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

The question of what may come tomorrow, the future, worries and fascinates all of us. But sometimes this question clouds our view from realising the real profit at hand, that is the present. May be, that's why the saying goes: 'Yesterday is history, tomorrow is mystery, but today is a gift. That's why its called the present'.

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Our fascination with tomorrow's mystery is hard to give up. Rather it has its benifits too. On the other hand, utilizing the real gift, the present, i.e every ordinary day of our lives itself requires efforts.

Why do we worry about tomorrow? And to what extent do we do that? What are the consequences of this 'question of tomorrow? And, if its worthwhile to reap our today, how do we do that? These are some questions pertinent to the discussion

## The mystery called Tomorrow

Human beings are curious creatures. We have the tendency to explore the unexplored, Know the unknown. Our fascination with 'tomorrow' is probably

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the result of this curiosity.

To search for this question & what 'tomorrow' may bring, we have tried myriad ways. Prehistoric shamans who tried to read the stars, medieval rulers & patronage to astrologers, to present day risk prediction agencies like CRISIL, world bank and geopolitical analysts, all have tried to give us a view of our future. But why?

The reason is lies in our urge to have control on our lives, on the factors shaping our fortunes and destinies. Having an answer to this question helps us plan for contingencies, hedge our risks, devise curative measures for the

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which may arise in the future. But has this been without unintended consequences?

No. While, we can't doubt the utility of the 'question of tomorrow', our over indulgence has gone to the extent, where we have forsaken our present and have started living in the ~~for~~ future. lets see ~~how~~ some examples from our lives.

**Curiosity killed the cat: ~~the~~ Pitfalls of Living in the future**

At individual level, the 'overthinking syndrome' is more visible today than ever. Our fear for the future has been responsible for raising our anxities, our worries and stress levels.

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This is resulting into plethora of mental illnesses. Isn't it our anxiety of the future which is causing our young students to turn towards suicides due to fear of future career path?

The same syndrome has been seen at national policies level too. Countries like China feared for their bulging populations of the tomorrow and thus to prevent its rise, they implemented harsh population control laws. But this fear of theirs caused problems like female infanticide, distorted sex ratio and distorted demographic structures.

Likewise, had Arjun not dropped the question of 'what will happen

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tomorrow, if everyone in Kurukshetra dies, would he have fought the Dharma Yuddha? he was duty bound to fight.

Moreover, our quest for knowing the future, has also been grossly incorrect many times as was seen in the failure to predict the 2008 Global Financial crisis or the crisis due to spread of the corona virus. Thus worrying itself did not lead to any positive result.

Hence, despite, the positives that may accure from questioning the tomorrow, now we know that over indulgence in the idea can lead to many issues as well. This makes it pertinent for us to explore the idea of present, i.e our today.

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## Living in the present: Reaping our today

If our future is filled with our expectations, our present is the time for action and to reap satisfaction.

Every day of our life is a new opportunity for us to improve ourselves. It provides us with the stage to display our talents, our skills, our strengths and channelize them in the right direction. This is one way of counting the profits that our present offers.

Like wise, living in the present helps us have a 'conscious lifestyle', a life where we are acting in a manner we want to act. It gives us that control

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we so dearly sought in our tomorrow.

Our present gives us the opportunity to value the things that actually matter for us. Spending time with one's family, pursuing a hobby, or even having a mindful meal, they all give us a sense of joy which the mystery called tomorrow may never be able to offer to us.

And lastly, focussing on the present helps us be rooted in our foundations, even when we are trying to raise our ceilings. Thus for example, even when we are trying to become a 5 trillion dollar economy, send a

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Gaganyaan mission or win a world cup, we remain rooted that our gains do not leave our vulnerable section behind.

## Counting the profits: How to live in the present

We now realize that its of utmost importance that we value our present. But how do we do that?

One way is <u>right mindfulness</u>. Buddha's eight fold path to free us from our worries or 'Dukha', was to have the right concentration, the right view. This can be developed through practising meditation in individual lives.

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Second way of doing this is being rooted in our values. It was Bhagwad Gita's gyan of 'Nishkam Karma' which helped Arjuna get rid of the worries of the future and do his duty in the present. Thus we need to foster the right value system.

Thirdly, emotional intelligence, self awareness is one of the ways in which we can remain rooted in our present. MS Dhoni's success has often been attributed to his present situational awareness, which can be developed by following the Captain

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Cool's Mantra of 'Control the Controllable'

Conclusion: Past, Present or Future, each has its value

It is said that 'History repeats itself' and our past is the key to our future. Thus learning the right lessons is important from our ~~pa~~ yesterday.

Also, trying to answer the mystery of tomorrow, has its benifits if it helps us avoid tragedies. But at the same time, over thinking can lead to negative consequences.

Lastly, we realise its our present which is our 'Karmabhoomi', our action field and the time which we must value as a gift. This can

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help us achieve true satisfaction.

If we are able to find a synergy between the three, we will truly be finding joy in ~~the today~~ yesterday's history, tomorrow's mystery and today's present.

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## 8. Act as if it were impossible to fail

The true key to success lies in the attitude with which one acts. When one acts with a positive attitude they have the energy to face every challenge. This energy clears all darkness that comes from the fear of failure and engines one to their goal.

It is said that when

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it rains all the birds fly away to shelters. But, eagle, the king of birds flies above the clouds to beat the rain. This underscores the importance of acting with a positive attitude to make failure impossible.

What is the significance of positive attitude in our lives? How can one build this quality in one's character? And is it truly a full proof measure to make failures impossible? And does this positive attitude go beyond failure and success! These are some questions that will be explored in this essay.

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## Acting with a positive attitude

Ability decides whether we will be able to do something. Attitude decides how well we will do that thing.

—Lao Tse.

Having a positive attitude implies looking at the positive side of things even in challenges. It involves approaching the problem with a solution oriented approach. It involves truly living the lines "Where there is a will, there is a way".

Thus, positive attitude gives one the willpower to persevere through difficult times. It was Nelson Mandela's positive attitude, which kept

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his hopes alive, gave him the willpower to continue through a painfull 27 prison time to see the light of freedom.

Positive attitude also helps one to think out of the box creative solutions to seemingly impossible problems. IAS Armstrong Pame, was faced with the task of building a 100km road without sufficient funds. But with his positivity, he found the answer in 'crowd funding' and completed the road because he refused to fail.

Acting with 'impossible to fail' mindset also helps muster courage and one's hidden, underlying strengths to rise up to the challenge. Our

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soldiers fought the 'Kargil War', in seemingly impossible to survive circumstances of extreme cold, high slopes and a strategically well placed enemy. But it was the positive attitude of officers and soldiers which made them achieve victory beyond failures.

Having realised the significance of having a positive approach to our actions, next we will ponder on how to build this quality in us.

## Building Positivity: The inner engineering

Rome wasn't built in a day, and thus our inner engineering requires sustainable efforts. Thus, the

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Point to begin with is cultivating the right practise through discipline.

@ Cricketer Rahul Dravid is known for his committment to practise. He holds the record for playing the most matches and is hailed for never missing a practise session. It was probably this quality which garnered the 'never fail' attitude in him.

It was this attitude, which was displayed by him and VVS Laxman in the famous Kolkata Test of 2001, when India came back from a follow on to beat the mighty Australians.

Secondly, it is our committment to our value system, our

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integrity through which we can build the consistency to have positive attitudes. Emannuel Kant's "Categorical Imperative' of never failing to do one's duty, is one such maxim. It was probably this maxim which gave our soldiers to win the Kargil war.

Thirdly, this positive 'never fail' attitude can be built through organizational culture and work ethics. Once followed at the top, this culture instills into the whole organisation. Konkan Railways construction through fragile Western

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Ghat terrain or Delhi Metro's never fail to arrive on time culture, are all contributing to positive attitudes in employees.

Similarly, the character of the leaders also decides whether the followers will have this 'never fail attitudes'. Be it Pt. Nehru's 'Temples of moder India' attitude, to take India on path of modernity or Lee Kuwan Yews leadership to take Singapore from an impoverished city to a developed Nation, it was their actions which built positive attitudes in their countrymen.

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## Failures are inevitable

Is it impossible to fail if one has a positive attitude?

Ofcourse not. Failures are like the troughs of a wave. Each crest is ordained to have a matching trough. Then what is the role of the preached positive attitude, if failures are bound to happen?

In the movie Batman, the protagonist as a child falls into a well, and his father picks him up. Then the father asks "Why do we fail?" and the child answers "so that we can learn to pick ourselves up".

This, is the role of positivity when it tells us that there are

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no failures, there are just lessons. ~~Each~~ When we act with 'impossible to fail' attitude, we take each failure as a lesson in itself. This is particularly relevant for the 'innovation' startup culture we are trying to foster in our country.

Elon Musk, who is the founder of Tesla, SpaceX etc has admitted he failed in many ventures before these. Our Prime Minister, Mr Modi, too gave a famous speech about 'Anti-fragility' in Startup India summit, where he encouraged the Indian entrepreneurs to turn challenges into opportunities. All this requires positive attitudes.

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To conclude, it is said that ~~'Kuch~~ 'Kisi Ko Ghar se nikalte hi Mil gayi Manzil,

Koi umar bhar safar me raha'.

- Some found their destiny immediately, some Kept searching all their lives. It is our positive attitudes, our positivity which helps us keep that fire alive in us in face of all challenges. It gives us the will power to persevere on the way, and this 'will to continue' the journey is what truly makes us impossible to fail.