

## **February 20 to 24, 2012 Talks at AMA, Ahmadabad**

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### **Knowledge, Imagination, Creativity, Optimal Solutions and Success**

#### **5 Lectures by SWAMI BODHANANDA**

##### **1) Knowledge:**

"Knowledge is power", "Knowledge is freedom", "Knowledge liberates" -- so are the wise sayings. But, what is knowledge? What is true and false knowledge? What are the means of knowledge and what are the proofs? How do societies generate, control, package and disseminate knowledge? What are the differences between Vedic and Semitic perceptions of knowledge, and also between scientific and spiritual knowledge? Is knowledge value neutral? Is knowledge conditioned or unconditioned? What is the role of emotions and survival needs in the manufacturing of knowledge? These are some of the questions this presentation will raise and reflects upon. In this age of networking and internet, knowledge is oxygen, knowledge is fuel, knowledge is transport and knowledge is the passport to success. 'vidhya dhanam sarva dhanaat pradhanam' says a Sanskrit adage.

##### **2) Imagination:**

Imagination plays an important role in knowledge generation and knowledge application. What the modern world lack is imagination. Mind is so saturated with old knowledge that there is no room for imagination. Imagination is the function of the right brain and the limbic system. It is the unleashing of the unconscious and the power of consciousness. The negative side of imagination is paranoia, depression and schizophrenia.

It is the same power of imagination that creates beautiful work of art that leads people to forge weapons of mass destruction and fight wars. Imagination is a double edged weapon and has to be tamed with periodic reality checks. This talk will dwell on the extraordinary powers of human imagination and its proper channelling.

##### **3) Creativity:**

Using the power of knowledge and imagination humans have created a wonderful culture and civilization that have enhanced our general well-being. Creativity is an inside-out phenomenon. Creativity unfolds when we ask the 'why' question rather than the 'how' and 'what' questions. Creativity bubbles up from pure consciousness. Focus, diverse interests, love of nature, acute observation and self-awareness are the ingredients of a creative mind. Creativity is doing things differently, or doing different things, or doing things in one's own way. Creativity manifest when one enjoys what one does. We find creative geniuses in all fields of human endeavours. Mastery in a chosen field is a necessary condition for creative flowering. It is letting things happen, ideas explode, and words flow. Creativity is the energy of spontaneity. This talk probes and unravels the mystery of creativity, a unique human quality.

##### **4) Optimal Solutions:**

One unchanging truth about the world and the human condition is that there are no perfect answers to problems. There can be only optimal answers. It is a compromise involving tradeoffs. To win something is to lose something else. Economists nick name this phenomenon "opportunity cost". Every solution is a package, a mixed bag of good and bad. You get a package -- take or leave it. Strategic thinkers term it as win-win solutions, a situation where both you and your enemy win. The great challenge today is optimizing human satisfaction with minimal resources for maximum people. It is a situation of the winner playing a positive sum game versus a zero sum game and sharing his/her victory with the loser. This talk will be an enquiry into the art of problem solving.

##### **5) Success:**

Nobody in this world wants to be a failure. All want to be winners, and successful. But what is success, who is successful -- the powerful, the rich, the strongest, the most beautiful? Based on a profit and loss analysis, we find that some times the early loser has the last laugh and that all the winners are not savouring their victories. Success like health seems to have material, mental, ethical and spiritual dimensions. Success also has long term and short term implications and cost factors. Swami Bodhananda gives a holistic picture of success and determines who is actually successful.

Note by

Swami Bodhananda