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Q.1 Procrastination is like taking a loan, enjoy it only till you have to pay the bill

Raju had recently passed from a tier-1 college and joined information technology sector. He was a sharp person having required technical capabilities. One thing he lacked was discipline, which led to procrastination at times. His teachers in college tried to make him understand the ill effect of procrastination, but to no avail.

Last week, Raju was given a project, which had a deadline of 3 days. Due to his procrastination, he could not complete it and sought for time extension. Again, after 2 days, he sought another extension as he could not finish his part of the project. This time he was given last extension a warning that if not completed this time, his appraisal will

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be affected.

In Raju's case, it is not that he is incapable of doing that job but due to procrastination, he delays it. Instead of completing the work, he bingewatches OTT. And who doesn't enjoy watching OTT? It gives him a false sense of 'good life'. But as soon as deadline approaches, pressure mounts and further productivity is affected.

Indeed, procrastination is like taking a loan, enjoyable only till one has to pay the bill. In this essay we will explore the meaning of procrastination, how is it similar to loan? why one should avoid procrastination? what are the reasons people procrastinate? and how to get rid of it?

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A Hindi saying goes as following
 "kal kare so aaj kar, Aaj kare so ab '
kal mein karlay hoggi, kahuri karayga kabii"

(we should do today, what was planned to do tomorrow, and now, what was planned for today. As disaster can strike any time, and thereafter we won't have any time.)

These lines summarise the importance of time, which is more valuable than money. Procrastination is a utter wastage of this precious resource. A procrastinator, who is supposed to do some productive work, wastes time in useless activities such as - sleeping, wandering here and there, on social media, watching the 'idiot box'-TV etc.

Procrastination is not age specific or profession specific. People from all walks of life, of all ages indulge in procrastination. Higher the population

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of a region, more is the number of procrastinators. This is the reason why social media giants such as - Meta, X, Reddit have large market presence in countries like - India, China, Brazil etc.

Benjamin Franklin in his work 'necessary hints to those who would be rich' writes that 'time is money'. Those who waste time, jeopardise their future and chances to succeed. Recently concluded Paris Olympics highlighted importance of time - in men's 100 m race, winner was decided by less than 1 millisecond. Similarly Indian wrestler - Vinesh Phogat was disqualified for being 100 grams overweight. Had she got 1 more hour to lose weight, India would have 1 more

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medal in 2024 olympics.

At individual level, procrastination diminishes the chances of success of a person. Just like bank interest on loan, costs individually financially, procrastination also eats into efforts of a person. For example, a lot of college students procrastinate, and it results into their failure in exams, not getting employment opportunities etc.

At societal level, procrastination ~~it~~ means delay in bringing measures to abolish caste discriminations, religious tensions, gender inequality etc. Though in short term, it may benefit dominant caste, religion or gender, but ultimately stalls the progress of society and results into disharmony in the society.

Similarly, at National level, procrastination in implementing economic reforms such as liberalisation, privatisation

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and globalisation resulted in hinder rate of growth, while china achieved economic might. Also, procrastination in implementing women safety measures has resulted in heinous crimes such as Nirbhaya gang rape, Kathua, Hathras and most recently R G Kar medical college case.

At this juncture, one would like to ask - what are the reasons that people procrastinate? Firstly it is due to overconfidence in their abilities. for example - a student who has to do homework. Normally it takes a person 1 hour to do it, but he becomes overconfident that he can do it in 30 minutes. ~~for~~ meanwhile, he wastes his 30 minutes, playing video games.

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Secondly, it may be due to inability of a person to defer instant gratification. In this era of social media, when attention span of human has reduced significantly, it becomes difficult for him to work continuously.
eg for example - checking mobile for notification in between, without realising the time lapsed.

Thirdly, it may be due to lack of interest in certain activity. Since, he is not interested in the work, distractions act as more powerful magnet.
for example - most of public sector employees procrastinate, which affects the quality of service delivery and satisfaction of citizens.

Fourthly, the flawed concept of good life is also responsible for procrastination to some extent. Today

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it is considered 'cool' and 'intellectual' to be hyperactive on social media, binge-watch OTTs, socialising and partying with friends and colleagues, shopping new gadgets etc. which automatically reduces time and energy available to do the productive work.

Now, having understood the reasons for procrastination, one would like to know, How to get rid of procrastination? The process is multipronged - physical, mental and spiritual. Aim is to control the mind - to identify the goal and prioritize activities, be physically fit and spiritually content.

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It is not to say that one should ~~altogether~~ altogether leave the leisure activities. But making a hierarchy would help. For example - a student should watch TV only after he has completed his homework. An organisation should give incentive to people only after it has achieved targets. A nation should fix timeline, before which it has to implement certain legislation such as - Nari Shakti Vandan adhinam in India.

However, not doing procrastination does not mean taking hasty decisions. For example - implementation of farmer laws in India without due diligence and consultation with stakeholders. Such actions result in chaos in society forcing actors to retreat, evident in repeal of these laws by government of India.

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Similarly, sometimes strategic decisions demand patience. As shown by Marathas in Anglo Maratha war (1775-82), under leadership of Nanabho Mahadaji Shinde. By waiting for significant time to trap British army in Sahayadri, Marathas secured a favourable treaty for themselves - treaty of Salbai.

Therefore, procrastination must not be confused with patience. Later one is virtue while procrastination is a vice. Raju, who now understands the time of value, ^{of time} vowed never to procrastinate again and this time he completed the project in time. Similarly India, rich with demographic dividend, will become developed by 2047, if its youth gives up procrastination.

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Q.7 An eye for an eye only ends up making the whole world blind.

October 7, 2023, was a normal day for Israel until Hamas carried out a major attack on its soil. Hundreds of Israeli citizens were taken as captives and many killed by terrorists. This incident left the world into shock - as intensity of the attack was unprecedented.

Now, Israeli Defence Forces (IDF), known for their military capabilities launched operation iron swords, aimed at eliminating Hamas militants and releasing captives. However, as time passed, instead of surgical strikes, IDF attacked in public places such as - schools, hospitals etc. This led to many civilian casualties in Gaza strip.

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Today, after more than 10 months of war, IDF has not been able to eliminate all Hamas militants, release all the captives. Rather, more than 40,000 people have been killed, almost whole of the Gaza population has been internally displaced. Other state and non-state actors such as Iran, Hezbollah, Houthis are engaged in war. Almost whole of west asian region is going through crises.

Instead of full scale war, had Israel taken the route of surgical strike, diplomacy, international collaboration world would be more peaceful today. Indeed an eye for an eye makes the whole world blind.

Now, the question arises -

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What does the phrase 'an eye for an eye signifies'? As evident in the case of Israel-Hamas conflict, it means retaliating violence with the use of violence. Apart from this, the phrase may denote different meanings in different contents.

At individual level, 'an eye for an eye' might mean treating unkindness with unkindness, or countering lies with lies, or hatred with hatred. Take the example of recent Udaipur incident where childish fight of two teenagers resulted in murder of one boy and followed by communal riots.

At societal level, this phrase may mean retaliating intolerance by hatred. For example - Encounter culture, which is considered as justice or Bulldozer justice in some societies.

Similarly at international level, 'an eye for an eye' leads to polycrises.

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such as - trade war between USA and china, public sentiments against immigrants such as - UK riots recently.

Having understood the meaning of 'an eye for an eye' one would like to ask - why does it make the whole world blind? To answer

this question, let us go back in history to 1919, when world war-I ended and Germany was defeated.

As a punishment for waging war, Treaty of Versailles was imposed on Germany unilaterally. It was a harsh treaty - monetarily as well as psychologically. Nazi party of Hitler exploited this situation and usurped power. This culminated in world war-II, a disaster for humankind.

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Similarly, in 1992, Babri masjid demolition was akin to 'an eye for an eye', which resulted in tragedies such as - Godhra fire incident, Mumbai serial blasts - 1993. These incidents deepened the communal tensions in Indian society. Not only short term losses, but also in long term, humanity has paid cost for such actions.

At this point, one would like to ask - if not retaliation in above manner, what should be one's response? India is the best case study for this. After Uri attack 2016, which was supported by Pakistan military, we had many options - respond to Pakistan in its own language i.e. infiltration, or carry out strikes that break the confidence of militants without damaging Pakistani civilians.

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India, being a civilizational state, chose the second option and carried out surgical strikes. Additionally we isolated Pakistan at international level through diplomatic efforts.

Similarly, in Jammu & Kashmir, Indian army chose the path of winning hearts and minds of local people as a measure to counter insurgency. This has resulted in increased confidence of public in democracy visible in significantly high turnout of voters in 18th Lok Sabha elections. It gave Election Commission of India - confidence to announce UT legislative assembly elections in October, 2024.

Another response, chosen by Gandhiji was of truth and non-violence (satyagrah). Despite countless

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atrocities by british, he chose not to 'lay a finger' on them. This approach not only resulted in freedom of India, but also instilled foundational values in Indian society, that makes us 'Mother of democracy'.

Not limited to India, this approach of Gandhi was used by great personalities such as - Martin Luther King Jr. in USA, Nelson Mandela in South Africa etc. After being elected as first president of South Africa, Mandela chose to forgive his culprits rather than seek vengeance.

Similarly Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, who had to face a lot of disabilities due to his lower caste, did not seek revenge from upper caste in constitution. His efforts were directed at reforming society - where everyone has equality.

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of status, opportunities etc. Today these efforts have made the world a better place.

Now, one would ask - is it not cowardice to not retaliate? As

It is clear from the above examples, none of these personalities were physically the strongest, or economically the richest, but they achieved, what they set out to achieve. Gandhiji was known for his 'indomitable will', Dr. Ambedkar for his knowledge and passion for reforms.

Mandela had all the power to punish his culprits but he chose to forgive them. As it is often said

'To forgive, is virtue of strong'

He was well aware of the consequences if chose to take an eye for an eye.

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However, resistance to non-justice, through violent means is necessary in some cases. Take an example of 1971 war between India and Pakistan. India had to retaliate Pakistani forces due to 2 reasons - one, atrocities on people in east Pakistan and two, danger to India's internal security.

Even Gandhiji has said, "if there is only option between violence and cowardice, I will choose violence."

Even in recent Galwan clash with China, Indian soldiers replied to Sino-threat, in its own currency.

Similarly India's nuclear doctrine of No First Use dictates that it is a credible deterrence against escalation but capable of massive retaliation.

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Finally, the question arises - How can the world be made a better place - where no one strives for an eye for an eye? The answer to this question lies in Gandhi's Ram Rajya. Ram Rajya is a governance system where everyone is equal, respectful, prosperous and states role is minimal in people's day to day life.

In this rajya, children are educated with Nai talim, which entails not only vocational education but also value education. Values such as - tolerance, compassion, respect for others are ingrained in children, which surely will make the world a better place.

Additionally at international level, strong institutions such as -

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United Nations, International Court of Justice etc. can ensure harmony.
In the case of Israel-Hamas conflict,
ICTJ as well as UN are unable to
interfere till now. By making structural
changes to UN's decision making
bodies such as - inclusion of India
as permanent member of UNSC, such
conflicts may be resolved.

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