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## Conversations with self-26

### Self-efficacy, optimism and hope

T. T. Srinath

*The future becomes fascinating, when we have the choice to determine it and the optimism to make it happen*

A Japanese high rope walker, who to earn a living walked at high altitudes across chasms, did so without failing for many years. One day while crossing across a deep gorge he fell to his death. The organisers of the event were struck by the fact that such an accomplished rope walker could lose balance and fall, so they went to his widow and asked her what could have happened. She replied, “During the ten years that he walked the rope he never once asked himself if he could do it. This morning before he set out, he doubtfully asked me, ‘do you think I will cross?’”.

Belief in myself helps me accomplish much. Yet belief in me happens when I have a meaning to live, a purpose to my life.

Where there is purpose there is the belief that I have the choice and can determine my future. Psychologists call such a belief ‘self-efficacy’; the belief in my capabilities to produce desired effects through my actions.

When I am self-efficacious, I am optimistic; I know I will get what I want if put in the effort. This happens because I have hope I will not be let down. Thus my existence is circumscribed by positivity.

Hope, the ingredient that helps me wake up every morning with renewed energy, encourages me to get up and get around. A teacher once asked her class, “What my dear students, is life’s greatest gift to us?” Several students said it was ‘life itself.’ The teacher shook her head and said, “No, it is hope.” The hope that today will be brighter, better and more promising than yesterday, drives me to work. Hope liberates us and gives our life meaning. It takes away ennui from our life, removes meaninglessness and helps us look at the world with positive anticipation.

The future becomes fascinating, when I believe I have the choice to determine it, the optimism to go out and make it happen and the hope that I will be supported. The future thus holds attractive and positive possibilities.

*(The writer is an organisational and behavioural consultant. He can be contacted at [ttsrinath@vsnl.net](mailto:ttsrinath@vsnl.net))*