

Personality Development Vis-à-vis the Teaching of Swami Vivekananda**Mamta Sharma, Assistant Professor,****Ansal Technical Campus, Department of humanities,****Sushant Golf City, Lucknow (UP), India.****Prof. (Dr) Sanjay Srivastava, Director,****Ansal Technical Campus, Sushant Golf City****Lucknow (UP), India.**

“God, our Creator, has stored within our minds and personalities, great potential strength and ability....”

APJ Abdul Kalam**(The Times of India, 11th Aug 2015)****ABSTRACT**

The term ‘Personality’ is a major concern for the people of not only urban area but for those too who belong to the rural area of our country. As far as ‘Personality Development’ is concerned, we feel ghettoized because our knowledge is confined and superficial. To develop our personality is in vogue these days because of people’s high and unending personal and professional aspirations and hence personality development training centers that have mushroomed in the nook and the corner are regarded like temples by today’s generation. In this context, I’d like to mention here that personality development is not about being proficient in a foreign language other than your native language or having an exquisite non-verbal communication; or being familiar with the advanced technology or gadgets etc because it talks about our outside skill development only. But this term deals with human values, ethical and moral values. So this is not a new-fangled perspective as Swami Vivekananda’s viewpoints pertaining to personality development are quite old yet unique. According to whom, all strength lies inside us that is required to give a ‘Midas Touch’ to our personality. So in the present materialistic and chaotic world, when people are so ignorant to not to peep into their conscience, my research paper could be helpful to some extent.

Key words: personality ghettoized, knowledge, superficial, mushroomed, human virtues, ethical, conscience.

Introduction:

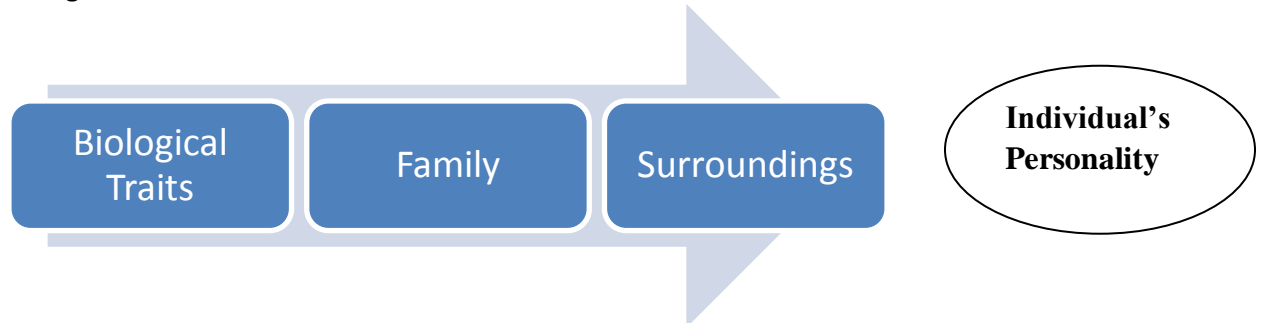
In the present scenario, everybody comprehends the value of personality development since this is a must. But without knowing the traits of a personality, it’ll not be a cakewalk to develop it. The aim of my research paper is to explain the nitty-gritty of personality and its interpretation by Vivekananda. I wish to clear the air that personality development is not a new coined term; it’s a term that has grabbed

people's attention in recent years because of the changing professional world. To own an impressive personality is a substantial issue for the survival in this era of cut throat competition. Vivekananda gave entirely different understanding of personality and ways to develop it. According to him, it's a rigorous process and can be achieved possibly if we are determined. Swami Vivekananda who was named Naren in his pre-monastic days was born in Calcutta on Monday, 12 Jan, 1863. Since his childhood, he had entirely different fervor towards life as he was an avid reader and interested in the spiritual matters. He criticized the superstitions prevailing in the Hindu religion since during his college, he **'studied and absorbed western thought, and this implanted a spirit of critical inquiry in his mind.'** (1) Life is a long process of learning and the experience that acquire every day lays the foundation of a considerable life. The term Personality is derived from the **Latin Persona which means Mask**. According to the **Oxford Dictionary**, the term **Personality means the qualities that form a person's character**. Psychologists study several various aspects related to an individual's life that make his personality. **"Personality" is a dynamic and organized set of characteristics possessed by a person that uniquely influences their environment, cognitions, emotions, motivations, and behavioral science in various situations.** (2)

Three Traits:

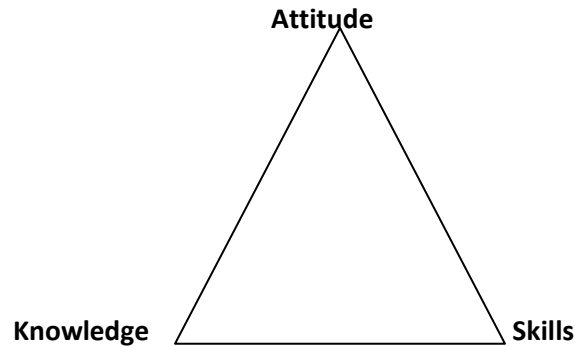
If we cast a glance on the study established by modern management we find three broad aspects that are essential to make a personality. These aspects are: Character, Behavioural traits and attitude. Apart from the character, behavior and attitude, there are some other factors also that set an individual's personality.

- 1) **Biological Traits:**
- 2) **Family**
- 3) **Surroundings**



So the trait or qualities that we inherit from our parents decide our personality up to a certain level but our surroundings and outside world also have a profound impression on an individual's character which molds his entire life.

I consider that personality comprises several aspects in it but if we study the content available specifically on this issue, **I figure out two broad concepts: our IQ and EQ which stands for Intelligence quotient and Emotional Quotient respectively;** both these terms are pivotal in building up our personality. Hence this is as clear as crystal that our knowledge makes us free from bondage and is essential for our personal and professional continued existence where as our interpersonal skills provide us a unique persona which doesn't have any duplicate blueprint of it. Apart from these two significant aspects, an individual's insight about a particular situation or life reveals how sound personality he has.



Right Attitude: “.....All the work you do is subjective, is done for your own benefit...” As per the Oxford Dictionary, the term Attitude means a way of thinking, a posture of the body, (informal) self confidence or behavior. So our entire life depends on how we perceive the things. If we have positive attitude, we will leave no stone unturned to achieve our goal but negative attitude often ruins the possibilities and even the opportunities as well. If person has precise proportion of positive attitude and working in the right direction, nothing can prevent him to achieve his desired goal. **“A positive attitude and will to concentrate on the work can help you achieve great heights.” Pg 78, lines: 6-7 (3)**

Now the question arises how right attitude contributes to one’s personality. **Swami Vivekananda asserts that negative attitude makes a person weak** and such person is not capable of achieving the desirable goals in his life. This quality needs to be inculcated in a person since his childhood then only he’ll grow up as an optimist. Along with the positive attitude, he’ll have several other virtues such as a caring nature, self-confidence, smartness and skill to live his life successfully. An optimist will come through the bad phase of his life invincible and never gets involved in the despicable means to achieve materialistic things. In the present scenario, our society requires such people badly to weed out the tribulations and to establish a peaceful environment.

Behave like the Pearl Oyster:

There’s an Indian fable to the effect that an oyster keeps waiting for the rain in star Swati since this is time when the water drop becomes a pearl when it falls in an oyster’s body. Hence it comes in the shallow water when this star shines and as soon as it rains and the water drop falls on him, he closes his shells and dives down to the bottom of the sea. There he waits for that drop to develop into the pearl. According to swami Vivekananda, we’ll have to behave and be patient like oysters only. **“First hear, then understand, and then, leaving all distractions, shut your minds to outside influences, and devote yourselves to developing the truth within you.” Lines 8-10 Pg 16** He also says **“Take one thing up and do it, and see the end of it, and before you have seen the end, do not give it up. He who can become mad with an idea, he alone sees the light.” Lines 12-15, Pg 16** Perseverance and endeavour are two heavenly virtues that can provide one the best personality. One must have patience to wait for the right opportunity to come in his way and should keep working on his skills that are important to achieve that opportunity.

Get rid of “I”:

Youth is suffering from the sense of self importance which creates lots of problems for them. Ego which means a person’s sense of his own value make an individual so arrogant and snobbish that he stops

considering the importance of others around him. It is an **“illusive mental phenomenon”** which makes a person aloof and afar from the reality of life. **(4)**

As I mentioned above our life is a long and complex process of acquiring knowledge and this exaggeration of self hampers our way to knowledge without which our personality is incomplete. According to Vivekananda, **“..... The adamantine wall that shuts us in is egoism; we refer everything to ourselves, thinking I do this, that and the other. Get rid of this puny “I”; kill this diabolism in us; “not I but Thou”- say it, feel it, live it. Until we give up the world manufactured by the ego, never can we enter the kingdom of heaven.” Lines 16-20, Pg 24 “.....The power is with the silent ones, who only live and love and then withdraw their personality. They never say “me” and “mine”; they are only blessed in being instruments. Such men are the makers of Christ and Buddhas. ...” Lines 21-24, pg 24**

“The Lord has hidden himself best, and his work is best: so he, who hides himself best, accomplishes most. Conquer yourself and the whole universe is yours.” Lines 26-28, Pg 24 If we wish to have better personality, we'll have to learn to win our egoism firsts since this feeling lessens our strength and competence to perform a task. We can make our personality unique with godly virtues such as politeness, humanity, sympathy; empathy and humble nature enhance the impact of our personality manifold since these virtues help us to understand how others be it a mountain or an ant; everything and everybody around us is important.

Secret of future:

“....Unto him comes everything who does not care for anything. Fortune is like a flirt; she cares not for him who wants her....” Pg 25, Lines 1-2 This should be the *‘Mulmantra’* for everything. In the present scenario, people are running after success, wealth and position but they have forgotten to listen to their inner voice which is mandatory for acquiring all the belongings. So if the real personality development is to shape your strength, caliber and capabilities which can make us reach the summit. Since money comes to masters automatically and not to the slaves.

Give up all weaknesses and Superstitions:

We should be logical in all the endeavours of our lives. **“....This I lay down as the first essential in all I teach: anything that brings spiritual, mental, or physical weakness, touch it or not with the toes of your feet....” Pg 28-29, lines: 28-1** Weakness is death and bravery is life as since birth till death, we keep struggling for our existence. The moment we find ourselves weak, we drive ourselves far from life. So living a life of cowardice will lead us to nowhere. No matter how knowledgeable, bright or positive we are, we can't move ahead to our goal. If we really wish to have a dynamic personality, we should take a resolution to live devoid of fear and apprehensions.

Face the hardships:

“....Once when I was in Varanasi, I was passing through a place where there was a large tank of water on one side and a high wall on the other. It was in the grounds where there were many monkeys. The monkeys of Varanasi are huge brutes and are sometimes surly. They now took it into their heads not to allow me to pass through their streets, so they howled and shrieked and clutched at my feet as I passed. As they pressed closer, I began to bite at me. It seemed impossible to escape, but just then I met a stranger who called out to me, “Face the brutes”. I turned and faced the monkeys, and they fell back and finally fled....” Pg: 29- 30, Lines: last to 1st Para. So according to Swamiji, no matter how tough the situation is, we must face the brute for there's no escape unless we confront the brute with valour. Winners never give up, they are not frightened of face even the worst on their way to success. Brave

and generous people are crowned with success. Success is drawn by the human virtues that we inculcate in us.

Bear willingly and be patient:

“...a mosquito sat along on the horn of a certain Bull. I have been sitting here a long time, perhaps I annoy you, I am sorry, I will go away.” But the bull, replied, “Oh, no, not at all! Bring your whole family and live on my horn; what can you do to me? Bring your whole family and live on my horn; what can you do to me?” Why can we not say that to misery....? Endurance and perseverance play a vital role in our personality development and in laying a firm foundation of a strong character. But presently these qualities are lacking in the youth of our country.

Know your divinity:

Vivekananda believes in how all strength comes from within and we need not to seek for it outside. Once while talking to one of the monks who were travelling in the Himalayas, Swamiji said, **“The road that is under your feet is the road that you have passed over and is the same road that you see before you; it will soon be under your feet.”** His statement suggests that we, the humans can achieve everything if we have yearning to do something in our lives since we a great source of light within us which if recognised well, can mentor us to through even the dark also.

Sense of duty:

Performing one’s duty whole heartedly is a divine aspect of one’s personality. **“Every duty is holy, and devotion to duty is the highest form of the worship of God.” Lines 25-26, pg: 33** The youth today grumble a lot for they feel that they and their caliber is under estimated hence the assigned task is not according to their skills. But we should not keep reminding ourselves that **“...if one has some capacity above another; the world will find that too...” pg 34** No work can be performed well without interest and these small things make or mar your personality. If a person grumbles his lot all the time without relishing his duty, he has been assigned to he will never achieve success in his life. **“.....to the grumblers all duties are distasteful; nothing will ever satisfy him and his whole life is doomed to prove a failure.” Pg 34** Each and every work is important be it small or enormous, simple or complex so this is a key to an impressive personality and a successful career.

Slow and steady wins the race:

“.....Anyone will be in a great position! Even the coward will grow brave in the glare of the footlights. The world looks on. Whose heart will not throb? Whose pulse will not quicken, till he can do his best? More and more the true greatness seems to me that of the worm, doing its duty silently, steadily from moment to moment, and hour to hour.” Pg 33

We have heard about the fable of a rabbit and a tortoise which gives us the moral that slow and steady wins the race. So keep working to achieve our goals and endeavoring to acquire knowledge and skills should be our main concern. Only dreaming about our goals can’t usher us to goals, proper guidance and rigorous training is required to get the pinnacle. Constructing something is a long and painful process but the end result is always fruitful and satisfying.

Don't pick the holes in others always:

Here I'd like to mention that we've lots of power in ourselves but we are unable to recognize it. If we fail to accomplish some task, we start blaming the outside world, people, circumstances and nature of task etc but we never make efforts to peep inside us. It's good to worth our salt but hiding the weak points of our personality weaken our strength. As Swami Vivekananda says, **".....I have no control of the external world, but that which is in me and nearer unto me, my own world is in my control. If the two together are necessary to give me a blow, I will not contribute the one which is in my keeping; and how then can the blow come? If I get real control of myself, the blow will never come."** Pg 35 It's significant here to observe ourselves to figure out the faults that hamper our progress and should try to train us in such way so that the positive aspects of our personality overcome the weaker ones. Though it's not easy to find our own faults because we need lots of courage and honesty for this work yet it's not an impossible task.

We create our own fortune:

"Our Karma determines what we deserve and what we can assimilate. We are responsible for what we are; and whatever we wish ourselves to be, we have the power to make ourselves. If what we are now has been the result of our past actions, it certainly follows whatever we wish to be in future can be produced by our present actions; so we have to know how to act...." Lines 23-28, pg: 36

The magic is in ourselves and it's very unfortunate that we don't know this fact. The lord has endowed us with the wonderful qualities that make humans superior from the other animals. We have this excellent gift of life which can be molded as we wish for it to be. If we set some goals and predetermined to achieve them, even divine powers also support us to do so. The only need is to channelize our thought process and to make appropriate efforts towards the goal accomplishment.

'How to establish good character:

".....Man is, as it were, a center, and is attracting all the powers of the universe towards himself, and in this center is fusing them all and again sending them off in a big current." Lines: 23-25, Pg 37

Character is **"the mental and moral qualities distinctive to an individual."** And these qualities make an individual unique and different from the masses. In the present scenario, human life has transformed entirely and there's no certain yardstick for the human values and virtues. It was the character of Lincoln, Mother Teresa and Gandhi that gave them a new height and reputation at the international level. A man of good character is at ease even at the time of pressure also. Actually character of a person is judged at difficult situations. It is character only that lay the foundation of a successful and impressive personality since it imbibes confidence in an individual.

Power of Self Control:

Today's young generation is undergoing problems because of its lack of self restraint power. Young people are devoid of patience, self control and desire to acquire materialistic wealth for which they don't even hesitate to adopt vile means. Annoyance, anger, quarrel, hatred and jealousy etc have contorted their personality for they work as the root cause of all the problems. **"Every wave of passion restrained is a balance in your favour. It is therefore good policy not to return anger for anger, as with all true morality. Christ said, "Resist not Evil", and we do not understand if until we discover that it is not only moral but actually the best policy, for anger is loss of energy to the man who displays it. You**

should not allow your minds to come into those brain-combinations of anger and hatred.” Lines 15-19, Pg: 39 Those who have learnt how to work in an adverse circumstance calmly and peacefully, they are skilled at the power of self restraint and turn out to be invincible in all the situations.

Conclusion:

In the present cut throat competitive era, when people are misled and misguided by the glittering materialistic world, it's really wonderful to follow the teachings of Vivekananda that usher us to the right path. Presently young people are deviating from the right path and are the victim of depression, several crimes, lie and immorality etc. Hence to develop our personality in the real sense has become mandatory. So indeed the suitable time has come when people, especially the youth should ponder about their internal virtues because a sound character and determined will power can make their lives meaningful and will prepare them for the upcoming challenges in their lives. The law of Universe is 'what goes around comes around' and Swamiji believed in this rule. Here's the poem through which I've explained personality in a real sense:

**Personality,
A practice to sympathy,
To feel for humanity;
To act in empathy,
To be far from vanity;**

**Personality,
Bubbling with Confidence,
And crammed with prudence;
Fills you with lots of exuberance,
Gets you ready to fight with turbulence.
This is our personality.
This shows your originality,
Mirrors your humility;
Gives you morality in this world of immorality.**

References:

- (1) Personality Development, compiled by Mananeeya Eknathji Ranade)
- (2) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personality_psychology
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