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खण्ड-A / Section-A

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- Q.1 If you look into someone's face long enough, eventually you feel that you are looking into yourself.
यदि आप किसी के चेहरे को काफी देर तक देखते हैं, तो अंततः आपको महसूस होता है कि आप अपने भीतर ही देख रहे हैं।
- Q.2 We can easily forgive a child who is afraid of the dark; the real tragedy of life is when men are afraid of the light.
हम उस बच्चे को आसानी से क्षमा कर सकते हैं जो अंधेरे से डरता है; जीवन की वास्तविक त्रासदी तब होती है जब लोग रोशनी से डरते हैं।
- Q.3 It is the province of knowledge to speak and it is the privilege of wisdom to listen.
बोलना ज्ञान का क्षेत्र है और श्रवण करना बुद्धि का विशेषाधिकार है।
- Q.4 Drop the question what tomorrow may bring, and count as profit every day that fate allows you.
यह प्रश्न छोड़ दें कि कल क्या हो सकता है, और हर उस दिन को लाभ के रूप में गिनें जो भाग्य आपको अनुमति देता है।

Q.4 Drop the question what tomorrow may bring,
and count as profit every day that fate allows
you.

Ramesh was a young, enthusiastic
IT worker in busy city of Bengaluru. He worked
extra hours almost daily and hustled a lot.
He had many ambitions to grow rich but was
stressed because his job couldn't do it swiftly.
Due to overwork and sleep deprivation,
he would always be tense and

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stressed. As a spillover of that, it was impacting on his family relationships, friendships and work environment. To say the least he was utterly dissatisfied with his life.

One fine day, just after he got up for work, he collapsed in front of the mirror and was rushed to the hospital. To an utter shock for everyone, he was diagnosed with a rare liver disease and sadly had maximum 6 months to live.

Ramesh spent a few days in hospital in trauma. But after coming back to home, he started introspecting upon his own life and the way he conducted it. After few days of deep introspection something was stirred within him.

As a surprise to everyone in his family, Ramesh was ^{now} more happy and enthusiastic than ever. He stopped overworking in company and

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started work as a freelancer, while pursuing his hobby of singing. Soon after the launch of his own youtube channel, he started doing live shows. Even more than his songs, it was his mere presence that encaptured the attention of people. When once asked the secret of his happiness, he said, "Daily, after waking up successfully I thank the Almighty for showing me this wonderful day on this beautiful planet and make a resolve to create happiness around me."

Ramesh died after 7 months but he lived every moment of these 7 months to its fullest. He, through his actions, portrayed, how shall we count everyday as a profit that the fate has given to us.

The above story tells us how shall we treat every moment of our life as a gift that we have recieved rather than as a currency to be spent carelessly.

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Dropping the question of tomorrow essentially means focussing on the present. It teaches and reminds us to respect and value the human life that we've got. It tells us to be in a celebratory mode towards life by treating it as a festival rather than as a tragedy with baritone background scores.

Meaning: Drop tomorrow, pick up today

The title points out at living a life where we love more & hate less, laugh more & cry less. Basically become as happy and intense with life as a child is.

It can also be understood through Buddhism which says, "Eat when you eat. See when you see, sleep when you sleep." So basically being totally present is the

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ongoing movement. But one may ask why so? What's the rationale?

Dropping the question of tomorrow: Unburdening the mind and the soul.

Firstly because, the attempt to predict our futures is futile. One may think about tomorrow 1000 times over but still be clueless about what it will bring with it.

Everyone had their plans ready, some had hiking, some biking on their list, some were to get married, some to get divorced. But 23 March 2020 was unique. We had nationwide lockdown and every plan had to be cancelled. It made us realise the uncertainty of life.

Another reason why we should drop the question is that it creates stress.

The what "ifs"? ruin what "is"

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It has many benefits for one and the all. Besides reducing stress, it also leads us to mindfulness. The freed mind (from tomorrow) can pay more attention to what the today has in plate for us. We become more aware and grounded because of this mindset.

Even our ancient tradition of vedas tells us the same. The essence of spirituality also lies in this. As Bhagwad Gita says. "Karmanyevadhi karaste ma faleshu kada ch h" (Work without thinking about the goal)

Not just at individual level, but it also holds significant benefits for the society. This attitude of living is the moment, will help us create more respectful attitude towards others leading

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to happier workplaces. It will also help us in building and nurturing better familial relationships as Ramech in our story did by caring for all.

So we understood how it helps towards better life. Now the question remains, "why to count everyday as a profit? Isn't it implied? Isn't it just one more day?"

Everyday: A grant that we take for granted but we shouldn't

There are million reasons why we should see everyday as a bonus that we receive from the fate. A few follow.

The writer, the reader and everyone alive today have survived the deadliest Pandemic of decades. For god's sake we are not at war with any country. It's nothing short of a miracle that we are

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all alive despite having thousands of nuclear bombs on this very planet. We should be grateful that we are still healthy despite inhaling polluted air and living with so many viruses around.

Thus this life, this day, in itself is like an excess grant from the fate to us.

Also, we often forget the fact that we came to this earth with nothing except this body. Not even clothes! And we will go without any. So, whatever happens in between is a bonus and has to be enjoyed and celebrated.

The constant reminder of this fact can serve as a happiness pill and solve a plethora of problems that we face as humanity today.

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Till now, we saw how one shall focus on present and drop the tomorrow's worries. Though it's a great idea, there's a caution against its misinterpretation.

Drop the question of tomorrow, not to a chance but to a plan.

Some people, by misinterpreting what is being told, might indulge in a careless living while dropping the necessary part of planning our future altogether.

Some may take too much risk in present by jeopardising the possible beautiful future.

Some may even take as a licence to indulge in a consumeristic lifestyle.

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Thus, while maintaining a focus on present, we should plan a little for tomorrow. Because, "If we fail to plan, we plan to fail." A balance should always be maintained in life.

They say Yesterday is history
tomorrow is mystery
today is present (a gift)!

Thus we shall embrace this gift to its fullest. Same as a singer like Bhimsen Joshi forgets himself while singing his songs. Or a sports person like Michael Phelps does in his games.

If we learn to do that without waiting for some disease to remind us

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that as did in case of Ramesh, then
only we can live a fulfilling life
like Ramesh did. Not just for 7 months
but for our whole life.

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- Q.5 Truth, like a torch, the more it is shook, it shines.
सत्य, मशाल की तरह है, इसे जितना अधिक हिलाया जाता है, यह उतना ही चमकता है।
- Q.6 Art is I; science is We.
कला मैं है; विज्ञान हम है।
- Q.7 Only the dead have seen the end of the war.
केवल मृतकों ने ही युद्ध का अंत देखा है।
- Q.8 Act as if it were impossible to fail.
कार्य ऐसे करें जैसे कि विफल होना असंभव ही था।

Q.8 Act as if it were impossible to fail

"He arrived - He ran - He Conquered
He arrived - He ran - He Conquered
He arrived - He ran - He Conquered!"

These lines perfectly depict the aura that the fastest human being on the earth held for years. Usain Bolt! The man who always acted as if it were impossible to fail. Not just on the field but also through his words, he expressed the ultimate level of confidence that he carried.

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The theme of the essay tries to portray what attitude and approach one should have while taking actions in various dimensions of life. We would try to understand it going further in this writeup.

We would go deeper into the questions like what does it mean by acting as if it were impossible to fail? Why shall we do so? What if we don't? How to do it? And lastly is it always true?

First things first. What does it even mean? A one liner, a seemingly simple sentence.

But gets complex as we try to read and reread it. "Act as if ~~we~~ it were impossible to fail!"

Firstly it means ~~that~~ believing that you can do it and you're the best in the concerned

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arena. Ever seen the level of faith our parents have in us? According to them we are the best and infallible ones. That kind of faith is expected while we take any action.

Secondly, it's about courage to take upon biggest of challenges without even blinking an eyelid. One may remember the famous match wherein a little 17 year old boy from busy town of Mumbai was facing the fastest pacers of the world, the Pakistani bowlers. Few early deliveries hit him so badly that the soil below him became red with blood. But despite so much pain, he just said, "Mein khelega" (I will play). This is how it looks when one acts as if it were impossible to fail.

The above mentioned story of cricketering legend Sachin, brings us to

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Our next segment of perseverance without letting any doubt mingle with your resolve. A great example (and a collective one) of this attitude is our freedom struggle. Gandhiji implanted the thought of freedom within Indian minds so well that everyone believed that it is next to impossible to fail. He kept the fire burning for more than 25 years!

This illustration also tells us how this theme of acting with sheer Confidence resonates with the quality of a good leader. A leader is always looking at one single goal of success single pointedly. For instance despite extremely unstable geopolitical situations, India didn't budge from its commitment to

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sovereignty and national interest, while keeping good relations with all. Really a leaderlike quality.

After looking at the meaning of the topic, we can safely look at why and what if? of it to understand it further.

One may wonder, why shall we act in such a manner, whereas there's always a chance of failure? There are several good reasons for it.

Firstly it provides you with much needed tonic called "Confidence." Shivaji

Raje's small armies did not win against

mighty army of Aurangzeb because they were superior. But rather because of sheer confidence and lack of any fear of failure.

They just didn't consider failure as an option.

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The way this attitude worked against armies of horses and swords also worked against an invisible army. When did it?

Remember - COVID-19 virus? That tiny little fragment of virus was tackled by our collective will to win. We thought only of winning and we did.

The converse is also true, if we don't act with the confident attitude of a winner, it creates several hurdles in our march towards success. It creates fear of failure, mental turmoil, lack of motivation and discipline in work and also hampers the intensity of our efforts.

Just imagine what would happen to our fight against climate change under SDG13 if we become too concerned about

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failure. It will derail the progress we've made till date and lead to a half hearted effort.

What applies to big fights like climate change mitigation, also applies to small fights of life. Many students and sports persons of

high calibre cannot perform well on D-Day just because of the fear of failure they carry. On the other hand some act as if it were impossible to fail and simply win!

Another beautiful example of this attitude is well choreographed in the movie of "Bidiots". The scene where Rencho

ends up performing delivery of a baby without any specialised knowledge or sophisticated equipments is a classic example of how, the All is well attitude works!

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Taking this phrase, "All is well" forward takes us to the practical solution of how to do it. Or how to act in such a way? Some simple practices and ways can help.

To start with, "know the game you're playing well". Lord Krishna ~~was~~ is also fondly called as "Lehkhadhari" for his ability to playfully navigate through life and knowing the tricks of the game well. In his whole life, there are several incidences where it feels like the end of story but he comes up victorious through it. His life stories should serve as a good learning lesson for us.

Secondly the mother nature can teach us many lessons. If one is aware

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about the dense canopy that Amazon rainforests hold, then one can relate it with the ability of tiny plants that grow taller and taller to catch sight of sunrays. I wonder if they ever think "what if I failed?" Rather they must be following mantra of nishkama karma given in the Bhagwad Gita.

The discussion till now might create a belief in one's mind that everything is so flowery and we should forget totally about failure. But there's a caveat too!

The title tells us what to do while we are acting/performing the task. But before that the possibility of a failure and necessary safety arrangements are required in the planning stage itself.

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For instance, in the recent Chandrayan-3 mission, ISRO did a failure based planning, meaning they took into account all the possible scenarios where the mission could fail and bridged the gaps accordingly. But they acted ~~with~~ with immense confidence and succeeded in first steps during actual execution.

Similarly a cricket team shall consider reasons for failure and possible scenarios before the match, but during the actual match they should play to win, like Virat Kohli always does!

It is said that "the God is not with the biggest of armies, but the best of shots." And in order to give the best

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Shot in the game of life or actual battlefield,
One must act as if it were impossible to
fail!

"Life's battles don't always go
to the strongest or the fastest man.
But at the end the one who wins
is the one who thinks he can!"

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