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Nuggets from nature: Lessons offered

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We have been struck hard by nature!

The Coronavirus is consuming us, our mind, our emotions and our very being, shaking the very base of our existence.

Yet I wish to pause for our sake, to look deeper at what is and has happened to us and take lessons that are being offered to us by and from nature.



In so doing, perhaps we may recognize how each of us, whether it be in the manner we wish to live, or organisations as they address their members or homes where we relate with one another, may reorient our thinking.

When we sow seeds in a garden or park, we nourish the soil with nutrients, pour water and wish for the emergence of our desired plant or tree. Yet if after all our effort the tree or plant we wished for does not grow, we DO NOT BLAME the tree and seek instead to examine the manner in which we nurtured the seeds.

In organisations or as people when an individual falters in expected performance we do not analyze the process that may have caused failure, though we may do it later, instead we first blame or fault the person. We dissipate energy and tire ourselves by feeling let down.

When we do not allow ourselves to be disappointed or lose heart when the plant or tree did not blossom and attempt to examine the process that caused failure, what is it in each of us that we quickly rush to blame the person causing pain to self and the other? Would it not help if we train our mind towards exploring cause of failure than immediately blame the individual?

We pick two saplings of a coconut tree from a nursery and plant them alongside. One grows tall and the other does not. When asked by someone why the two trees are different, we defend the trees by telling the person that 'they may be two different varieties' and cannot be compared. We allow for the differences without feeling any less for one or the other. Yet in organisations when two individuals

are involved we compare them. At home we compare one child with another. When we are willing to allow nature its uniqueness what prevents us from doing it for people?

A river flows from its source to the ocean. The path of the river has been furrowed by nature and we appreciate it. To gain from the river we may construct a dam to hold the water. However, when the river swells in monsoon we quickly open the dam and let the water flow, lest it breach and inundate the area around. When individuals in an organisation or in our family feel pressure, we counsel them, sometimes warn them or chastise them, not in both situations realizing that they may only need a 'vent', to let off the pressure. When we do not want a dam to burst it seams and release the water to ease the pressure, what is it about us as people, that we lack EMPATHY for one another when feeling pressured?

We admire the bamboo tree for her resilience, for bending into the wind and not breaking up. We compliment her for being aligned. Yet as individuals in organisations and in our homes when we know it will serve us and the organisation well, if we align, we still resist. What causes us to do so?

When a virus such as the Corona Virus, that is now ravishing us, overwhelms us, we are forced to embrace the uncertainty that envelops us and are enjoined by life to respond. Yet when we are faced with uncertainty in organisations and in our home we tend to react and not respond; we want to dismiss the uncertainty. What makes it hard for us to respond and want certainty in whatever we do rather than seek for clarity?

Every morning the sun rises or shows up at a prescribed hour. Across the World many of us set our day contingent on the hour the sun rises. We admire the Sun for being disciplined and even punctual. Yet as people some of us are unwilling to be so; what causes us not to defy such a possibility of being punctual, dependable and disciplined?

Crops we plant depend on the bounty of nature to help them grow. They do not emphasize their independence nor counter it. They unequivocally establish their interdependence. No attempt is made by crops to prove they can grow and prosper on their own. We know this for ourselves too, that we need one another to bloom, yet we are unwilling to acknowledge it. What prevents us from so doing?

As Gibran, the famous Lebanese author and poet tells us the bee and flower never discount one another; for just as it is the nature of the flower to give out honey, so is it the nature of the bee to suck on the flower; comparison and competition are absent in their co- existence..

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