

It's not the fall that's important but how you dust yourself off and rise again. Turmoil in the world, such as financial crisis, economic downturn and disasters of the worst kind are impacting our world. In times like this we must prepare ourselves to face the challenges, develop the strength within us so that we are better able to ride the waves in high or low.

'Appreciation' is the key to maintaining the equilibrium in life. When people are blessed with success, they should not let success or pride overwhelm their sensibilities, but appreciate and enjoy the benefits that have come with the success. Similarly, when down under, they should not let the feeling of depression overpower their sensibilities, but again appreciate the experiences and lessons that they have gained from their challenges. They should tell themselves that since everything is impermanent, bad too shall become good. The main reason why people get carried away by the ups and downs is because they lack the understanding to appreciate. Without understanding, it is not possible to appreciate.

I do not think that the world is a bad place, though in rough times some people may not agree with this. The reason why I believe so is because the way we respond to a situation can transform our outlook of the situation and the world. For example, when the economy was in better health, we should have focussed on appreciating the happiness that we were enjoying due to financial surplus. And basically we need to understand that genuine happiness comes from the ability to share the joy, if possible, one's own resources, and to bring happiness to others. So by developing the cause of happiness and by appreciating the happi-

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His HOLINESS

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ness, people are investing in happiness so that more happiness will follow. But then again if people do not learn to appreciate, this becomes the poorest part of their lives and the happiness that they get from mundane success will be totally wasted. I believe that investment for a better future can be simply done through appreciation.

It is of the utmost importance that people learn to appreciate; else they will remain unhappy and create stress for themselves. Stress is a result of inflexibility and non-acceptance. In other words, it is caused by strong attachment and expectations. When there is hope or expectation, there is fear that this expectation will not come true or there is a sense of insecurity that makes people worry about losing what they have, that is to say whatever they expect may not happen as they wish. So stress not just makes an entrance but also a big impact. It can also be said that due to a lack of appreciation, people are not grounded and therefore are gambling with their happiness and trying to get lucky. Appreciation will bring the satisfaction and therefore, happiness. After all, we are all living in this world, looking for happiness, aren't we?

Everything we do has a consequence, and I believe that people should not act randomly or be short-sighted for quick and temporary results without understanding the basis of appreciation; this will lead to a lot of hurdles or troubles in their path. For instance if we appreciate our mother earth, ourselves, everyone and everything, we would not want to destroy them and we would value and treasure ourselves, our world and every being on this earth.

Nothing is impossible, so why not put our energies into transforming the negativity into positivity? When people are able to appreciate and learn to live to love, this gift will guard them from failures and guarantee them success and happiness, wherever they go and in whatever they do. Whether the physical world will collapse or not, it does not matter, people's strength garnered through the wisdom from understanding and appreciation will take them through the ups and downs, unscathed and unwounded.