

GROWTH

As a part of a whole, the human perch on life is identical to a vine on a stick. Growth happens when the vine adheres to the conditions of the whole.

Though this truth poses as a basic fact, it does well to heed the logic in the following aphorism: **"Boiling water softens potatoes but hardens eggs. What's important is not one's circumstances but one's makeup."** What one is or desires to be on the inside is of great importance for outcome and conditions. It is determinant.

Renowned writer Stefan Zweig (1881-1942) has adequately expressed this desire: **"Once a person discovers themselves, they have nothing on this earth left to lose. And once a person understands the human within them, they have understood all humans..."**

The desired growth is difficult to accomplish if intentions, thoughts, desires, actions, even attitudes are not fixated on the greater good of the whole and do not progress from the **"mind-ego level"** to the **"spirit-heart level"**. It takes time. Which leads to quakes, convulsions, collisions, and sometimes fishtailing.

The material and spiritual growth and enrichment of a person relies on the generosity and work discipline that they exercise in their field of responsibility.

If they have internalized a service-oriented mentality, they gain strength from the spirit. Vital energy courses through their ego and keeps it lit.

If they haven't adopted such a mentality, vital energy turns against them and they fall victim to their self (ego).

A service-oriented mentality necessitates giving back to life, pure and unadulterated, what one receives from it in order to gain more back. If all material and spiritual possessions are monopolized out of greed and laziness, they stagnate. With time, they depreciate and cause impoverishment.

If a watermill refuses to unload its water, it will soon drown itself. However, if the water flows free, it will prove invaluable to the watermill by generating power. Everyone can enjoy ground flour.

The same goes for humans. We are required to give back to life the gifts of divine will as assets toward our own self benefit, altruistic benefit, and individual and social peace. Otherwise, like the watermill, we will inescapably drown in our own water.

The most meaningful and striking words to bear in mind are these, meant to treat the injuries caused by arrogance and haughtiness: **"What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?"** (I Corinthians 4:7).

As it is written, **"Each tree is recognized by its own fruit."** (Luke 6:44). What matters is to preserve moral tenets and retain human values while on our life journeys and orders of service; to fixate on self-love, self-respect, self-compassion, and the moment without putting on airs and resorting to oppression.

During the process of giving back, if a person's service can reach in and touch their spirit, then the words of their mouth, the words they write down, and anything they offer life will be equally valuable and meaningful.

For life is sometimes assignment and duty. And assignment and duty are life. The energy that generates both of them is love. True creative love bears no negative thoughts, meanings, or actions. In the event that it does, moral decay begins to take place.

Lest we forget, people experience the reflection of the light they emit.

Since, at the end of the day, everyone is destined to be buried in their own conscience, whatever we give away, whether good or ill, we give to ourselves. Whatever we do, we do to ourselves.

As an ancient saying goes, **"The quality of timber is determined by its pith; the timber of a man is determined by his words."**

Yusuf Beğtaş