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Section A

"When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves"

When young Abraham Lincoln went to take oath as President of United States of America, he was greeted by a fellow leader.

He said,

"Mr President, I have met your father. What a great man he was! and a great cobbler! I am still wearing the shoes made by him"

Lincoln replied

"Oh! Thank you very much. I hope I can be as good a President as my father was a cobbler"

This shows that when a situation presents itself as a giant problem, we can change ourselves and adapt happily.

Similarly, when Buddha saw
an old man, a beggar, a corpse and
an ill person he challenged to
change himself. He left his worldly
pleasures to seek true enlightenment

These two instances do spark
a question within us? Why do
we change or why should we
change?

Firstly, change is the only
constant in life. The earth that
we live today in is a change
process over thousands of years. The
air that we breathe in was not
available billions of years ago when
earth was a giant ball of toxic
gases. But it changed and
changed for our good!

Secondly, change is the
law of nature. A river traversing
through hilly terrain, if it

2

is not able to cut through the mountains, is forced to change path and go forward.

Similarly, sea waves turn soft rocks into orches, but they are unable to turn cliffs into a feature. Thus, if a situation for sea waves is suitable, it modifies the situation. Else, it changes its path.

Thirdly, change is how evolution happens. The process of humans evolution from apes is a process of changing ourselves. Sigmund Freud says there are 3 levels of personality. Id is the child, ego is the young, and super ego is adult. If a child's notorious wish is not fulfilled, he gradually understands that what he was asking for was wrong.

Fourthly, if we do not change, we are stuck in the middle. And

getting stuck somewhere in the middle
is not what humans are made for.
we, humans, are made to challenge
the status quo to thrive for ourselves
and our society and to bring positive
changes. which would come only
through change!

Historically, we have seen how
in the face of a situation those who
changed, thru! USA became a
superpower after World War 2 along
with USSR. USA thrived due to
capitalism and mercantilism while
USSR eventually disintegrated. As it
was unable to cope up with local
pressure, economic situation & a
failed to adopt a thriving capitalist
society.

on the other hand, Switzerland,
a tiny Alps nation, realized it could
not beat Germany if invaded. So, it
adopted a Policy of Neutrality to save
itself.

similarly, in the face of a pending economic crisis due to Balance of Payments and foreign exchange issue, India adopted 1991 liberalization, Privatization and Globalization reforms and managed to become world's 6th largest economy.

But Pakistan's policy of aggression never changed even though many situations have come and gone. It shows, if we do not change ourselves the situation may take a heavy toll on us.

we have come a long way in changing our society for good in the wake of increased societal changes and awareness. we have adopted LGBD changes, sologomy, homosexuality etc. And such changes are for good. They help us evolve into better homosapiens !!

with an impending global warming crisis, we realize that if measures are not taken, the temperature could very

will exceed 20C. This situation calls for massive changes like reduced Greenhouse Gas emissions, reliance on renewable energy etc.

with the onset of 4th Industrial Revolution, issues like cybersecurity, privacy, etc have become common

This situation requires rapid changes in our technical framework of

Right to Privacy, Cyber laws, data protection laws which the civil society is actively seeking.

As it has been said UN Population Report, India is set to become populous country by 2023. While this situation is one which we cannot deny, what we can do is to better prepare ourselves for tomorrow by skills initiative, investing in infrastructure to reap demographic

4

dividend and its benefits. This change is change for our own good in the face of an impending social situation.

Similarly, back in 1960s in the face of an impending food security crisis, we changed our agriculture system and adopted Green Revolution to ensure food for all.

When we were hit by once in a century crisis of COVID-19 pandemic, it was a dire situation which nobody could change. But, it made us change our perspective. Social distancing, regularly washing hands made us realize how our small efforts could ~~bring~~ bring a drastic change in the situation.

As a collective society, our joint efforts are sometimes needed to bring about a drastic change in society.

2012 Nirbhaya case shook our conscience
and we all took it upon ourselves to
bring change. And the government
did take steps to fight the situation
by bringing in Criminal Law (Amendment)
Act, 2013

On the similar lines, speech by
climate activist Greta Thunberg which
said -

"How dare you make false promises
to our generation?"

invoked a sense of urgency towards
bringing necessary change.

But, sometimes individual
perspective based on past experiences
and social support can create 2
different set of changes.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy through
his morals and conscience called
for banning of sati. Over time,

5
His individual beliefs gradually changed
the collective beliefs and ethics of
society which were not prevalent at
that time.

Thus, he was able to
change the situation itself by
calling out an inhumane practice.

While the ideas of Henry Vivian
Derazio of radicalism were not
ripe for the 19th century India. He
was unable to change the situation as
well as bring change through his
efforts.

BR Ambedkar on the other hand,
tried to change the situation ~~but~~ by
reforming Hindu society by removing
untouchability. But he was of the

view that it could not be changed,
and thus he changed his own
views and adopted Buddhism.

Thus, history is replete with

stories of successful and unsuccessful
changes. What really matters is
how adaptable we are in getting
comfortable with a situation.

When times are happy go lucky
we enjoy and celebrate life like a
young child. But we are often
under-prepared for tough times which
not only tests our physical, emotional
but also mental strength.

In such situations, we need
to be positive patient and
wait for a right moment. Such
challenging situations may take a
heavy toll on our mind and health.
We can change our thinking
through Yoga, meditation, breathing
in calm air to pass through the
situation.

There is a common saying that
"Nobody said that life was going to
be easy, but it will be worth living".
It is thus on to us to make it worth
living through small steps in life.
and putting up a strong fight against
challenging situations. or else,
change ourselves for better !!

As Rudyard Kipling has said

"If you can fill the unforgiving
minute with sixty seconds of
distance won, You're in the
earth and everything that's
in it.
And which is more, you will
be a man my son!"

Section B

5) Gentle persuasion succeeds where force fails

In 2017, all eyes were glued to television when we were saying final goodbye to Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee. While his entourage of officials and cars were rolling on Rajpath, we saw a new force of social change. His daughter lit the funeral pyre. This sight caught the attention of Indians mired in ages long patriarchal system. It was a message of new India with gender equality.

The above example shows how a gentle act of persuasion can bring change in consciousness.

On the other hand, Emperor Ashoka realized his five dharma

of non-violence after Kalinga war, where he regretted killing of hundreds of men.

Thus, the power of persuasion helps us achieve intended result with minimum damage to society & maximum moral upliftment.

But, the power of persuasion depends on few factors for its effect against force.

Firstly, Persona of the persuader plays an immense role. The persuader should be a charismatic

personality. Example Amitabh Bachchan successfully led Polio vaccine campaign which help us eradicate polio. He again was the voice behind caller tones during COVID-19 pandemic.

Secondly, he/she should be a compassionate person with strong

background that motivates people to walk on the path of change. For example Honnan Kazore successfully led anti-corruption campaign.

while a persuader uses his acumen to persuade people towards intended change, a person with force lacks compassion and forces people to change without will.

while in 1989 Deng Xioping used brute force to end student strike resulting in Tianmen Square massacre in China, Nelson Mandela on other hand spent 27 years in jail to bring an end to apartheid in South Africa.

Thus, persuasion goes a long way in influencing future generations as well to walk on the path of success.

Historically, we have seen how power of persuasion through use of non-violence by Mahatma Gandhi led to India's eventual independence in 1947. He put up a fight against mighty and brute force of British Kingdom which eventually collapsed.

India was under an unprecedented emergency crisis in 1970s which was imposed without any discussion with cabinet. It resulted in massive protests, violence and anger of people. On the other hand, democratic decentralization of 1993 through Panchayati Raj and municipalities ushered in a new era of Indian growth story.

The power of persuasion took time more than force, but it

brought fruitful results.

We have seen how India is able to collect record GST collections of 1 lakh crore a month. GST reforms show the collective decision making of centre and state bring Cooperative Federalism to reality by power of persuasion.

On the other hand, Sri Lanka's current debt crisis is partly due to forced migration to organic farming overnight. This shows that reforms can be brought more effectively through persuasion and collective will.

China has a history of suppressing people's voice through communism leading to rapid growth but an imbalanced one with people not in favor.

while India believes in participative decision making through persuading different sections to come to a common agenda which is slow but brings in a balanced and stable change.

Similarly, Sudarshan Pattnaik is a sand artist who brings societal change and awareness through his detailed sculptures along the sea shores. It shows the power of an individual to bring conscious change through a simple act of persuasion.

Narayan Murthy and Ratan Tata are the big corporate giants in India who act as role models. Their efficient decision making and healthy work atmosphere, CSR activities and compliance with laws shows how leaders can lead

through examples. On the other hand, companies like Sahara, Satyam failed as they were run by few people who used force to get undue benefits.

Nobel Laureate Abhijeet Banerjee propounded nudge theory of economics. It shows how people can be persuaded to take a direction through constant reminders. For eg → drunk & drive billboards or TV commercials evoke a sense of responsibility and influence our behavior towards a responsible action.

Economic Survey 2020-21 highlights the use of some nudge theory in ensuring success of Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code. How the act has brought change in society to comply with laws which

many other forceful laws could not bring.

But at times, it's the force that is needed to bring urgent changes in society as persuasion is a time taking process.

For example during COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, law needed to be brought in to make people follow social distancing and stay at home.

Similarly, there were acts of violence against doctors which resulted in amendment to Disaster Management Act, 2005 to protect life of doctors by punishing any violence.

India tried to resolve Kashmir issue through dialogue and negotiation. But the use of force by Pakistan forced India to protect its sovereignty. The matter is

5
in UN whose persuasion hasn't worked since last 70 years to demilitarize the conflict zone.

Similarly, current Russia-Ukraine conflict is alleged to have an been an outcome of expansion of NATO impacting the interests of Russia. While persuasion over the years hasn't worked, we have seen over 4 months of war by brute force.

Hence, at times, there is no option left but to use force. Though the use of force is not justifiable, but depends on the necessity of the situation. Like, a lion cannot persuade a deer, it has to kill lion. Else, his own survival is in danger.

The survival of fittest doctrine by Darwin shows to survive, one

has to win against the other. This
may sometimes take form of
brute force. But these conditions
must be limited. Example USA
intervened in Afghanistan to
bring an end to terror. But over
20 years of force has not resulted
into anything and eventually it
had to leave.

Sometimes, blend of
persuasion and force can also be
leveraged. Persuasion helps in
cognitive and logical decision
making but force deters a future
misdoing. Like children are
persuaded to not hit others, but
when they repeat it, they are
punished.

Today, when humanity is
facing several issues like
climate change, terrorism,
war, inequality etc. we cannot

use brute force as any irrational use can bring unintended consequences. Threat of nuclear war should not be even discussed as any act will have serious consequences which could not be reversed.

We need more persuasive leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King to persuade society on path of progress. It is a responsibility of privileged and developed countries to lead by example. They should not ask developing countries to take measures against climate change when they are themselves unwilling.

As forces of nature like tsunami, earthquake, volcano etc bring devastation to earth, use of brute force ~~should~~ should be

limited in every sphere. use of
logical and emotional appeals should
be used to bring any social change

Thus, "Persuasion can go
through obstacles that force
cannot." we should use persuasion
to bring about social cohesion,
equality, world peace and
stability!