



***"Greater energy and greater passion is more extraordinary than greater genius."***

**— Lt. General Arjun Ray, (Retd.), PVSM, VSM**

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**Dear Friends,**

### **Self-Actualization of Children**

Maslow believed that children cannot be self-actualized because their lower order needs outweigh all other considerations. He studied the lives of only extraordinary leaders like Einstein and Eleanor Roosevelt, rather than ordinary persons. I think Maslow got it wrong. We have hundreds of examples of poor children who are self-actualized and have been recognized as change-agents. If the world is to be sustainable, children must be motivated and trained to be change-agents. In this regard, they have distinct advantages over adults, in particular:

1. Imagination
2. More receptive to change than adults
3. Greater moral sense of what is right and wrong
4. Creativity
5. Empathy
6. Idealism

In the late 60s and 1970, a path breaking experiment in will power was conducted in Stanford University, popularly known as the Stanford Marshmallow Experiment. Four-year old children were given one marshmallow and promised that if they could resist eating it for 15 minutes, they would get a second marshmallow. 70 percent of the children ate the marshmallow.

The follow-up study was done after many years and the results were startling. Those who ate the marshmallow were found to be generally unsuccessful in their marriages and relationships; they had low SAT scores; low self-esteem; and were not doing too well in their career. On the other hand, those who did not eat the marshmallow, were successful in their career, exercised discipline and self-control, and were academically good.

The outcome of the Marshmallow Experiment underscores the following lessons in leadership:

- One must resist smaller rewards to receive greater ones later.
- Delayed gratification is a habit and a skill that is trainable.
- Training for leadership and preparation for life must start as early as possible.
- You cannot be a visionary if you succumb to instant gratification, which is all about a short term mentality, and the lack of patience and self-control. Today's Millennial Generation wants everything now, this very moment. So they look for quick fixes.

Leadership is about individuality first, and teams later. Change begins with one person, the leader. It is the leader who makes the difference. History is replete with examples of great leaders who transformed the world. The world experienced one Buddha, one Jesus, and one Prophet Muhammad.

On 6 June 2010, a 28 year old Egyptian techie, Khaled Said, was arrested in the city of Alexandria and brutally murdered by two police officers. His battered face went viral and was seen by a Google employee in Dubai. He was Wael Ghonim. Angered by what he saw, Wael created a Facebook page on him with the title, "*We are all Khaled Said.*" Khaled Said instantly became the symbol of the Egyptian Revolution that took just 17 days to overthrow a dictator, who had ruled the country with an iron hand for over 40 years.

Leadership development must, therefore, start with the **Power of One**. Each child has the power to make a difference. They can do this by advocacy of any social cause that affects children like illiteracy and malnutrition. By saving their pocket money each child can support another child. When children do what we are suggesting, they will discover themselves and become what they are capable of becoming.

With warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Arjun Ray". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

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Chief Executive Officer  
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