

THOUGHT CRAFT

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What is essential?

My grandson, a delightful child aged five, is always full of smiles and good cheer. He trotted in from school one day, joyful as usual, and announced "I love everyone, including the people I don't know!" "But there are so many people in the world," I replied. "How will you find space in your heart for all of them?"

"Love never finishes," he declared condescendingly, and went away to play.

His words reminded me, in a way, of a book that I am sure some of us know extremely well, "The Little Prince," by Antoine de Saint-Exupery. The story can be read at many levels, both as an allegory and a simple tale for children of an innocent golden-haired child who falls from a star or small planet (remember this is fiction!) and embarks on an odyssey of discovery to other planets.

The little Prince was on a search for meaning and experience. He encountered, in the persona of the people he saw on other planets, various human qualities such as greed, vanity, duty and responsibility, among other things.

When at length he returned to planet Earth, the wise fox in the story told the little Prince a secret that in fact he had already learned: firstly, that "it is only with the heart that one can see rightly," and secondly, "that what is essential is invisible to the eye."

The Little Prince realised anew that he already possessed the most important thing in life, which was a heart full of love, for a rose that grew on his planet.

This story is a reminder to all of us of what is essential — moral values, love in the widest sense of the word, and the ability to introspect and reason before we make choices.

We adults lose our way sometimes, and have to

relearn from our little ones that love and goodness come with us when we are born, and are always present inside us. They are the lodestars and moral compasses of our being, and represent all the finest and most precious qualities of the human spirit: compassion, forgiveness, generosity and charity.

For the time that we are here, we have the option to choose the paths we take, but also accept responsibility for the consequences of our choices. We assume that all normal people will make different, but virtuous choices.

Yet, these days, virtuous choices have been replaced by a dystopian reality. Instead of our evolving into more enlightened souls trying to create a better world, some of us seem to be regressing and turning our world into a place where goodness has been almost forgotten.

Tribalism, racism, hatred and bigotry seem to be on the rise. If left to fester, these negative forces will feed upon themselves and grow. In the face of this invidious spread of evil, we too will be complicit if we practice apathy, and accept passively what is taking place in the world at present.

While we cannot combat the negativity and ignorance of those who value hate over better instincts, and the cynical greed of those who have constructed entire empires built on avarice, cynicism and destruction, we can counter these pernicious forces in part by adhering to our own integrity, sound moral values, and the unshakeable belief that we can help bring out, by the example of our own actions, the essential goodness that is inherent in others.

We owe it to our children and grandchildren to strive constantly, during our lifetime, to change the ugliness of the present, and leave for them a better world than we know today.

#PRESS RELEASE

The Westin Dhaka introduces amazing new offers



To escape the daily monotony, The Westin Dhaka introduces 'Full Board Staycation and Daycation' offers for families.

Families wishing to stay out for a night can avail the 'Full Board Staycation' package which includes one-night stay in a deluxe room, buffet breakfast, set lunch and dinner at Seasonal Tastes, access to gym and swimming pool and many other exclusive benefits for 2 adults and 2 children. The package is priced at Tk 15,000 net.

Families craving a day outing can enjoy the 'Full Board Daycation' package, which includes buffet breakfast, set lunch and dinner at Seasonal Tastes, access to gym and swimming pool and many other extra benefits for 2 adults and 2 children. The package is priced at Tk 9,999 Net.

All the above offers are upgradeable and is available for a limited time only. To book the offer or to know more, guests are requested to call +880222291988 – The Westin Dhaka's new hotline number.

Giving full priority to the safety and security of the guests and associates The Westin Dhaka has introduced "Commitment to Clean," an all-encompassing programme to ensure World Class cleaning and sanitisation standards to instil a heightened sense of safety, security, comfort and confidence in guests.

HOROSCOPE

**ARIES**
(MAR. 21-APR. 20)

Avoid joint ventures. Look into new ways of making money. Your partner can get on your nerves. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.

**TAURUS**
(APR. 21-MAY 21)

Work diligently on responsibilities. You need a change of pace. Insincere gestures of friendliness are likely to occur. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.

**GEMINI**
(MAY 22-JUN. 21)

Your determination will pay off. Focus on improving yourself. Work quietly behind the scenes. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.

**CANCER**
(JUN. 22-JUL. 22)

Quit getting on everyone's nerves. Involve yourself in group endeavours. Take care of any minor ailments. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.

**LEO**
(JUL. 23-AUG. 22)

Make your intentions clear. Communications with loved ones may be strained. Don't neglect your partner. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.

**VIRGO**
(AUG. 23-SEP. 23)

Changes in your professional position are evident. Find an outlet to ease your mind. Make time for loved ones. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.

**LIBRA**
(SEP. 24-OCT. 23)

Deception is apparent. Do things that provide enjoyment. Problems with colleagues are evident. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.

**SCORPIO**
(OCT. 24-NOV. 21)

Act on your instincts. Your co-workers won't be on your side. Sort out differences in an amiable manner. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.

**SAGITTARIUS**
(NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

You need some rest. Reciprocate by offering helpful hints. Disputes at home are likely. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.

**CAPRICORN**
(DEC. 22-JAN. 20)

Be wary of deception. Let others have free reign. Travel will be fun and entertaining. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.

**AQUARIUS**
(JAN. 21-FEB. 19)

Don't get talked into anything. Time to make some crucial decisions. Don't overspend too much on travel. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.

**PISCES**
(FEB. 20-MAR. 20)

Re-evaluate what is important in life. Social events will lead to new friendships. Don't make large investments. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.