



Irony of a Global Village: A Spiritual Remedy for Alienation by Hindu Scriptures

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Abstract

This article attempts to posit that modern people are alienated and so feel sad though they are equipped with modern means of comfort. This is ironical. In this connection, this article also attempts to define the concept of "a global village," discuss the psychological problems of alienation and loneliness, created ironically by globalization, and suggest some measures to cope with them from the perspective of the ancient wisdoms of the Hindu scriptural texts such as the Upanishad, the *Bhagavad Gītā*, the *Pātanjali Yoga Sutras*, and others. Unlimited, uncontrolled, and selfish desires are the main causes of modern alienation, triggered by the ideas of individualism, capitalism, consumerism, sexism, classicism, hedonism, and narcissism. Since the problems of alienation and loneliness are psychological ones, they can be best treated with the help of spiritual ideas propounded by ancient sages and seers. The permanent solution to these problems cannot be found outside in our external world. Their solutions can be found only inside our body, mind, and intellect with our inner journey to the Self ("Ātmā"). We can practice having vegetarian food, yoga, meditation, self-control over one's body and mind, mutual help, philanthropic activities, and non-violence by minimizing worldly desires, anger, and avarice to facilitate our journey to the Self. The less desires, the more happiness. This knowledge can inspire us avoid running after the temporary happiness attained by materialistic things. By being desireless and detached, we can remain still in the center of the inner Self inside our heart. This is the process of discovering permanent peace and happiness within ourselves to avoid the state of alienation.

Keywords: irony, global village, alienation, desires, desirelessness, spiritual, happiness

Introduction

Today, the whole world has become like a village. The means of telecommunications and transportations have turned the whole world into a single community. Due to the development of modern technology and spread of globalization, space has become narrow and time short. We can reach to any part of the world and communicate with anyone within a short time to solve our problems and increase our happiness. However, the irony is that our happiness is decreasing rather than increasing due to the side effects of globalization. And we are feeling alienated and, as a result, lonely or sad. We are in contact with each other either through communication or sitting together watching the online events, yet we are going away from the center of our Self and losing our whole integrity. The world is being fragmented or divided into many problems. And we too are being fragmented and losing our equanimity. We are being decentered. In other sense, we are running after many desires and ideologies experimenting one after another. Due to the spread of media, culture, and postmodernism, the whole world has lost its large boundary. Now, it has become as narrow as a village. In short, this is a concept of a global village.

The worst situation of alienation and loneliness is that husband and wife are sitting together on the same bed, but there is no communication between them. One of them is busy with his or her Facebook or YouTube and another is trying to share his or her feelings, but to no avail. Sometimes both are busy with their Facebook or YouTube and no one is concerned with each other. We are living in the same apartment, but we do not know each other or rather we do not want to be concerned with others' problems. This alienated state or experience is due to the effect of selfish desires caused by the ideas of individualism, capitalism, consumerism, sexism, classicism, hedonism, and narcissism.

Today, we need not go to libraries to study. Through internet we can access almost all the important books and journals in the internet. The same event can be viewed by many people in many locations around the globe. Through online teaching, multiple students sitting in multiple classrooms can be taught. By watching live video instructions of remote online doctors, a patient can be treated by a doctor here. Multiple people living in multiple parts can instantly watch a movie as soon as it is released anywhere in world. These are some examples how the globalization of technology has narrowed space and shortened time. Despite having all these magical powers of science and technology, we are still facing the problems of alienation and loneliness.

Needless to say, we have almost all sorts of facilities and abilities. Yet we are not at peace. We have done unimaginable progress in different

areas of life such as medicine, recreation, commerce, science, and technology. Nevertheless, the concept of "only for me, not for others" is worsening our state of alienation and loneliness. We are working for self-interest, but not for public interest. We are creating spaces for ourselves, not for others. On one hand, we want peace and happiness. On the other, we are making the nuclear bomb to finish the world with a click of a button. Thus, we are trying to deal with many issues of life unnecessarily. We are remaining in periphery, losing our connection to the center of our self. All these reasons are responsible for our alienation and loneliness.

In the modern world, the problem of alienation and loneliness is growing with the growth of our body, being complicated at the old age. The remedy of this problem is not outside anywhere. That is within ourselves. For this remedy, we must be spiritual-minded. Every day we should spend some time peacefully thinking about the meaninglessness of everyday mundane activities. We should narrow down or minimize our daily routine. We should not do work at the risk of our physical, psychological, and spiritual life.

Since the main cause of our alienation and loneliness is our hectic schedule of life and over-ambition, we need to turn inward and practice the ancient spiritual values. Isolation from our near and dear ones, too, causes alienation and loneliness. Alienation is especially related to the psychological state of mind whereas isolation is especially concerned with the physical separation from each other. We can be free from alienation and loneliness with the help of the ancient wisdoms of the Upanishad, the *Bhagavad Gītā*, and the *Pātanjali Yoga Sūtras* of the Hindu philosophy. These scriptural texts are the metaphysics or the sciences of the Self ("Ātmā"). They can provide with us the psychological remedy for our disease of the mind ("*mana*").

Against this background, this paper has been presented to point out the irony of the concept of a global village as to how it has caused our psychological problems of alienation and loneliness and how they can be treated with our spiritual response to them. In this paper, the references to the Upanishads are taken from Paul Deussen's *Sixty Upanishads of the Veda* and S. Rādhākṛishnan's *The Principal Upanishads*.

Since the beginning, scientists, atheists, and so-called wise people are trying to discover and invent new and new modern means of recreation, comfort, and amenities. They are trying to explore other planets like moon and mars to seek more pleasure. They know a lot about their outside world but not about their inner body, mind, and intellect. They have developed many theories to cope with their physical, psychological, and environmental issues. Despite having all these resources, modern people are facing the problems of alienation and loneliness. They can control others but not themselves. This is

because they all have missed the secret, esoteric knowledge about the very significant another part of life, i.e., the spiritual life. Modern writers have undermined or ignored the importance of the spiritual life. In this context, this article tries to state the unsated things by highlighting the importance of spiritual response to life in minimizing modern people's feelings of alienation and loneliness, caused by modern peoples' materialistic mind. This is the research gap, which this article tries to fulfill.

Qualitative research-oriented methodology is used to study about the irony of a global village and the problems of alienation and loneliness, caused by the modern means of comfort, recreation, facilities, transport, and communication of the global village. Similarly, the materialistic and spiritual values are compared and contrasted to show their relationship with temporary and permanent happiness respectively. The theoretical concepts of spiritual response to life are derived from the sacred Hindu scriptural texts such as the Upanishad, the *Bhagavad Gītā*, the *Pātanjali Yoga Sutras*, and others. These texts are chosen by using purposive sampling method because they are the foundational texts of Hinduism. They all highlight that our physical or material life is shaped by our inner desires; the world is a play of mind; and the inner freedom from desires and detachment are real keys to permanent peace and happiness.

Irony of a Global Village: Alienation and Loneliness in Place of Closeness and Happiness

"A global village" is a modern concept that views the world as a community in which distance and time have been dramatically minimized by electronic means of communication like television and the Internet. "The global village" has been an ironical concept now because we are feeling alienation and loneliness in place of closeness and happiness.

Marshall McLuhan and Quentin Fiore maintain that the word "global village" was first used by Marshall McLuhan in 1959. McLuhan admired Wyndham Lewis for his first use of the word "one big village" for the earth in 1948 (164). McLuhan and Fiore unanimously argue that "'Time has ceased, 'space' has vanished. We now live in a global village" (165). The reduction of time and space has certainly made our life easier, but resulting in alienation and loneliness side by side.

The concept of a global village is related to the concepts of global integration, global strategy, globality, and globalization. As John Daniels, Lee Radebaugh, Daniel Sullivan, and Prashant Salwan define, globalization is "the widening and deepening of interdependent relationships among people from different nations. The term sometimes refers to the elimination of barriers to international movements of goods, services, capital, technology, and people

that influence the integration of world economies" (625).

Due to the increase of globalization, we are facing environmental stress, competition for career, unemployment, income inequality, and personal stress. Though globalization has positive benefits, it has negative effects side by side which is causing alienation and loneliness. These effects can be minimized or managed by working for global interests, not only for national and personal ones, with global cooperation.

M. H. Abrams and Geoffrey Galt Harpham argue that "Scholars in postcolonial studies have turned their attention to identities in a globalized world where large groups of people have, for various reasons, left their homelands, producing diasporas, population flows, and émigré groups (307). The scholars are aware of cultural and environmental crises or catastrophes such as global warming, earthquake facing globalization. People are moving from one territory to another in pursuit of job or studies, inviting alienation and loneliness. Now, for global crises, we need global solutions.

The most important factor to cause our alienation and loneliness is our inhuman, immoral, and unspiritual habit of living a life. Bribery, violence, and sexual promiscuity are largely responsible to increase our alienation and loneliness in the modern world.

The irony of a global village lies in its result. The concept of a global village is good, but its implementation is complex. That complexity arouses the sense of alienation and loneliness in human beings. One cannot share their feelings and problems with others. So, being helpless, one has to withdraw into oneself to solve their own problems, turning into alienation and loneliness.

Spiritual Remedy for Global Alienation and Loneliness

Global alienation and loneliness among people is spreading day by day despite the fact that we have immense sources of pleasure and entertainment. Science and medicine cannot permanently treat the feelings of alienation and loneliness caused by anxiety, tension, or stress. The permanent solution to these issues can be found only in the spiritual wisdoms of ancient seers. Therefore, let's review those secret pearls of wisdoms, which are overlooked so far, for the benefit of humankind.

The yoga of meditation holds a great importance to balance our physical, psychological, and spiritual life. Meditation works as a medicine to all sorts of psychological problems such as anxiety disorder, alienation, and loneliness. Meditation creates mental silence. Silence is power. Modern people lack this kind of meditative or spiritual silence. They watch movies in silence but this kind of non-spiritual silence does not boost their inner peace and happiness. Before beginning meditation, we first must be vegetarian

completely. As we eat, so our body and mind become.

In this connection, the *Chhāndogya Upanishad* clarifies that there are three results of each food, drink, and oil which we have in our meal. After we eat food, its very coarsest portion changes into the faeces; its middle portion into flesh; and its subtlest portion into mind. So we say that food makes our mind. Our mind becomes as per the qualities of the food. Similarly, after we drink liquid like water and juice, their coarsest portion changes into urine; its middle portion into blood; and its subtlest portion into (vital) breath. So, we cannot live without water because it makes our breath. However, we can live without food for many days. Likewise, after we take heating things like oil, ghee, and butter, their coarsest portion changes into bone; their middle part into marrow; and their subtlest portion into speech, sound, or the power to speak (6.5.1- 4). Thus, our mind is made of food, our breath of water, and speech of heat(s). There is a very close relationship between food and our mind. Therefore, the first step for those who want to practice yoga is to be careful while having food, drink, and heat. Unhealthy food increases our feelings of alienation and loneliness.

Sāttvika food, the vegetarian food that keeps mind stable, peaceful, stoic, and resilient, is the first requisite of a yogic practitioner. Clarifying this ideas, Lord Krishna says in the *Bhagavad Gītā*, "Foods which promote longevity, intelligence, vigour, health, happiness and cheerfulness, and which are sweet, bland, substantial and naturally agreeable, are dear to the *Sāttvika* type of men" (17.8). Similarly, "Foods which are bitter, acid, salty, overhot, pungent, dry and burning, and which cause suffering, grief and sickness, are dear to the *Rājāsika* type of men (17.9). Likewise, "Food which is half-cooked or half-ripe, insipid, putrid, stale and polluted, and which is impure too, is dear to men of a *Tāmasika* disposition (17.10). If we have pure and balanced food, we have no disease and need not any medicine. Even hundreds of medicines cannot help those who do not follow this principle of pure and balanced diet. From these arguments, we can deduce that physical diseases are also responsible for one's alienation and loneliness. So, the wise people who follow yogic practices first pay attention to their balanced food and drink.

In this connection, Lord Shree Krishna in the *Bhagavad Gītā* clarifies that yoga is the destroyer of woes and can be done by them who are regulated in diet and recreation, regulated in doing actions, and regulated in sleep and wakefulness (6.17). This is the middle way of life, similar to Buddha's Middle Way or the Anglican Middle Way that give importance to moderate style of living, eating, and drinking. We become what we do; we do what we think; and we think what we eat and drink. Therefore, to avoid alienation and loneliness it is quite necessary to follow the prescribed diet of food as per the

scriptural texts of Hinduism.

So, now we know that we become what we eat. Food determines our temperament or disposition of mind. Referring to the science of *Astāṅga Yoga*, Satyal Pal and Dholan Dass Agarwal describe three types of mind and their effect to our physical, mental, and spiritual health. A *sāttvika* mind:

is completely at peace and cool like the moon on the full moon night.

Its chief characteristics are kindness, truth, contentment, love, devotion, humility and happiness. In this state, the blood pressure remains normal and the living cells multiply and become stronger.

They obey the orders of the mind without any hindrance. (146)

So, it is clear that *sāttvika* food makes our mind calm. This type of a *sāttvika* mind can control and develop its body at will. Further, Dass and Agarwal maintain that a *rājasika* mind:

is overshadowed by the cleverness of the intellect. The mind then gropes in the darkness of worry, sorrow, jealousy, greed, anger, fear and luxury. In such a state, blood circulation becomes abnormally rapid and leads to turmoil and confusion in the body. The cells are also in a disorganized and disturbed state. Their growth and development is stopped and their deterioration and weakness begins.

Any amount of exercise and diet cannot then save the body from disintegration. (146)

Then the body starts to suffer and deteriorate. When our body is not at our control, the feelings of alienation and loneliness start to attack us. Then, Dass and Agarwal highlight what *tāmasika*-minded people do. They feed themselves "on the poison of deceit, theft, ignorance, laziness, violence, adultery and other sinful activities." Then their life gets deteriorated. Taking pleasure in all these kinds of debased activities is bad. It makes their thinking blurred and blood circulation disorganized. Then the cells are filled with poison and stop functioning normally (146).

Thus, the persons of a *tāmasika* mind meet their downfall. Thus, we know that food influences our mind. And mind influences our body. Sound body is in sound mind and vice versa. Alienation and loneliness cannot so easily attack those who are of a *sāttvika* mind. Therefore, it is desirable to have pure food of *sāttvika* nature. But the people of a *tāmasika* mind, who value the taste of *tāmasika* food despite knowing its disadvantages, are not ready to accept the truth of *sāttvika* food and its advantages. Truth is bitter. Supporting this idea, in his poem "Burnt Norton" in *Four Quartets*, T. S. Eliot boldly declares, "Human kind cannot bear very much reality" (118).

Alienation, loneliness, frustration, anxiety, stress, and suffering are all related to the psychological states of mind whereas pain to the physical one of

the body. When individuals are in trouble, they might not be able to control their pain because pain is natural and unavoidable; no one can go against nature. But they can control or manage their suffering because suffering depends upon the state of mind. So, at the same time, one may feel painful in their body, but may not suffer mentally. Similarly, by hearing a loss of their friend, one person may feel lonely or sad, but another may not because one has attachment to the friend, but another has not. The suffering of alienation and loneliness is a subject matter of attachment. Thus, pain is a physical concept whereas suffering is a psychological one. *Sāttvika* or pure food helps develop the power to endure suffering, alienation, and loneliness.

Purity of thought comes from the purity of food and drink. Pure food purifies inner heart or mind by which Self-knowledge is attained. In this connection, the *Chhāndogya Upanishad* highlights the importance of food. When pure food is taken, mind becomes pure. When mind is pure, the memory [of Brahman, the real knowledge] becomes firm. When the memory is firm, all ties are loosened (7.26.2). Food does not mean only that food which we take from our mouth. Food means even those things which we receive through our five senses of touch, sight, smell, taste, and sound. So, we should be careful while using our five senses in our daily life. We should be able to filter the things and the ideas evoked by them while perceiving them through five senses. Those who can do so become free from mental defects.

As indicated earlier, spiritual response to life is quite necessary to avoid alienation and loneliness. So, in the *Chhāndogya Upanishad*, the sage Sanatkumāra confidently declares to Nārada that those who know about their own Self cross the boundary of grief (7.1.3). Through the practice of doing meditation with pure food helps one to be calm, self-controlled, withdrawn, patient or enduring, and collected or concentrated (*Bṛihadāraṇyaka* 4.4.23; *Mundaka* 1.2.13). Then one can be physically and mentally healthy, and realize the ultimate goal of life.

Our life depends upon our *karma* ("actions"). As we sow, so shall we reap. Bad *karma* yields bad result and good, good. This is the theory of *karma*. In the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upanishad*, the sage Yāgyavalkya presents his theory of *karma*. Accordingly, our desire directs our determination or will that subsequently directs our deeds. Then, the deeds make our destiny or result (4.4.5). This theory of *karma* can be represented diagrammatically thus:

Theory of *karma*: desire → determination/will → deeds → destiny/result

One of the causes of our alienation and loneliness is to think that there is no life after death on the ground that we turn into ashes or dust after death. This kind of thought makes us materialistic. And we start thinking that

the purpose of life is taking physical pleasure only. For this merry-making purpose, we have to eat, drink, and be merry even by borrowing money while alive; we need not pay back the money, and we can commit any kind of vice, sin, or crime thinking that there is no punishment after this life. Ironically, to get free license for committing immoral and criminal deeds rampantly and to escape from punishment, licentious or unscrupulous people say that God is dead. But the Upanishad declares that there is life after death and we have to settle or pay back even a penny after death. Replying answers to such atheists, hedonists, scientists, or naturalists who do not believe in God and an afterlife, T. S. Eliot, in his best poem *Four Quartets*, confidently states that "In my beginning is my end. . . . In my end is my beginning" ("East Coker" 123, 128), meaning that there is life after death and there is death after life.

To attain permanent peace and happiness in this life and afterlife, Eliot advises us to connect our Self to "the still point," the central point of the universe ("Burnt Norton" 119) which is known as Brahman in the Upanishad. When one attains "the still point," they attain freedom ("*moksha*") from the cycle of life and death. How can we get "the still point?" Shankarāchārya replies: go to the company of good spiritual gurus or saints, which brings refined thoughts and no desire for pleasure, thus, leading to detachment. Detachment leads to "the still point" (the knowledge of the Ultimate Reality) and from "the still point," you will get freedom (*Aadi Sankarāchārya's Bhaja Govindam* 9).

To be free from alienation and loneliness, we must maintain a stable mind. In this connection, the *Katha Upanishad*, the *Pātanjali Yoga Sutras*, and the *Bhagavad Gītā*, they all highlight about the importance of maintaining stable mind through yoga and meditation and the ways to maintain it. What is yoga? They answer that yoga is to control five senses, mind, and intellect (*Katha* 2.3.10-12), to control thought waves by fixing the mind within a center of spiritual consciousness (*Yoga Sutras* 1.1, 3.1), and to maintain evenness of temper in success or failure by renouncing attachment (*Gītā* 2.48).

Unstable mind leads to disintegration, frustration, and anxiety leading to the feelings of alienation and loneliness. Loys Tyson argues that anxiety develops due to any or many of the fears such as the fears of intimacy, abandonment, betrayal, low self-esteem, insecure or unstable sense of self, and Oedipal fixation or complex. If anxiety is not controlled in time, it grows severely or chronically and remains as a core issue of life (17). And it results into permanent alienation and loneliness.

To keep our mind stable, we can meditate on (the shape of) the full moon, especially on the night of the full moon day because moon is the god of mind. In this regard, the Creation Chapter of the *Shukla Yajur Veda* indicates

that in the beginning of the creation of the world, human mind was born out of the Mind of Brahman, the Universal Self (*Rudrāstadhyāi* 2.12). Since our mind gets power from the moon, our mind is supposed to be controlled by the moon or its moonlight (Badarināthashukla 153). In Hindu religious tradition, a particular god or deity is invoked, worshipped, and prayed to remove the particular problem of a particular organ of the body. So, according to this tradition, the moon god is invoked, worshipped, and prayed for good mental health.

Highlighting the importance of the magical effects of the moonlight upon a human body, mind, and soul, the American transcendentalist writer Henry David Thoreau in his essay "Night and Moonlight" writes that the moonlit nights are with "such serene and majestic beauty, so medicinal and fertilizing to the spirit, that methinks a sensitive nature would not devote them to oblivion . . . (232).

Mindfulness is quite necessary for perception and understanding. It is the mind through which one sees and hears, not through the eye and ear, which are only the instruments or medium of sight and sound. So, a person says that my mind was somewhere else, I could not see; my mind was somewhere else, I could not hear (*Bṛihadāranyaka* 1.5.3). Five senses cannot perceive without mind, but the mind can perceive without the five senses. So, our mind is more important than our five senses. The divided mind causes disturbance, but the attentive one, integration and awareness. *Tāmasika* food disturbs our mind. Meat, eggs, fish, liquor, and tobacco are some items of *tāmasika* food.

Five kinds of people cannot get peace: those who steal gold, those who drink wine despite being a Brāhman, those who have sexual intercourse with their teachers' wives, those who kill Brāhmans, and even those who consort with these aforementioned four types of bad people (*Chhāndogya* 5.2.9).

The most important admonition to restore our peace and happiness is given by the *Bṛihadāranyaka Upanishad*. In it, Prajāpati (the Creator of the universe) instructs his three groups of disciples—gods, men, and demons—to be generous but not selfish, to be kind but not violent, and to be self-controlled but not anarchic, indecent, and lustful (5.2.1-3). The same instruction of Prajāpati has been admonished by Lord Krishna to Arjuna in the *Bhagavad Gītā* where He says that desire, anger, and greed are three gates of hell which ruin the soul. Therefore, one should avoid all these three enemies (16.21). Indeed, life becomes meaningful, peaceful, and happy if we can sacrifice something to others, if we can be merciful or compassionate to others by saving other's life, and if we can control our mind and body. We know about the world, but not about ourselves. We are turned outside, not inside.

Therefore, we are meeting our tragedy, alienation, and loneliness.

Imparting us a very secret, beneficial wisdom to us for peace and happiness, the sage Pātanjali tells us to remember this saying: we should behave friendly with the happy, compassionately with the unhappy, delightfully with the virtuous, and indifferently with the wicked (1.33). All the people are not of the same disposition. To acquire undisturbed calmness of mind, one should be tactful while dealing with them.

The food of the Self is meditation, a means to attain peace and happiness. In this regard, the *Mundaka Upanishad* prescribes us to utter the divine sound of OM or to meditate on it in the center of our heart with a single mind to attain peace, happiness, and Brahman (2.2.4). Those who utter its sound ("*udgitha*") with whatever desires, material or spiritual, thinking in mind, can fulfil them (*Chhāndogya* 1.3.12). As a beloved and her lover meet or unite and gratify each other's desire, the same way when a person's divine sound (of OM) and breath are united, they become a pair of lovers and get their desires fulfilled from each other (1.1.6). Besides, they who do such a practice of meditation on OM become able to gratify other fellow human beings' desires also (1.1.7). The equivalent divine sound of OM in Bible is Amen which is uttered at the end of a prayer or hymn at church. These divine sounds have a power to create a pleasant mood in us and pleasant atmosphere around us.

Hence, for peace, happiness, and success, we need to practice yoga and meditation. How can we do yoga and meditation? In reply, the *Shvetāshvatara Upanishad* (2.8-10), the *Bhagavad Gītā* (5.27, 6.11-17), and the *Pātanjali Yoga Sutras* (1.1, 3.1) guide us properly as to the procedures of doing them. When our will-power does not work, we must seek the grace of Brahman or God through yoga, meditation, and prayer, then our alienation and loneliness can reduce or disappear completely. Also, there are other benefits of yoga and meditation as described in the *Shvetāshvatara Upanishad*. It asserts that real yogis will at first find having light body, health, thirstless mind, clear or bright complexion, a beautiful voice, aroma, and scantiness of excretions. They will not be touched by disease, old age, or death (2.11-13).

To cope with alienation and loneliness, we should contemplate on some spiritual wisdoms every day as Gautama Buddha did. Some are mentioned in this paragraph. Our body and world is illusory, transitory, mutable, and destructible. And our relationship is selfish. As Gautama Buddha did, we should contemplate on the physical pain and mental suffering caused by our life, death, disease, and old age. So, we should renunciate our fantasy of getting physical pleasure. In this connection, the *Kaivalya Upanishad* declares that not by work, nor by offspring, nor by wealth, but by renunciation

alone, one can attain immortality, i.e., freedom from the bondage and suffering of life and death (2). One can get peace immediately from the renunciation of the fruit of actions (*Gītā* 12.12). Finally, one has to die and all sorts of their labor become futile. After all, one needs only six feet of land to bury or cremate their dead bodies. This is the ultimate truth.

Mind alone is the cause of one's bondage and freedom. The attached mind to sense-objects leads to bondage whereas the detached mind free from sense-objects leads to freedom (*Brahmabindu* 2). So, we should try to avoid ten mental defects: ego, cruelty, injustice, lust, anger, greed, over pride, jealousy, attachment, and selfishness. Instead, *Manusmṛiti* (6.92) admonishes us to follow the ten qualities of human religion: contentment, forgiveness, self-control, not stealing, purity (of mind, speech, and body), controlling one's senses, conscience, knowledge, truth, and not getting angry (*Suktisudhākara* 107).

We want success, but become frustrated when we do not get it. Frustration leads to alienation and loneliness. So, to achieve success, we need positive thinking. Highlighting the importance of positive thinking, the *Chhāndogya Upanishad* declares that those who desire things with a single or concentrated mind get their desires fulfilled even by determination alone (8.2.10). Therefore, positive thinking is powerful and we need it when we are frustrated.

Giving a solution to our problems of alienation and loneliness, John Cage gives us a spiritual formula for contemplation to find a joy from the perspective of *I Ching* [*Book of Changes*] that is a Chinese spiritual classic, a common source for both Confucian and Taoist philosophy:

One must be disinterested, accept that a sound is a sound and man is a man, give up illusions about ideas of order, expressions of sentiment, and all the rest of our inherited aesthetic claptrap. The highest purpose is to have no purpose at all. This puts one in accord with nature, in her manner of operation. Everyone is in the best seat. Everything we do is music [a thing of pleasure]. Theatre [action] takes place all the time, wherever one is. And art simply facilitates persuading one this is the case. They [I Ching] told me to continue what I was doing, and to spread joy and revolution [through spiritual ideas of disinterestedness, illusions, etc.] (qtd. in McLuhan and Fiore 173).

Here, Cage suggests that disinterestedness, disillusionment, desirelessness, and contentment are the keys to joy to be spread on earth. Desirelessness is to remain in tune with nature. Over-ambition or overthinking is not good. We must enjoy "everything we do" without any displeasure. To feel joyful and

content we need to spread the ancient wisdom of "I Ching," Chinese spirituality, in order to bring change in the world. Then we can be free from alienation and loneliness. And the dream of a global village will be fulfilled. Otherwise, the dream will remain as an irony only.

Conclusion

We are living in a globalized world, connected with each other through transportation and communication technology. The whole world has become like a small village. Now, we can interact and integrate among each other worldwide instantly without spending much time and space. We have access to any kind of intellectual and recreational things. However, ironically, we are feeling alienated and lonely psychologically. Though physically being together, we feel a lack of emotional integrity, security, and happiness due to different kinds of familial, social, and environmental stresses and modern living style. Modern people try to find the solution to these problems by medicine and increasing material means of recreation. But these kinds of measures can bring temporary relief only. To remove suffering, alienation, and loneliness permanently, we have to use the spiritual measures as directed by the significant ancient scriptural texts of the Upanishad, the *Bhagavad Gītā*, and the *Pātanjali Yoga Sutras* and by ancient seers such as Yāgyavalkya, Shankarāchārya, and Gautama Buddha. The spiritual measures are to practice having vegetarian food, yoga, meditation, self-control over one's body and mind, mutual help, philanthropic activities, and non-violence by minimizing worldly desires, anger, and avarice to facilitate our journey to the Self ("Ātmā") for permanent peace and happiness.

To get perpetual peace and happiness, we should keep the spiritual goal ahead of all material ones. First of all, having pure vegetarian food is required. We become what we eat. We should practice ancient virtues of generosity, kindness, and self-restraint over body and mind in place of selfishness, violence, and uncontrolled desires. Contentment with what we have or can do is a key to happiness, which we can get also by minimizing our worldly activities and maximizing our spiritual activities for one's and others' benefit. By avoiding over-ambition and limiting our desires, we can achieve peace and happiness.

Desirelessness is the best medicine that can give us permanent peace and happiness in this life and after this life. We become what we desire. Since the feelings of alienation and loneliness are the psychological problems, they can be cured with the help of the spiritual ideas that work as a medicine for the psychological or emotional diseases like alienation and loneliness. These diseases are rooted in our ideas. When ideas are changed, revolution can take place in our life. Then, we can really become what we think. Thus, the concept

of a global village will be materialized. Otherwise, it will be limited to a theory only, resulting in an irony.

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