

Self-service

## WISDOM AT WORK



REKHA SHETTY

✓ The Buddha once told the layman Dighajanu how to excel at work. There are four things to be mindful of: to be skilled, efficient, energetic, earnest and learned in whatever profession one has; to conscientiously protect one's income and one's family's means of support; to have virtuous, trustworthy, faithful friends; and to be spiritual.

For centuries, well-intentioned men and women have confronted difficulties in combining spiritually-motivated behaviour with secular lives. Parenting itself is an example of the real work, calling for wholehearted, unselfish effort. To let go of the competitive attitude and find ways to use the skills he already has, to help a co-worker, is the way to vocational excellence. Michael Porter's *Competitive Advantage* was one of the most admired books in the arsenal of the ambitious, upward-bound MBA. Competitive advantage is such an important concept taught at management schools. Everyone is obsessed with being better than the Joneses. There is no end to it. You want to do better than everyone and do not mind bending the rules.

A good rule is to try and be better than you or your company was yesterday or last year. Many strategies are developed for downsizing. In a poor country like India, what will a breadwinner do? Getting a job is so tough; what do you do when you are middle-aged or close to retirement and you get the pink slip? Many companies in other countries try to help their people get another job. Not in India.

The most worrying symptom of the present financial crisis is unemployment. Unemployment causes deep unhappiness. Young unemployed people can more easily be recruited into terrorism and conflict situations. So, let each of us strive to protect our jobs and help others get jobs. This can reduce the huge social and economic damage caused by the problem.

Dr Rekha Shetty is the author of *Innovation Secrets of Indian CEOs and Innovation Sutra*

### Feng Shui tips

When it comes to choosing the colour of kitchen walls or cabinets, keep in mind that the colours you choose blend well and feel good together! According to Feng Shui, colour yellow is a good choice for the kitchen, as it is considered good for your digestion. You can choose this colour as light as butter yellow or as vibrant and strong as squash yellow.



# Power of *mantra japa*

Chanting *mantras* or doing *japa* with a string of 108 beads invokes spiritual qualities



RABIA KOCHAR

✓ The Sanskrit word *japa* means to utter in a low voice and repeat internally. It is a spiritual action which involves repetition of a *mantra* or name of a God or any divine power. This practice of *japa* is present in varied forms and actions and is practiced across the world.

#### WHAT IS A MANTRA?

*Mantra* means "that which when reflected upon gives liberation." A *mantra* is a word or series of words chanted aloud or silently to invoke spiritual qualities. As each *mantra* invokes a precise power, they can be used for very specific purposes: spiritual development, the healing of diseases, and for the attainment of worldly desires. When combined with the main reason of performing a particular *japa*, *mantras* become even more targeted and the essence is stronger. A *mantra* is fully empowered after 125,000 repetitions and is called *Mantra Siddhi*.

#### HOW TO USE A MALA

Hold the *mala* in your right hand and use your thumb to



"count" each *mantra* by touching the bead during the recitation and then lightly pulling the bead towards you on completion and moving to the next bead. The large *meru* (mountain) bead should not be counted. If you have a wrist *mala* of 27 beads, you will need to repeat this 3 more times.

To empower the *mala* and the *mantra* used, *japa* should be practiced each day for 40 continuous days. When the *mala* becomes empowered it can be worn or placed on oneself or others to transmit the energy of the *mantra*. When not in use, store your *mala* in a special, clean and preferably sacred place

#### IMPORTANCE OF 108 IN JAPA

George Feuerstein says the Vedic sages were aware that the sun and the moon's aver-

age distance from the earth is 108 times their respective diameters.

"Symbolically speaking, 108 is the number signifying the mid region (*antariksha*) of the space between heaven and earth. Thus, the 108 beads can be taken to represent an equal number of steps from the material world to the luminous realm of the divine reality."

The writer is a coffee cup reader, numerologist and rudraksha therapist. Send in your DOB and query at [selfdecoder@gmail.com](mailto:selfdecoder@gmail.com)

#### TYPES OF JAPA MALA

There are various types of *malas*, either the *mala* is empowered by the Guru or one can choose the type as per one's needs. For eg: Tulsi wood *mala* can be used for spiritual growth and devotion, *rudraksha mala* used for Shiva devotees is said to have healing properties and create stability in one's body, crystal *mala* can be used to balance the *chakras* of the body and to eradicate negativities in one's life, sandalwood *mala* is used for calmness, meditation and positivity, *navgraha mala* is used to treat any astrological imbalance in one's charts and provides a balance, rosewood *mala* is used to increase blood circulation and create a better aura and boost self-confidence, Bodhiseed *mala* is for enlightenment and is majorly used in Buddhist practice, lotus *mala* is used for financial success and stability.

As author Ruzbeh N. Bharucha beautifully explains in his life-changing book *The Fakir*: "Chanting of prayers and *mantras* is like putting fuel to a spiritual fire. Like when we do *havan*, we are saying our prayers and we keep adding sandalwood or fuel to the holy fire. What happens is that fuel offered to a small flame becomes a roaring fire. So the same reaction takes place with consistent prayers and chanting of *mantras* or just repeating your God or Master's name. As you keep chanting the holy name, the fire keeps growing. This fire that burns within your soul, dispels darkness and negativity, it destroys and burns all your past karma, it shows you the way. This fire provides you warmth, nourishment, strength, light and eternal life."

**JAPA MALA**  
Japa mala are a string of beads used to count mantras in sets of 27, 54 or 108 repetitions. The mala is used so that one can focus on the meaning or sound of the mantra rather than counting its repetitions. Mala beads are seen in other cultures and religions and are also known as prayer beads, rosary beads and worry beads.

### POSITIVE THINKING

## 'Build positive energy around yourself'

Q Dear Mani, I don't know why I am in the habit of thinking negative thoughts. I was a girl full of ambition and wanted to pursue a profession which no one would think of pursuing but I got affected by my jealous relatives who often put me down about my ideas and dressing sense and made me feel low. I wanted to be a model or a dancer but now I am so desperate for love and compassion that I want to give up my life. My friends accuse me of being miserable just because I am not married yet. I want to start my own business, which will take time, but I



MANI GOEL

also want to become a millionaire without any effort.

Padma Priya

Dear Padma, Surround yourself with positive energies and kind people who support you and harbor attitude of benevolence towards you. Pray to Lord Shiva for confidence and chant Gayatri Mantra 10

times in the morning to build positive energy around you. Success in personal and professional lives is an outcome of corresponding action, be it subtle or gross action.

Similarly, you would also need to perform right action to fulfill your dreams. An affirmation for you is: "I am surrounded by loving and supportive people who encourage me to move forward on my highest life path and attain fulfillment and success in all areas of my life." Repeat it 10 times in the morning and evening for two weeks.

The writer is an international author, spiritual healer and teacher, angel medium and artist. You may send your queries for Mani at [selfdecoder@gmail.com](mailto:selfdecoder@gmail.com)