns his head towards the wooden stool near the window. Then he goes towards the counter and picks up the piece of plastic and keeps it on the counter. He takes the knife and cuts it into around thirty centimeters wide piece with the help of a knife. Then he climbs the counter and tries to reach and touch the roof to check if his hands reach through the counter. It does not. So he steps down and he looks towards Chitta Uncle and finds him snoring away.

He walks tiptoed towards the wooden stool, picks it up and brings it under the broken roof tile. He places it and then takes the plastic sheet and climbs the tool. He tries to reach the affected area by stretching his hand, holding the plastic together towards the broken roof. But all is in vain as he is too short. He gets down again and takes out an aluminium cylindrical container from underneath the kitchen counter. He comes and places it on the stool. He attempts once again to reach the roof, but he is still beyond the reach. He gets down and goes towards the door.

He peeps out on his left, finds no one there, and then looks to the right. At a distance he sees Atman sweeping the floor with his back towards him. Ahem looks at the steep iron

ladder in the next house leading to the mezzanine floor. His eyes are following the details of the construction. He sees from the right edge of the mezzanine a tin canopy slides and is just two feet above the roof of Chitta Uncle's roof. His eyes sparkle. He quietly slips back into Chitta Uncle's house and shuts the door without noise. He walks towards the stool, keeps everything back at its place.

Suddenly, the sound of a song comes on a loudspeaker come through from somewhere. The festival season is around, and he thinks Chitta Uncle's sleep could be disturbed. So he shuts the window that he had opened. In between, he is holding his nose too to avoid the foul smell. He manages to lock it despite the bolts being rusty. The sound of the loudspeaker is now diminished. He then walks towards the bed where Chitta Uncle is in deep sleep and still snoring. He whispers and says, "I hope I am doing the right service today just like you do," then he looks up at the picture of the Mahatma on the wall.

He walks towards the counter where he had kept the plastic sheet and picks it up in his hand and walks towards the door. He looks back at the kitchen counter, the dough in the bowl catches his attention. He pauses and looks at the broken roof tiles again and thinks for a bit. Then he comes towards the bowl, takes some dough chunk and keeps it in the left pocket of his shorts. He quietly peeps out again.

Atman is further away but his face is towards Ahem. He waits till Atman faces the opposite direction, then he quietly shuts the door and gently climbs the iron ladder of the next house that leads to the mezzanine floor. He has rolled the plastic sheet and holds it under his armpit. He climbs the ladder and is almost on the mezzanine floor when Atman turns while cleaning the lane and his eyes fall on Ahem going up. He wonders with curiosity where Ahem is going to. He stands stunned with the broomstick and watches him disappear. Ahem turns from mezzanine on the partial wall, sits on it and goes on another side there is a fifteen centimeters wide cornice to stand on. Then he bends to reach the tin canopy. He then sits in a squat position and slides down. The backside of his shorts gets dirty. His feet reach and touch the tiles of Chitta Uncle's house. He places both his feet on the roof and stands on his feet. This is a gable shaped roof that is not too steep but there is a lot of unused throw away garbage, empty containers, cans and torn rags on the roof. There are layers of dark green moss on the roof. He starts walking ahead to find the broken spot. As he starts he realizes that the roof is really weak and too slippery. The roof tiles wobble from its position as the overlapping of tiles has lost the grip. Probably due to the termite on the rafters below. He walks further slowly and surely and ascends the top of the roof and sits on the center of the ridge.

He sees some birds flying but quickly holds his nose due to the bad odour. He is taken aback to find a big and very wide

around twenty meters long sewage canal. All the organic waste, soiled pipes, septic tanks, sanitary waste, dirty water is going into it. He feels dirty and shrugs while making a face. Then he sees next to a woodcutter and a big tree, some children playing football on the other side and he smiles and ponders. His mind tells him, 'Ahem, if those children can take the foul smell, then probably you should also have some tolerance.' As he watches them play, his eyes fall on the broken roof tile. By now, Atman has also climbed up and reached the tin canopy. He sits on the canopy and bellows from there, "Ahem, what are you doing up there? I smell uneasiness on the rooftop, come back! Ms. Gitana has called us in the next lane to serve there." Though the music is loud Ahem could hear him because he was not that far and he says, "You go. I will come later after finishing some service left here." Atman is puzzled, "Climbing high on the roof does not mean you will get high marks in service work, come back, I can't leave you alone. I have told Miss that I will come with you." Ahem starts moving down to the broken spot on the other side and is disappearing from Atman's sight as he is descending from the ridge.

On seeing this Atman is worried. He also slides down to the roof. He starts walking carefully and slowly treads to the ridge. He takes a sigh after he finds Ahem sitting near the broken tile around two meters ahead of him. He also sees the sewage canal and feels disgusted. It is slippery while he tries to reach Ahem who by now has opened the plastic sheet. Atman slowly reaches him. Ahem picks up one or two

cans on the roof near his hand to use it as the paper weight to put on the corners of the plastic sheet, so that he can fix it easily without the wind blowing it away. Atman helps him. Then Ahem takes out the dough from his pocket and starts rolling it between his palms. Atman giggles, "Are you making bread on the rooftop, this is a weird place to bake bread. I smell uneasiness here." Ahem ignores what he says and keeps rolling it into the length size of the plastic sheet. He then flattens it and pastes it on the edge of the plastic sheet so that it holds onto the tiles. Atman appreciates him, "Wow! Ahem, you are so smart." Ahem feels a sense of attainment. Atman decides to help Ahem but he is sitting in a squat position so his belt starts hurting him. He opens up his belt and holds it in his left hand.

Both of them fix the other three edges of the plastic with the dough. They manage to mend the roof in their way for the moment and feel a sense of satisfaction. Atman gets up and starts walking. He takes two steps ahead towards the ridge. Ahem is about to get up when a crow flies down towards the dough to devour it. It flaps its wings very close to Ahem, who gets scared and moves back and loses his balance. His canvas shoes slip through the marshy tiles. He screams, "Aaaaaaaah," as he falls on his chest and grips Atman's right calf. Atman swiftly turns back to see Ahem but since Ahem holds his calf, he also falls on his chest as he is pulled behind. Both of them are slipping through the marshy tiles. Their feet are hanging from the rake of the roof as Atman tries to grip the tiles with his right hand with great



difficulty. He is holding his school belt in his left hand. He is unable to grip properly so they slip further.

Underneath the rake of the roof, there are some iron bracket angles at a distance of one and a half meters, to support the roof to the wall. As they both slip and scream and the belt is dragged from his left-hand gets a jerk and the belt goes into one of the iron angles. He is swift enough in holding through the other hand the belt that goes inside the bracket. His presence of mind helps him get locked in that position. While Ahem is holding onto Atman's leg tightly with both hands. both of them scream, "Help! Help!" But their voices drown in the sound of the loudspeaker. Both are scared to death and wail loudly.

Inside the house, Chitta Uncle wakes up suddenly hearing the noise on the roof. He outbursts, "Looks like again someone threw some garbage. When will people learn and why do they have to play music so loudly at this time of the day," and then murmurs again to himself, "Oh, maybe they are checking the sound system for evening Navratri celebrations program in the locality." He is unable to hear them cry as the loudspeaker outside has a higher volume so the children's voice is not audible.

Suddenly, the door opens and Buddy enters with a medium built man in his forties. He is wearing a pin-striped white and blue shirt with blue trousers. He is carrying a briefcase and seems to be a doctor. They walk towards Chitta Uncle. The

man keeps his briefcase on the bed, opens it to take out his stethoscope. Buddy keeps the books in his hand on the kitchen counter and takes out a glass and pours some water from the earthen clay pot and keeps it near the briefcase for the doctor to drink. The doctor puts the stethoscope on his ears and places it on Chitta Uncle's chest and asks him to breathe deeply. Then he removes it from his ears and takes out the blood pressure machine from the briefcase and wraps that around his right arm. He pumps the machine to check the pressure and then keep it back in his briefcase. He later takes a syringe out and checks for an injection bottle in his briefcase. He tells Buddy, "I don't have the injection needed to give to your father." He takes out a pad and pen from his briefcase and writes a prescription and gives it to Buddy. Buddy says, "I hear you, I will just take my bicycle across the trail shortcut through the canal and fetch this medicine quickly," The doctor nods and then Buddy leaves.

The children hanging on the roof are tired of screaming and sobbing. They are making an effort to grip on to the wall. The exterior wall of Chitta Uncle's house extends down to the sewage canal. There are no additional boundary walls where the children can place their feet except few industrial nails on the wall here and there. Atman is crying and chanting. Ahem pushes his upper lips towards nostrils to avoid the foul smell. He says, "Why are you crying so much, we are yet not in the dirty water. Don't you know how to swim in case we fall." He continues after looking down, "Even I don't want to fall in this dirty stinking water and if I

hold my nose now I shall surely fall into it, the future looks dark hanging out here.” He starts sobbing too. Atman is chanting “Om Namah Shivay” continuously and says, “Ahem, hold on to me, don't fall, don't leave me and don't die.” Both start sobbing. They are around two meters left from Chitta Uncle's window and their little hands cannot reach beyond a meter.

Ahem laments, “I miss you, mom! I miss you, dad! I love you both! I promise to be a good boy. I will not be jealous of anyone, please get me out of here. Dad please come and find us. Oh, how I miss my dad. Atman starts howling and he says, “I miss my dad too.” Ahem says, “Your dad is a rich man. I am sure he can send a whole battalion of commandos to look for you.” Atman says, “Yes he can,” sobs again and says, “but I miss my real father.” “Real father? What do you mean by that?” Ahem, cross-questions him.

“All the luxurious life that I have, does not belong to me. My mother died when I was born. My father was a priest in my current father's house. They did not have a child, my father used to perform Vedic astrological rituals at his home. We lived in the beautiful hills. One day after doing a ritual on the mountain top temple while walking down the cliff, the lady slipped. My father pulled her and saved her but in the process, he himself slipped down and lost his life. After that incident the couple adopted me and for my well-being now they have moved to this city. **You don't know who is important to you until you actually lose them.**” He breaks

into tears and says, “Ahem, please hold on to me, don't fall, don't die. The leg that you hold tightly is the one that got hurt this morning, it's hurting a lot but please hold on to me, please don't fall, and please don't die.”

Ahem has tears in his eyes listening to Atman's story. He has a clear view of his physical and emotional pain. He looks at Atman's wound with empathy, feels both guilty and sad. He then looks down towards the sewage canal that is flowing and finds an industrial nail a little distance away on the wall. He rests his left foot to put his body weight and quickly clutches onto Atman's left foot. He looks at his bruise with blood coming out a bit. He opens his mouth and blows air gently over his wound as a healing gesture.

In the meantime, across the canal at a distance, Buddy is cycling his way through the children playing football in the mud. Everyone is engaged in their activity and the loudspeaker volume keeps increasing. The woodcutter's back is towards the canal and he is busy chopping the branches of the big tree. As Buddy passes by he says to the woodcutter, “Stop cutting the tree.” He then overtakes them speedily through that lane and reaches the chemist. He gives the prescription with some money to the chemist. The chemist hands him the medicine and the balance. Buddy keeps it in his shorts pocket which has a flap and he buttons it up. Then he takes the bicycle and speeds up through the canal.

Atman is chanting and he tells Ahem, “Ahem my father said to pray to God. It works! **Our prayer is a heart search. It is a**

**reminder to ourselves that we are helpless without His support!”** Ahem closes his eyes and starts chanting too. After a few rounds of chanting, he says again, “I miss you, Mom, I miss you, Dad, I love you both. Please get us out of here. I promise I will be good. God, please help us. We can't eternally be on this wall like Spiderman and Batman. Oh! Superman please come and save us,” and he bursts into a tearful face again.



## Chapter 7 Self Awareness Activity

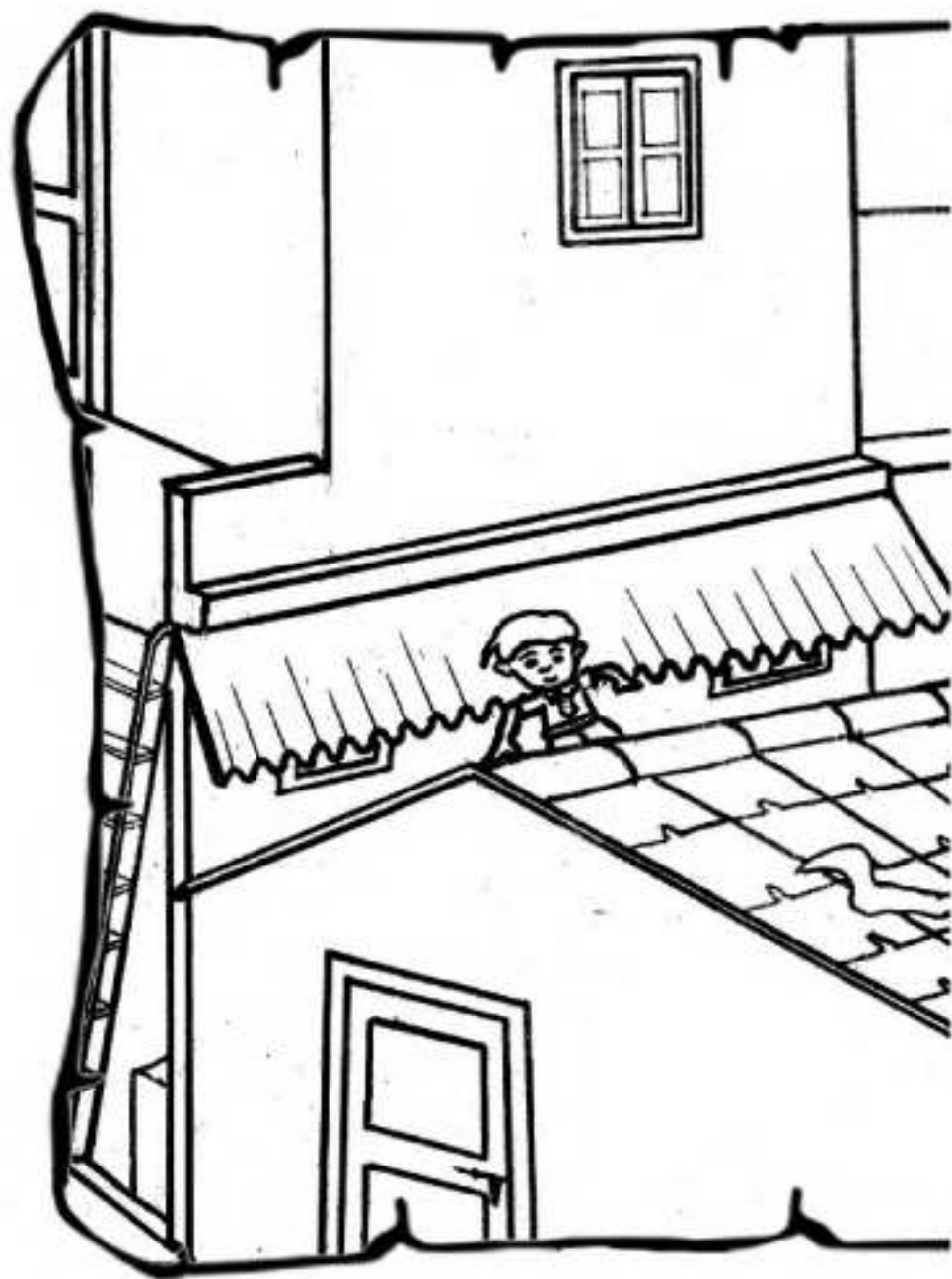
***You don't know who is important to you until you actually lose them! – Mahatma Gandhi***

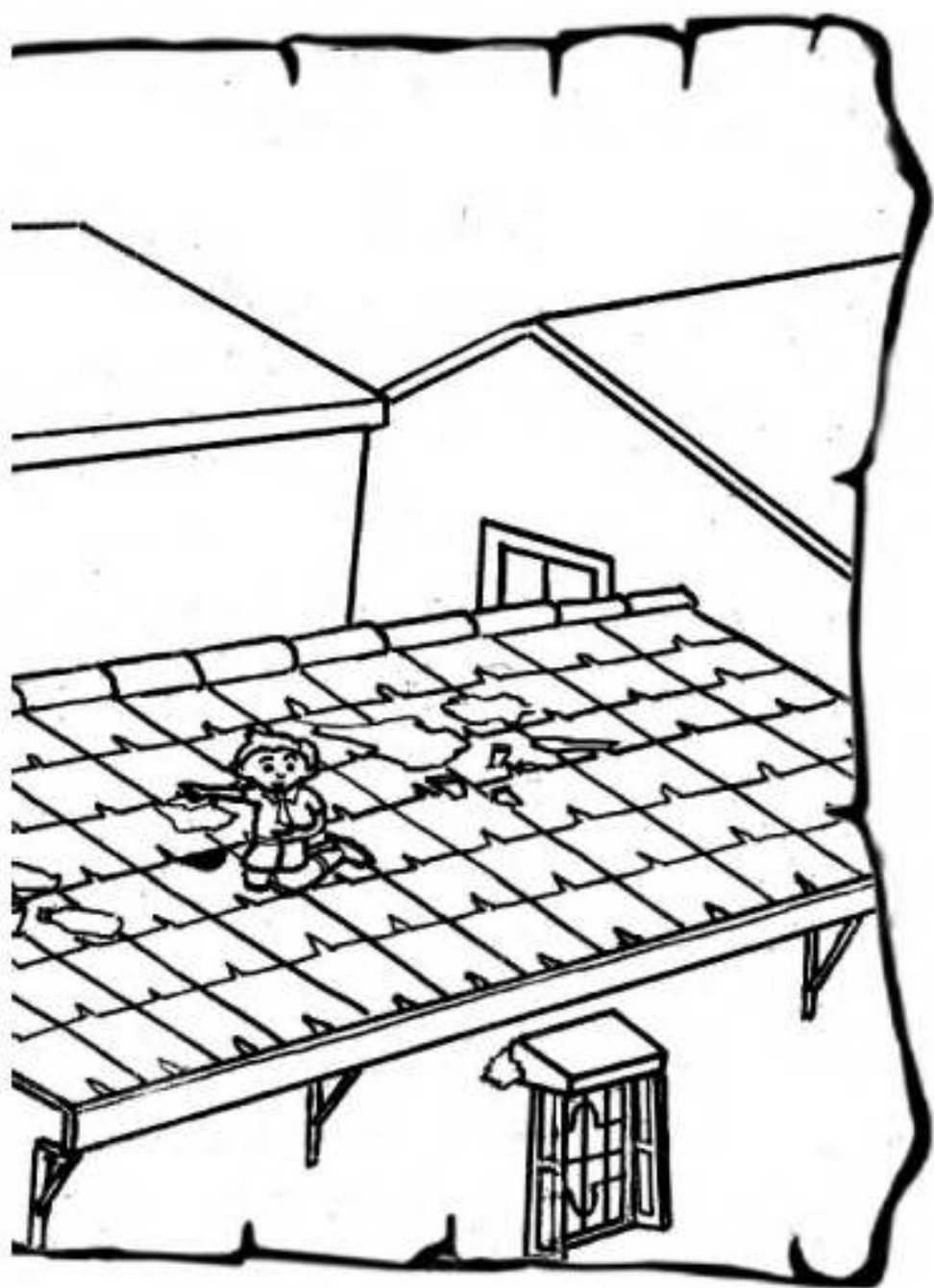
1. List the people important to you and note why they are important.
2. Reach out to everyone on your list and say 'Thank you' to them. Be grateful for all that they have done.

***Our prayer is a heart search. It is a reminder to ourselves that we are helpless without His support!***  
***– Mahatma Gandhi***

1. List 3 people outside your family who have supported you and mention how?
2. Write down how you can help 3 people around you.









# 3

## Chapter 8

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### Life Evolves



When Ego, Intellect, Soul Align

Buddy is about to cross the woodcutter again while cycling and he says, "Why can't you value the environment? Aren't you getting the message loud enough?" Suddenly, the small boys who were playing football stop. Their ball comes in front of the bicycle and bounces on the heap of garbage on the right side across in the opposite direction towards the canal edge. Buddy presses his bicycle brake and halts, and as his eyes follow the football bouncing on the other side he catches the glimpse of the two boys struggling to hold on the exterior wall of his house. Buddy quickly gets off his bicycle, puts it on the stand and comes towards the edge of the canal. His mouth opens up and eyes are stunned to witness the sight he just saw. He is in a shock when he realizes, that the two boys who are hanging for life are his school mates. He exclaims, "Oh no!" By now the woodcutter and the children also come towards the edge of the canal and they are stunned too and say, "Oh My God."

Inside the house, Chitta Uncle is lying on the bed and the doctor is sitting next to him drinking a glass of water kept aside by Buddy. In between the song change over pause from the loudspeaker, the doctor feels that he heard a child crying and tells Chitta Uncle, "I think a child is crying somewhere," to which he replies, "Oh, the children keep crying around here but they laugh sooner. **The law of love could be best understood and learned through little children.**"

At that moment, Ms. Gitana opens the door and walks in with another young man from the slums who had escorted them to this place. He is behind her. There is a worried expression on her face. She queries, "Have you seen two boys around eight to nine years of age? They were around here some time ago. Their names are Ahem and Atman." Chitta Uncle replies, "Well I don't know about the other but Ahem was here sometime back. Nice boy. Maybe they are playing together somewhere, there are many shanties around." Ms. Gitana asks the young man, "Can you please call Denzil Sir and Ramu and get all the kids too?" He nods and leaves.

On the other side of the canal Buddy is shouting, "Atman, Ahem, hold on tightly, do you hear me?" but his voice can't reach due to the loudspeaker sound. He quickly thinks over and scans the whole exterior wall surroundings. He speaks aloud to himself, "My house roof is weak we can't climb the roof to save them. We need to pull them from here and there aren't any wall projections to climb and reach them too." Then he tells one of the boys who was playing football, "You go and ask the stage guys to stop the loudspeaker." And tells the other boy, "You go in the open grounds, there was a school bus there when I brought the doctor home, tell the driver Raghuram Uncle to get the rope and come back as soon as you can." The other boy runs away to call the driver.

A boy and the woodcutter are standing with Buddy, their hearts are pounding. Buddy is walking up and down looking for something around and making an effort to find some way. He tells both of them, “We need to make things click and not just wait. “ He walks towards the heap of garbage. The woodcutter and the boy follow him. He takes the axe from the woodcutter’s hand and starts digging the garbage, mixing them up and down to check if he finds something. He stops when he sees a nylon net bag with 2-3 broken net strands. It’s the one in which we usually put the football in. He then finds a bundle of old coir rope and an old saree (Indian drape which is 5 meters long). He picks them up and keeps them aside.

He takes a deep sigh, then he carries all these near the tree. He asks the little boy to bring the football and then asks the woodcutter to tear the saree lengthwise. The woodcutter tears the saree, while buddy takes the football from the boy’s hand and inserts it in the nylon net bag. Then he takes the coir rope and ties the open end of the net bag firmly with it. After that, he takes the other end of the coir rope and joins it to the torn end of the saree and tightly makes a knot to join each other. He does this to ensure that he has a long rope.

He then tries to climb the tree which is too high for him to climb. The woodcutter bends down and Buddy climbs his shoulder. He holds one end of the saree and knots it safely and tightly on the highest thick strong branch close to the

tree trunk. Then he pulls and checks it several times for the strength. After that, he jumps down from the tree. Both the spectators are watching him curiously. He puts the ball with the net bag in a clear position on the ground. Then he retreats with a few steps. He looks up in the sky with open arms, closes his eyes and takes a deep breath in. Then he opens his eyes, looks at the ball, runs with the full force and kicks it hard. The ball goes high in the air along with the handmade rope of coir and saree, lands upon the tiled roof of Chitta uncle's house and breaks through the tiles and rafters and falls inside the house.

Chitta Uncle, the Doctor, Ms. Gitana who is around the bed away from the window are thunderstruck with the sound of the roof tiles falling. Chitta Uncle gets baffled and says, "Earthquake!" The Doctor who sees the ball first says, "It's a football," the loudspeaker sound goes off at this moment and the voice and cry of "Help! Help!" through the broken roof is heard. Ms. Gitana and the Doctor run towards the window. They quickly open the window and are shocked to see Buddy standing on the opposite side of the canal. He is shouting and pointing towards Ahem and Atman who cannot be seen from inside of the house. So they don't know what Buddy is pointing at. Then they hear the voice crying "Help! Help!" again. Ms. Gitana is bewildered to hear a familiar voice. She wants to be assured if they are the missing kids and says, "Atman, Ahem, have you fallen, we can't see you but can hear your voice." Ahem, replies with a hope, "Miss, not yet, we are hanging here, please save us or

we see us falling soon.” Buddy is shouting from the other side, “Miss tie the rope.” Ms. Gitana quickly consoles the children by her words, “Hold on boys, we will get you soon!” She dashes towards the football in the net bag picks it up and comes towards the window. Buddy screams, “Miss hear me out, please tie the rope to the window grill.” The Doctor helps Ms. Gitana in opening the knot from the net bag with football and then together they tightly tie it to the window grill.

On the other side, Buddy climbs the tree with another piece of saree and ties it around his waist and positions himself properly. He makes a loop and ties the other end of his waist rope on the handmade ropeway. He then takes out his iron bangle with open end from his hand, then twists it open, inserts it in the makeshift ropeway and presses the ends back.

His eyes are in tears as he looks up in the sky. He takes a deep breath, closes his eyes and opens them back again and starts rappelling towards the window. Ms. Gitana and others clasp their hands in tension as they see this little boy taking a risk. He descends smoothly till the first joint of the makeshift ropeway. Raghuram comes running with a bundle of rope and a metal rod. He runs closer towards the ropeway flanked by the woodcutter and the little boy. He drops both the materials down and is in awe and worry with Buddy’s stance.

Inside Chitta Uncle's house, all are nervous about what they just saw. Denzil Sir enters the house running with Ramu Kaka behind him along with the remaining school children. Some kids along with Titicksha enter the house, while others with Latif and Pappu are standing with Ramu Kaka outside the house with a pale face. Denzil Sir goes towards the window to see outside. Ms. Gitana looks at him and says, "We are in crisis! Ahem and Atman are behind this wall." Denzil Sir swiftly runs outside and looks at the high wall adjacent to Chitta Uncle's house. He shouts out, "Children we are here, don't worry, we will find a way to pull you out." Ahem's voice replies, "Sir we are scared, it's stinking here, we can't breathe, we might fall, I can't hold on to Atman anymore." Denzil Sir motivates him, "Be a team player Ahem." He suddenly remembers the same words told by Denzil Sir In the morning football practice. He feels motivated and holds onto Atman more tightly. Atman cries and says, "Sir, I feel frightened too." Denzil Sir boosts him up by saying, **"There would be no one to frighten you if you refuse to be afraid."** Atman feels uplifted.

Denzil Sir runs towards the next house iron ladder. He climbs up the mezzanine and slides through the canopy leading to the roof of Chitta Uncle. He places his right foot on the roof and the rafter below breaks. The roof tiles go in and his right leg too in the process. The kids below quickly move back. Denzil Sir quickly pushes his body behind to avoid breaking the roof further. The neighbours and Ramu Kaka standing below respond together, "The roof is weak."

Denzil Sir quickly comes down again and asks Ramu, "Get something to reach the wall." Ramu goes inside Chitta Uncle's house and gets the wooden stool. He then climbs it and sits on the parapet of the wall, with one leg on either side. And from here he sees both the kids. Atman sees him first and a faded smile breaks on his pale face. Denzil Sir says, "Boys be brave." Ahem looks up with tears in his eyes and says, "Yes Sir, we are brave," whereas the expression on his face contradicts his words. Pappu's vibrator in his pocket rings again and he runs behind one local adult man and says frantically, "Mom, two boys have fallen in the canal and we all are.." at that moment Ramu comes and Pappu looks at him and says, "Mom wants to speak..." and he gives the phone to Ramu. He tries to pacify the mother's anger but the voice on the other side says, "I will complain to the management, how can the school be so irresponsible." Ramu turns away from Pappu and after a pause quietly switches the mobile phone off. Then he turns to Pappu and says, "Do you want me to complain to Sir that you are carrying a mobile?" The little boy is scared and nods in a no. Ramu says, "Then keep the phone away and don't take it out again." Pappu obeys him and keeps it in his pocket and both of them walk towards the door.

Buddy has smoothly abseiled through and reached the last knot joint of the coir rope. But throughout his descent, he is only looking at the sky above. He is a few meters away from the window and says, "Don't worry Atman and Ahem I am



here.” They both feel secured with the rescue team near them and they reply with joy, “Buddyyyyyyyyy,”

Inside the house, Chitta Uncle tells Ramu at the door, “Why don't you quickly go and call Kalu welder?” Ramu replied, “He is on the big event ground in town and going out to find another welder might take time.” Ms. Gitana takes out her phone from her sling bag. She dials the helpline number and tells them to send a team for rescuing two children who have been trapped near the canal. For address verification of the place, she hands over the mobile to Ramu. He takes the mobile phone and goes away to give the address.

Denzil Sir warns Buddy, “Don't go close to the window, just above the left edge is a beehive.” Both the children below, close their eyes and scream together, “Beeeeeeeeeeeeeee.”

Latif's eyes widen as he is holding onto the stool of Denzil sir. While Buddy is thinking about how to reach the boys, as they are still away from the window and him too. Ahem says, “Sir bee stings hard.” Atman says, “Don't worry Ahem, Sir is kind. He won't ask us to take the honey out.” Denzil Sir smiles and says, “Boys you all will make good trapeze artists for entertaining people, but don't you think it is a funny place to do bungee jumping? You, three boys, are quite adventurous, hang in out there for some time.”

Buddy says, “Sir what do I do?” Denzil Sir says, “Give me a minute.” He steps down to go towards Chitta Uncle's house

with the help of the stool placed below. He picks up the biggest bamboo lying on the side. Ramu who has finished calling helpline comes and gives the phone to Latif and gestures him to go and give it inside. Then with other people of the slums, he helps Denzil Sir in picking up the bamboo. The kids help too. Denzil Sir comes back to the dead-end wall parapet and slides the bamboo through the wall towards the window. Latif takes the mobile phone to Ms. Gitana inside the house and hands it over to his teacher. Then he says, "Please hold the bamboo that Denzil Sir is passing." The Doctor and Ms. Gitana spot the end of the bamboo approaching the window. They both grip it tightly. Chitta Uncle is also feebly standing and watching everything. He says to the children, "Go and get a small bamboo and rope inside." Latif and Titicksha go out with few more kids to fetch it.

Latif asks Ramu Kaka for some rope. He runs towards a house, that is a few yards away and goes inside the door. While the young man of the slum breaks the rope from a clothesline of the neighbouring shanty and gives it to Latif. Few children together take this bamboo inside. Chitta Uncle asks them to push the bamboo through the window towards Buddy. They follow his instructions. They push one end of the bamboo through the grill while the end is put to rest on the ground so that it is fixed. Latif gives the rope to Ms. Gitana. She asks Titicksha to bring the knife from the counter. Titicksha fetches it and helps her teacher in cutting the rope into a few pieces. She throws one rope to Buddy

who rappels little ahead to catch it with his free hand. Denzil Sir instructs from the dead-end wall to Buddy, “Buddy tie it tightly a meter away from the window. Buddy frees his bangle from the ropeway and is supported and suspended by the saree rope through his waist to the ropeway. He uses both his hands to tie the bamboo. The Doctor who is holding the bamboo pushed by Denzil Sir then redirects his bamboo towards Buddy. Who then, grips it and tightly ties the two ends of the Bamboo in the pointed shape of V.

Denzil Sir tells Ahem, “Ahem leave Atman’s leg and hold onto the bamboo and move towards Buddy.” Ahem listens to his teacher and leaves Atman’s leg and clutches onto the bamboo. But he is unable to move smoothly, as he is not left with much strength to do physical labour. Denzil Sir asks Buddy, “Do you have a belt to give him that will help him to glide,” as it was not visible since his shirt was out. Latif hears that and quickly opens his belt and throws to Buddy from the window who catches it. Ms. Gitana looks at Latif proudly and says, “You are on time!” Latif smiles. Buddy throws it towards Ahem, and it falls on the bamboo and hangs. Ahem holds it exactly as Atman’s grip and slips towards Buddy. He is scared to move in the direction of the beehive. Atman tells him, “Ahem, start chanting, you will feel strong, it’s powerful, and it works.” Ahem listens to Atman and starts chanting and reaches Buddy in no time. Buddy holds Ahem as he closes his eyes in fear of the beehive above. He pulls Ahem towards him. Buddy asks for another piece of rope that Ms. Gitana quickly throws, and he catches it. He ties it

around Ahem's waist then ties the other end to his waist. Ahem is panting. He sits on the bamboo and takes a deep breath. Latif tells Ahem for a pun, "Ahem, Just be!" Ahem stares at Latif with a blank expression, who giggles.

Denzil Sir tells Atman, "Jump onto the bamboo Atman." His eyes are full of tears as he thinks of his father. He feels shaky within and goes through inner conflict. He takes a deep breath and chants. Then he takes the leap of faith by loosening his right hand and shouting out "God help." He freely falls with the belt in one hand and holds the bamboo again in the quick interlocking position. He tries climbing the bamboo, but in the process, his wound gets bruised again. He says, "Ouch." Denzil Sir queries, "Are you okay, Atman." In his mind, he remembers what Sir had said in the morning sports practice session, 'Play through the pain.' So he quickly says, "Yes Sir! Just feeling a little weak as bruised my wound again." Denzil Sir inspires him, **"Strength does not come from physical capacity it comes from an indomitable will!"** This is enough to boost him up. He uses his belt to slide towards Buddy, who helps him along with Ahem to sit and anchor on the intersection point of the two bamboos. He asks for another rope to tie Atman. Ms. Gitana throws another piece of rope, which he catches. He ties Atman's waist to his waist. On the other side of the canal, the three football-playing kids, Raghuram, the woodcutter, and some more crowd has gathered and observes their valour from a distance.

The three monkeys are outside the window grill. Latif comes out to inform Denzil Sir, "The rescue team from the helpline number had called on Ms. Gitana's mobile phone and said that they would need half an hour to reach." Denzil asks Ramu and other local people to keep holding the bamboo on the parapet of the dead-end wall and comes inside the house with Latif. Denzil Sir says, "It's too long for the kids to wait." They discuss amongst themselves how to get the kids. The Doctor says, "What if we call a carpenter to cut the window frame," Ms. Gitana says, "It might disturb the bees in the hive, and they might attack the kids." Ahem, Atman and Buddy, who are glued towards the grill, hear this and are frantic. Their eyes are big in fear sitting so close under the beehive. They abhor their idea and say "No" together. Buddy says, "Denzil Sir, this time we will play to win!" Then he turns back immediately, locks his iron bangle on the ropeway again, and starts rappelling in the opposite direction of the window.

Since all the boys are tied together, they cling on to each other and move with a jerk throughout the coir rope. They have to ascend now with more weight and it's more difficult than before. People on both sides are cheering them and their hearts are pounding too. Ahem looks down and says, "I look like a Superhero, but it's such a dirty place to fly over." Atman says with a profound thought, "It's all Karma, my father says. I feel we must have bothered the crow sometime." Ahem admits like a saint, "Yes I did chase it away this morning before coming to school. My mother had

left a piece of bread for them and their cawing was irritating me. Oh, crow! Please forgive me,” he says with a pang of guilt while looking up in the sky. He sees Buddy looking up into the sky and queries, “Are you looking for that crow too?”

Buddy is quiet as he was struggling to move ahead with the iron bangle not sliding easily this time. The effort he makes to move ahead goes in vain. Due to the downward slope near the window all three slide down towards the window again. As they reach midway of the canal, Buddy holds the rope and all three are hanging in the air. As Latif is watching with all the others in the room, he puts both his hand on his head and laments loudly, “The law of gravity.”

Buddy shouts out, “Raghuram Uncle, you need to take this rope down for us to slide that side.” Raghuram looks at Buddy, then at the rope tied near the trunk of the tree and then checks the rope he got that was lying on the ground. He scratches his head.

Denzil Sir takes out his mobile phone from the side pocket of his trousers and calls Raghuram. He takes the call. Denzil Sir instructs, “Pull the coir rope down with the help of the rope you have.” Raghuram replies, “The joint might open and they will fall in the canal.” “We have less time,” Ms. Gitana intervenes. She picks up the net bag with football and says, “Throw this to Raghu and ask him to tie the rope and resend,” as she says this she looks up and points in the

direction of the roof. They all look towards Chitta Uncle, who even before they ask for permission to break the roof, says instantly, “The sky is the biggest roof.” All take a sigh and smile. Denzil Sir continues speaking on the mobile phone, “Raghu, catch the ball, tie the rope, and aim the roof above the window.” He disconnects the phone then and keeps it back in his pocket. He takes the football in the net bag from Ms. Gitana’s hand and goes out in the lane outside Chitta Uncle's house.

He places the netted football much behind the dead-end wall, goes back and angles himself towards Raghuram’s direction. He then runs towards it with a great focus and gives a hard kick. All the kids and the slum crowd start clapping as the ball goes high in the air.



## Chapter 8 Self Awareness Activity

***There would be no one to frighten you if you refused to be afraid! – Mahatma Gandhi***

1. What happens when you are afraid?
2. How can you overcome your fears?
3. Use the same formula to help a friend overcome their fear. Note down their feeling after helping them.

***Strength does not come from physical capacity it comes from an indomitable will!***  
***– Mahatma Gandhi***

1. Write down 3 ways in which you can improve your physical strength, mental strength and emotional strength.









# 3

## Chapter 9

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### Unity In Diversity



When Ego, Intellect, Soul Align

The football is high in the air and crosses the canal at a great velocity. As all are watching it Ahem exclaims, "Wow! It feels different as cheerleaders in the air." Atman says, "As long as you don't feel too excited and kick me again." Both start laughing amidst their physical pain and tension, while Buddy's eyes follow the ball as Raghuram catches it. He quickly ties the knot with one end of the rope and gives the woodcutter the other end to hold so that it can be tied to the tree. Then he keeps the ball down on the ground. There are lots of people gathered around the canal by now. Buddy instructs further, "Raghuram Uncle, keep the ball aligned to the window and aim the roof above it," to which he replies, "Yes Buddy." He places the football in the net bag just aligned straight with Chitta Uncle's house window.

Inside Chitta Uncle's house, everyone moves out and stands near the door for their safety as nobody knew where the ball would fall from. The woodcutter is a bit nervous and asks Raghuram, "What if the ball never reaches the roof and falls into the canal." Raghuram replies to him, **"You may never know what results may come out of your actions, but if you do nothing, there will be no results,"** and he continues saying, **"Adversity is the mother of progress."**

Then he steps back a little to run forward. All the hands, amidst the spectators, fold to pray on both sides of the canal. Atman chants, "Shiva! Shiva!" Buddy looks up in the sky, and Ahem closes his eyes. Raghuram runs in speed while aiming at the roof, and the ball goes up in the air,

above the three kids. It goes and hits the roof right above the window. The football along with some broken terracotta roof tiles, lands on the floor of Chitta Uncle's house. The three kids look towards the direction of the broken roof and turn pale, as they see the rope almost touching the beehive. But sooner they feel relieved when they see that the rope misses the beehive by an inch and they repose within themselves.

Inside Chitta Uncle's house, Denzil Sir, Ms. Gitana and Doctor rush in, while Ramu walks behind, holding and supporting Chitta Uncle as he is feeble and is walking slowly. Denzil Sir quickly opens the rope and with the help of the doctor, ties it to the window grill. He then shows a gesture of thumbs up to Raghuram on the other side of the canal. Raghuram nods and quickly goes towards the other end of the rope, which is in the woodcutter's hand. He takes the rope end from the woodcutter's hand and walks towards the tree to tie it on the lower level of the trunk. But its short and does not reach the trunk. The expression of happiness on everyone's face soon turns into anxiety again.

Raghuram looks around to see if he could tie it somewhere in the lower level. But nothing is around apart from the heap of garbage. Buddy shouts out, "Raghuram Uncle, please listen to me, get my bicycle from the tree to the edge of the canal. Bury the base and tie the rope end to it." It's a 'Eureka' moment for everyone. The woodcutter and the local boys around quickly get the bicycle and bring it closer

to the edge of the canal where the ground is muddy. A little boy who was playing football runs to get the iron rod dropped by Raghuram earlier and gives it to him while he holds the edge of the rope. Raghuram starts digging the soil with the iron rod, little away from the edge of the canal. The woodcutter helps in digging the marshy ground with his axe. They dig in a line about the size of buddies bicycle base, and everybody around is helping.

Buddy is looking up in the sky and is in a pensive mood. Ahem asks him, "Are you questioning God up there, that why can't people keep the environment clean? Look down, Eew, it's so dirty." Buddy replies, "I have stopped questioning God. And I don't look down on running streams or water bodies." Atman asks, "Why? Don't you know how to swim?" He replies, "I used to swim in the river for hours in my village, but then the floods hit our state, the river water overflowed. Our cattle, farms, hut, everything got washed away. I climbed the temple top to save myself and heard my parents crying for help as they got washed out in front of my eyes. So flowing water brings flood into my eyes and soul too. It disturbs my mind and pains my heart. Then I left my village. I was on the streets when Chitta Uncle found me, and he got me here. He understood my pain, as he had lost everything too. We care for each other." Ahem stirs within, "I am so lucky to have my parents when both of you have been deprived of it. I shall not complain now about not having things that others possess." Atman is in tears as he understands that Buddy has gone through more than him.

Both Ahem and Atman hold Buddy tightly like a group hug and cry, “Buddy my Buddy.”

Inside Chitta Uncle's house, on the window Denzil Sir, Ms. Gitana, Chitta Uncle, Ramu Kaka, and the Doctor, all are witnessing this moment. Ramu wipes his tears while Denzil Sir says, “This morning they did not get along with each other look at their bonding now.” Ms. Gitana's eyes are moist too. She says, **“Relationships are based on four principles; respect, understanding, acceptance and appreciation.”** They all nod together seeing their mutual love. Denzil Sir encourages them by shouting out, “Boys you make a winning team together, just hold on to each other!”

On the other side of the canal, the triangle-shaped bicycle base is buried in the ground with the help of people and the woodcutter. Raghuram ties the rope end tightly to the bar of the bicycle, and they hold on to it too. Now a second ropeway is ready which is descending towards the tree side of the canal. Raghuram shouts out, “Boys we are ready, come safely.”

The two ropeways are close to each other and intersecting the other in the shape of a narrow ‘X’ in the aerial view. One is ascending and the other is descending on each side. The three of them turn towards the intersection point of both the ropeways. They slide towards it and stop at the intersection point. Buddy removes the iron bangle by locking his left hand on the rope by his elbows and then

bringing his wrist close to his biceps. Then he opens the ends of the bangle and unlocks the right hand from the current rope. He suspends himself through the waist rope and quickly interchanges rope and inserts his iron bangle on the new rope about a meter below in the same way. He has difficulty in pressing it mid-air with their bodyweight pulling them down. Denzil Sir says, "Buddy be careful." Buddy suddenly recollects what Denzil sir had said in the morning during the football practice, "Don't run with the ball until you have caught it." Buddy is intelligent enough to interpret his words in his mind as a warning as, 'Don't start something unless you have successfully finished the previous act properly.' Then he fixes the iron bangle safely and tightens the bangle with his teeth then says, "Yes Sir." Ahem says, "Wow, I feel and look like a skydiver." Buddy shuts him up by saying, "Now don't fly beyond the new rope, else either the crows will take you away or the filthy water." Atman giggles.

By now, it appeared as if they had mastered their share of adventure sports, and both of them grip the new rope and hold onto Buddy. It appeared in mid-air that the Universe had tied them up in a thread of friendship. As they hold on to each other, Buddy slides and rappels through the ropeway, and all three of them land safely to the other side of the canal. When they reach on the other side, Raghuram helps Buddy in removing the bangle and pulls them safely one by one with the help of others. Everyone claps for them. All of them hug each other and give a high five. Raghuram



pats them and hugs Buddy. On the other side of the canal on Chitta Uncle's window, everyone gives them a thumbs up, which they reciprocate.

Buddy asks Raghuram, "What punishment should we give to the woodcutter for destroying the tree?" Ahem says, "I think he will look adventurous if we hang him upside down from the tree with this rope like a Batman." Atman checks on Ahem, "Are you obsessed with that hanging adventure?" Buddy and Raghuram laugh. The woodcutter says, "I have realized my mistake. If I had cut this tree, saving these boys would have been very difficult." Atman says, "Let us make him do Superbrain Yoga. His intellect will awaken." They make him sit in a squat and then stand up holding opposite ears with opposite hands and they start counting the number of sit-ups. Everyone laughs. Finally, the woodcutter says, "I will plant as many trees that I have cut." All are happy to hear this and leave him. Then everyone helps to take out Buddy's bicycle partly buried in the mud. After taking it out they level up the additional mud on the sides due to digging work. Buddy makes both the boys sit in the carrier behind and cycles away with Raghuram walking behind the bicycle. The crowd disperses along with Buddy's bicycle. Atman's faded voice is carried in the gentle breeze, "You have a different kind of bicycle Buddy, it has three strong bars."



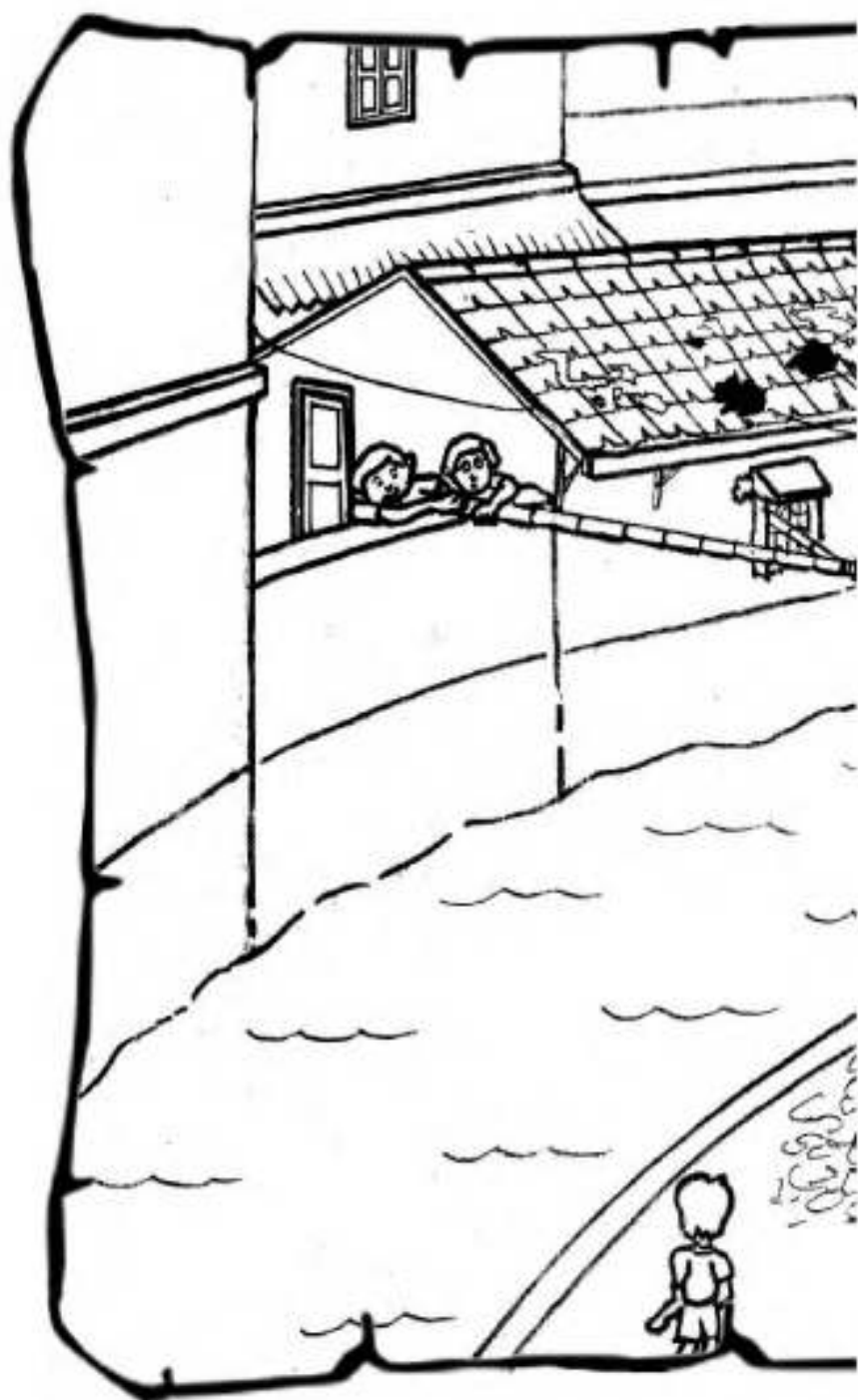
## Chapter 9 Self Awareness Activity

***Relationships are based on four principles; respect, understanding, acceptance and appreciation!***

**– Mahatma Gandhi**

1. Make 4 columns and list people in your life under the categories *Respect, Understanding, Acceptance and Appreciation*. Mention one reason why you put them in that category.
2. Understand your own inner qualities and write down what you respect, accept and appreciate in yourself.







# 3

## **Chapter 10**

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### **Ego, Intellect, Soul, Align with Bliss**



When Ego, Intellect, Soul Align

Atman, Ahem, Buddy cycle through the lane outside Chitta Uncle's house, and Raghuram walks behind them. As they move towards Chitta Uncle's house, the local people are clapping for them, and the elders are appreciating. They smile back at them. Raghuram drops them at the door and says, I shall wait near the school bus and clean your bicycle too, and then he leaves with the bicycle. The kids are completely physically tired, but the smile and radiance on their face can light up any dark room.

They enter Chitta Uncle's house. Ms. Gitana, Denzil Sir, Chitta Uncle, Ramu Kaka, the Doctor, Latif, Titicksha, Pappu, and other kids welcome them with a big smile. Ms. Gitana comes forward and hugs all three one by one. Denzil Sir gives a high five to each one of them. Ramu Kaka says, "Children the way you have handled the crisis is commendable." Denzil Sir adds, "You have made us and our school so proud." Chitta Uncle encourages them, "As a saint truly said, **In a gentle way you can shake the world!**" Then he starts coughing.

Buddy quickly bends and takes out the injection bottle and gives it to the Doctor who keeps it near the briefcase. He goes to the wash area, takes the water from the bucket with a mug and washes his hand, wipes with his handkerchief, comes back opens his briefcase on the bed where Chitta Uncle is sitting. He then takes out the syringe, inserts the needle in the medicine bottle after breaking the bottleneck, pushes the air into the vial, pulls back the plunger, holds

Chitta uncle's arms, cleans the skin with wet cotton, then injects him. Except for Buddy, all the other children in the room close their eyes as if they are feeling the pain. After injecting him, the Doctor says, "You will be better soon." Then he cleans Atman's bruise and dresses it up. He also examines the minor scratches on Ahem and Buddy around their legs and hands and applies an antiseptic ointment and gives them some medicines to consume. He then packs up his briefcase, appreciates the kids, and says, "I am getting late and need to leave." Chitta Uncle, Denzil Sir, Ms. Gitana, Ramu Kaka, Buddy, Atman, Ahem, and all the other kids present there thank the Doctor. He smiles and leaves.

Ms. Gitana looks at the condition of the room and says, "We had come to clean the place and look what a mess we have made." Then she looks towards Chitta Uncle with guilt. Titicksha ascertains immediately, "Miss, we know what to do." She winks at the three boys and says, "Friends follow me." All the kids follow her as she leaves from the door.

Denzil Sir, Ms. Gitana, Ramu Kaka, and Chitta Uncle are puzzled as to where the kids went. Ms. Gitana looks at the clock on the wall, which reads forty minutes past 4 o'clock. They look concerned when Titicksha's voice ascertains, "We are back!" All the elders turn towards the door to find Titiksha standing with a big broomstick and wearing a bigger smile on her face. Every child has a broomstick or a mop in their hand, and they enter the room like a battalion of a cleaning squad. They divide themselves into two groups.

Atman and Ahem are opening the rope on the window grill. Then they remove the bamboo, and along with Latif and Buddy, they carry it on their shoulder and keep it back outside where it was placed earlier. One group is cleaning outside Chitta Uncle's house with Latif leading the team under the supervision of Denzil Sir. Whereas, Titicksha, Atman, Ahem, Buddy and other kids clean inside the house under the supervision of Ms. Gitana. Ramu Kaka brings the wooden stool from outside and keeps it inside to its original place. Buddy and Atman pick up the big pieces of broken terracotta tiles and keeps them on one corner of the wash area. Titicksha, Ahem and the others clean the floor with the broomstick. A group of kids is cleaning the kitchen counter. They do everything in a supersonic way and take a deep sigh after all the cleaning is done. Chitta Uncle's house looks immaculate. They go back and keep all the mops and broomsticks borrowed by the neighbouring houses and then come back in the room. Ms. Gitana checks the clock that reads fifty-five minutes past 4 o'clock. She is proud that the children finished the cleaning service five minutes before the time.

Denzil Sir asks Chitta Uncle, "The rains have not yet withdrawn, and the roof is damaged. Why don't Buddy and you come over to stay with me for a few days till the roof is repaired? Humbled by his approach, Chitta Uncle smiles and replies, "Thank you for your kind gesture Mr. Denzil, but Buddy and I have seen and slept under the open sky too. At least we are happy that major part of the roof, is still intact



and the open portion only adds some stars as gems on our roof!”

Denzil Sir remarks, “Wow! What a profound perspective on life. I am sure Buddy is learning a lot more from you. He has shown a great will and presence of mind. We all are proud of him. But still, if you need any help from us, please let us know.” He takes out his business card from his pocket and gives him. Chitta Uncle accepts it and assures, “Very kind of you Mr. Denzil. Thanks will surely let you know.”

Buddy smiles and picks up the pieces of rope from the corner and says, “Uncle, I shall get my bicycle and tie it out and tell the cleaner to pick the rubbish too.” Ms. Gitana tells Chitta Uncle, “Thank you, Sir! The children have taken plenty of learning from your home.” Chitta Uncle says, “It's a pleasure Ms. Gitana, God bless them all!” And he tells Buddy, “Come back soon, son.” Buddy nods. As Ramu escorts all the children out, they say, “Bye-bye, Chitta Uncle.” He reciprocates their love by smiling, waving, and saying, “Thank you, children, come again.” As the children leave in a queue Ahem who is the last one, turns back and stops, he waves a bye gesture to Chitta Uncle and continuously keeps gazing at the picture of Mahatma for some time and then leaves.

On the open grounds, Raghuram has finished cleaning Buddy's bicycle. The kids have arrived, and they board the bus one by one. Ms. Gitana is counting the heads. Denzil Sir

tells Ramu, "You can leave. We will take care of the kids until their escorts arrive at school to pick them up." Ramu is happy and nods a yes gesture. He says, "Thank you, Sir, I shall go and find the workers to repair Chitta's roof." Denzil, Sir immediately says, "Please do!" Raghuram takes out the bicycle keys and tells buddy, "Stay happy young brave man, here's your key," and then he goes to the driver's seat and sits and starts the bus. Ms. Gitana pats Buddy and calls out, "Ahem, Atman, come now, we should be on time to school," and she boards the bus.

Ahem and Atman gets so bonded with Buddy that they are sad to part ways with him. They give a group hug. Atman says, "It would have felt so nice if you could also come with us." Buddy replies. "I have responsibilities, but I will keep meeting you both." They feel consoled after listening to his words and give a faint smile.

Denzil Sir comes closer and says to Atman and Ahem, "Come boys let's go." Both of them like an obedient boy follow his instructions and board the bus with a blank face as they leave Buddy behind. Buddy keeps gazing at them and takes out his earphones and wears it. Denzil Sir says to Buddy, "Why don't you join the school?" Buddy gives an expression of worry. Denzil Sir continues, "If the day school is a problem, you can always join the night school. Don't worry about the fee. I will be happy if you will allow me to be a part of your life by sponsoring you. Now don't deprive me of my happiness." Buddy has a fade smile on his face, and he

says, “I heard that Sir, I shall think over it.” “Denzil Sir keeps his hand on his shoulders and says, **“A man is but the product of his thoughts.”** Removes his earphones, keeps it in Buddy’s pocket, then takes out his headphone from his own neck and puts it on Buddy’s head. He then leaves to board the school bus. Buddy keeps smiling and gazing at Denzil Sir as he walks away towards the bus.

Inside the bus, on the second last row, Latif has fallen asleep next to Pappu, who is near the window seat. He looks at him and quietly takes out his mobile phone. He switches it on, and it immediately vibrates, showing ‘MOM’ on display. He receives it and whispers, “I’m on the bus. Everyone is around, can’t talk, Mom.” And her voice from other side says, “Why did you switch it off, come home and I will see you then,” He says, “Come to school Mom, you will see some ‘Super Kids’ too along with me, bye for now.” He then disconnects the phone and starts playing the videogame. Atman and Ahem walk in and occupy the last row seat as they boarded last, and there were no seats in the front. Denzil Sir boards and sits on the first row with Ms. Gitana and inquires, “Raghuram, is there any music on the bus?” He replies, “I shall play the FM on my mobile phone, Sir.” “Sure, thanks!” was the prompt reply from Denzil Sir. Raghuram tunes in to the Radio channel on his phone that’s playing the devotional song “Raghupati Raghav Raja Ram” on Mahatma Gandhi. He then changes the hand gear of the bus, and the bus departs.

The children are a little tired after the hard work and a tough day. Some are sleeping, some chatting, while some listening to music. Atman and Ahem are in a discussion mode. Ahem gently pulls his Shika and asks him, "Why do you keep this?" Atman replies, "My father said it attracts cosmic energy and helps in concentration and memory too." Ahem check his hair behind with his left hand and says, "Oh, I see, now I know why I behave so dumb sometimes." Both burst into laughter.

Atman looks into Ahem's eyes and says, "You know something, I was wrong. People in cities are not bad. People are good everywhere." Ahem puts his right arms across Atman's shoulder with a brotherly feeling and says, "Yes, brother! We had an adventurous day. I think we should have it more often. What do you say?" Atman says with a great spark in his eyes, "Oh, I loved the service work today. It's exciting and so much fun to learn from. Why can't our school make, it a compulsory period like sports or art and crafts? I think we should do it on holiday every weekend. What do you say?" Ahem is also thrilled. "I am in for it anytime, brother," then both pauses and say, "But without Buddy?" Ahem makes a sad face and says, "I miss him!" Atman takes a deep breath and says, "Me too." "Whenever you need Buddy, he will appear," intervenes a voice that resembles Buddy. Both the boys turn their heads above. Just at that moment from the broken back glass windshield of the bus, Buddy's face is visible. There is a euphoria in the

ambience of the bus. The two boys are elated, and together they cry in joy, “Buddyyyyyyyyy.”

The laughter of ‘3 Super Kids’ fills the roads and the breeze, and as the bus moves through the streets, it can be seen that Buddy has actually tied his bicycle to the metal ladder behind the bus that leads to the carrier above. He is standing on one of the steps holding two sidebars of the metal ladder. The bus goes through a roundabout that has Mahatma Gandhi's garlanded statue. At that moment, the song ends on the radio while the voice of the Radio Jockey fills the air with the pristine words, “Mahatma Gandhi rightly said; **Be the change you want to see in the world!**”



***To all the SuperKids reading this book...  
“Celebrate your Uniqueness and Stay Inspired!”***

## Chapter 10 Self Awareness Activity

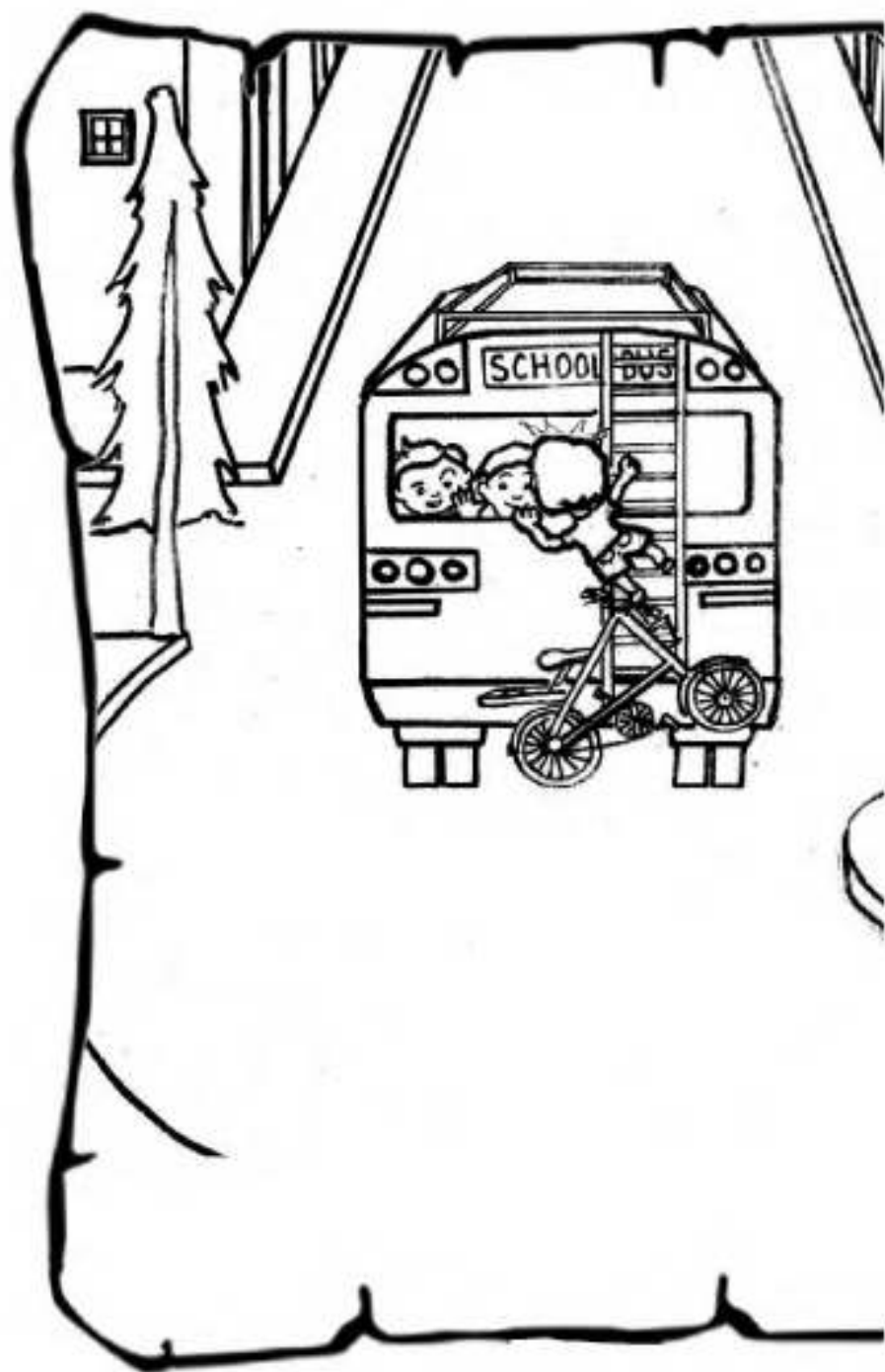
***A man is but the product of his thoughts! – Mahatma Gandhi***

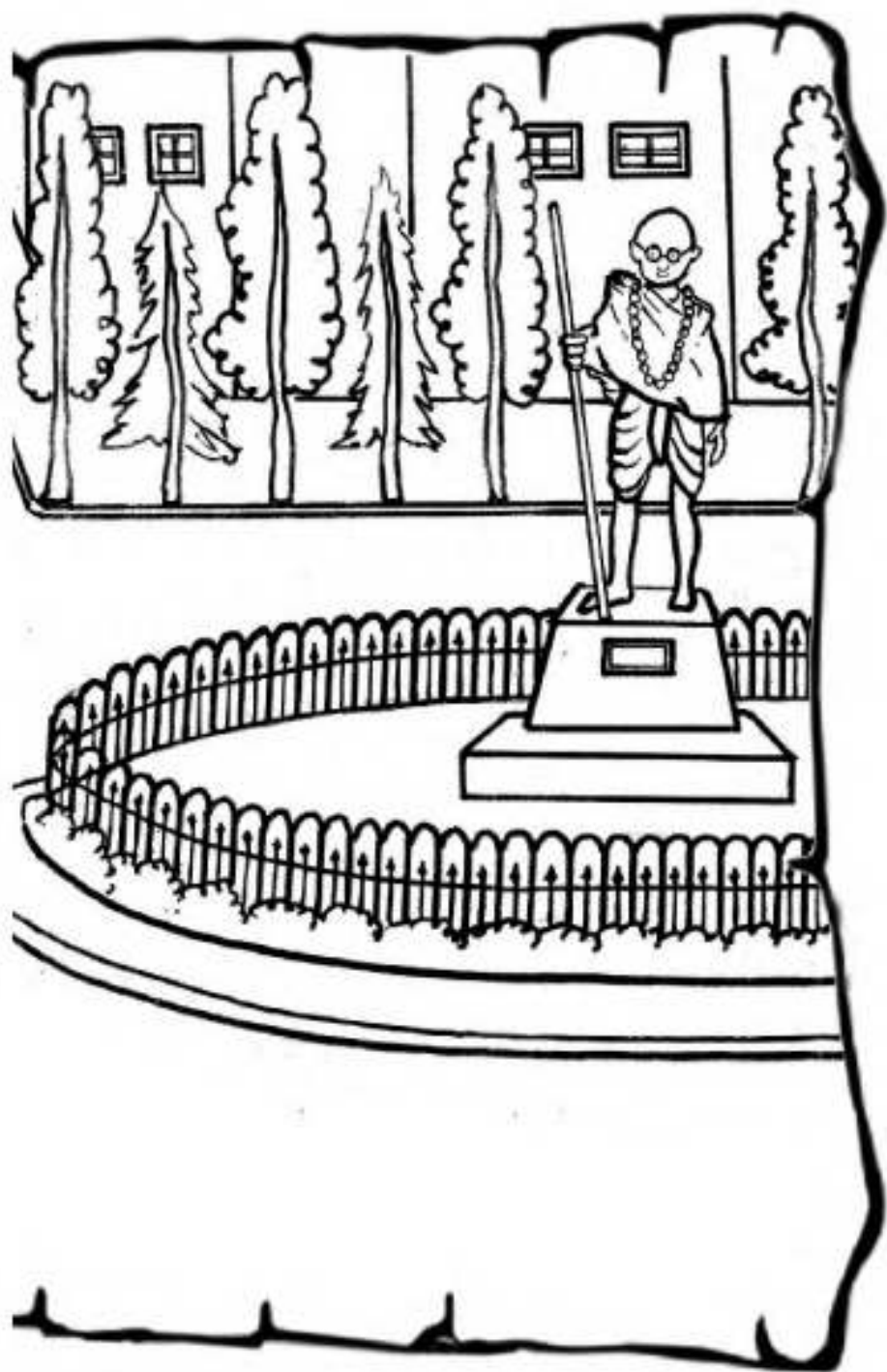
1. Reflect and note down what happens when you have positive thoughts.
2. Observe and note down what happens when you have negative thoughts.
3. Compare both the influences on you. Cultivate the habit of replacing negative thoughts by positive ones every time and note the shift.

***Be the change you want to see in the world! – Mahatma Gandhi***

1. What is that one change that you want to make in yourself, and how can you make it?
2. What is that one change that you wish to see around you? Write down what you can do to bring that change. Do it now!





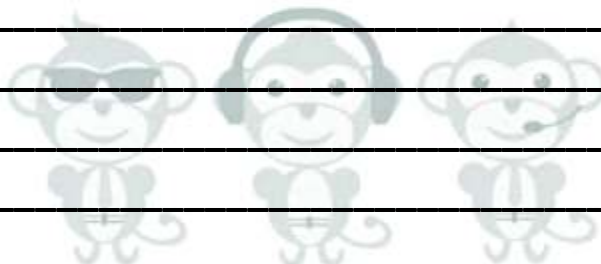




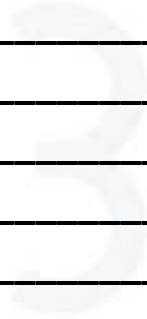
Chapter 1: A New Beginning



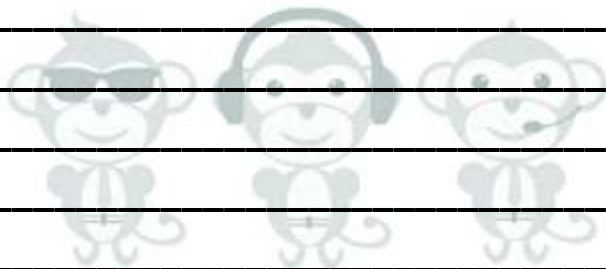
When Ego, Intellect, Soul Align



## Chapter 2: Everyone's Buddy



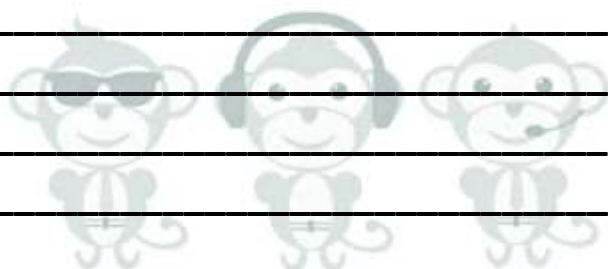
When Ego, Intellect, Soul Align



## Chapter 3: The Game of Life

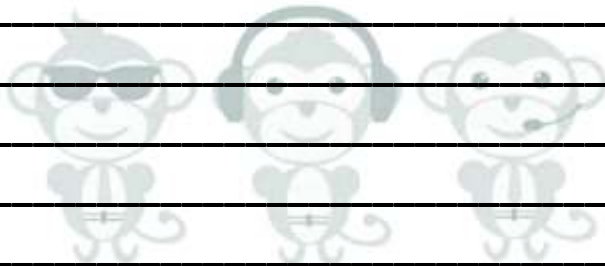


When Ego, Intellect, Soul Align

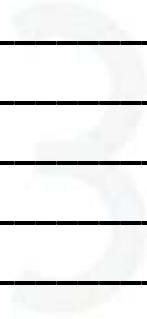


## Chapter 4: Food For The Soul

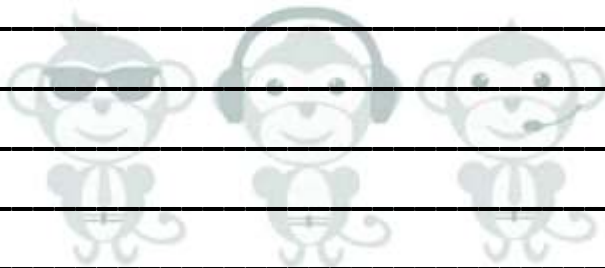
When Ego, Intellect, Soul Align



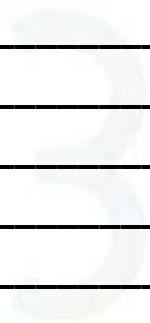
## Chapter 5: Life Is A Journey



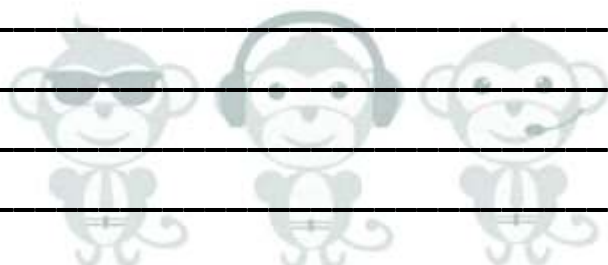
When Ego, Intellect, Soul Align



## Chapter 6: When The Light Enters Through The Darkness



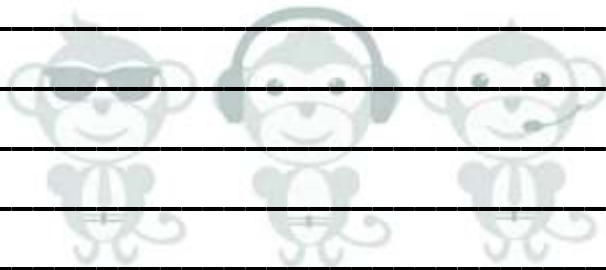
When Ego, Intellect, Soul Align



## Chapter 7: Uncertainty Expands



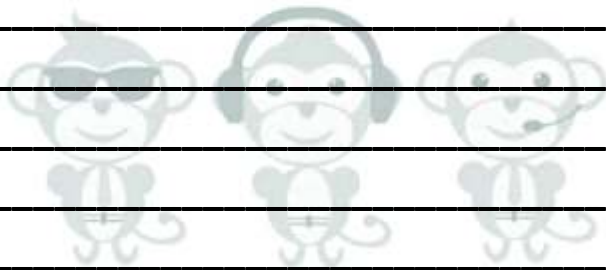
When Ego, Intellect, Soul Align



## Chapter 8: Life Evolves



When Ego, Intellect, Soul Align

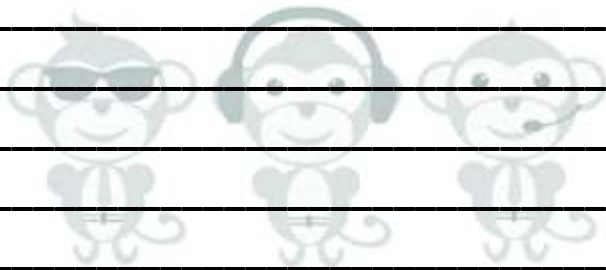




## Chapter 9: Unity In Diversity



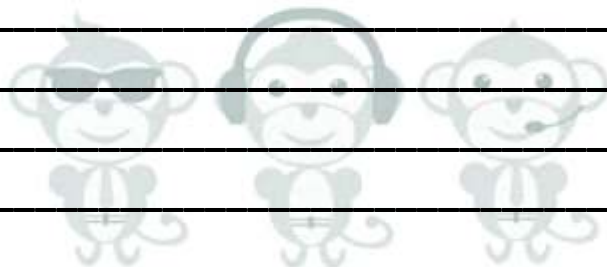
When Ego, Intellect, Soul Align



Chapter 10: Ego, Intellect, Soul, Align with Bliss

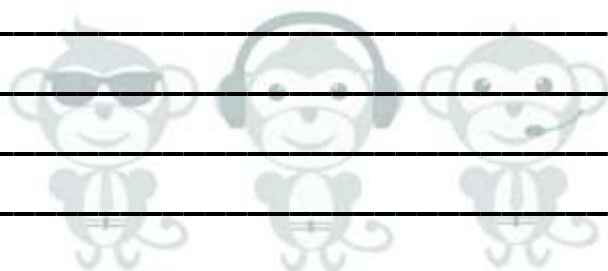


When Ego, Intellect, Soul Align



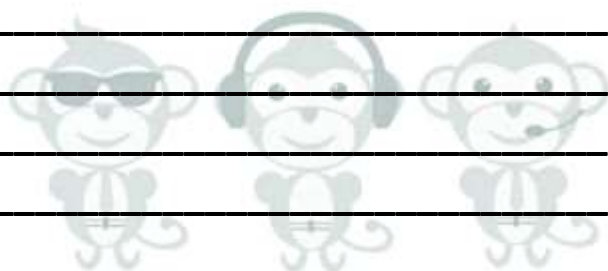


When Ego, Intellect, Soul Align



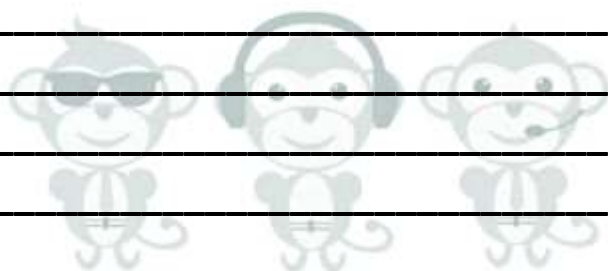


When Ego, Intellect, Soul Align





When Ego, Intellect, Soul Align



## Praise For The Book

I am delighted to appreciate the initiative by Writer Production Designer to launch a unique book for celebrating the uniqueness in every child and a child in us by professing the ideology of Mahatma Gandhi for accepting, respecting, understanding and appreciating people in your life along with understanding your own beautiful qualities with in. Congratulations Smita for this unique initiative.



**Mr. Subhash Ghal**  
Indian Film Maker  
Founder & Chairman  
Whistling Woods International



**Ms. Sakshi Tanwar**  
Indian Actress  
& Television Anchor

A story that everyone should read and apply in life because it's important to keep the child alive in us despite the world forcing us to grow up!

This small book of fiction for children and the child in adults is woven imaginatively by the sensitive Production Designer Smita. It is not only illustrative but also instructive and conveys Gandhi's central message of elevating self to a higher plane.



**Dr. Sudarshan Iyengar**  
Gandhian,  
Former Vice-Chancellor,  
Gujarat Vidyapeeth,  
University founded by Mahatma Gandhi



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