Compassion key to tackle AIDS

Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev

IF A life has to grow into its full form, it needs a body that corresponds to its needs. If we have to take our body and our life to a higher level, then we must take conscious action.

It is possible that for some reason—a disease or an injury—there may be a situation in which life cannot function in its fullness. There have been developments in science and medicine, but even so, there exist several diseases for which there are no remedies. Even as we go on inventing new remedies, nature keeps posing us new challenges. After a while, when everyone has understood how to fight these challenges, then it is no longer such a big issue.

Human body may have lost the power to resist diseases, but the resistance to diseases in society is increasing. We must decrease the resistance in society and increase the resistance in our body. Currently, there is a lot of hostility towards persons infected with HIV. This is mainly due to lack of understanding: How people get infected, how it spreads from one person to another and what we could do about it?

Some people fear that one may even get infected by just looking at a HIV+ patient. To go beyond this fear, we need to spread awareness. One sees no such deep hostility in the Western countries because people there have gained the necessary understanding about this disease.

There are many diseases which affect a man and cause him to suffer. It is not that he suffers only because he is infected by HIV. If you look at it, HIV itself is not a disease. It is the loss of immunity in the body that weakens it and takes away its ability to resist other diseases. If you look around, everybody does not have the same level of immunity.

HIV/AIDS is no longer just a medical problem, but a social crisis in the making. At one time, we thought that in a country like India the disease would not spread rapidly because of strong social codes. Obviously, we have been wrong in that assumption. The fact that today even the rural population is getting infected means there are many aspects of the society which we have not understood. Ultimately, living sensibly is the only solution. It is important that people who are infected with HIV, act responsibly and carefully.

Even for those with HIV, if one maintains life energies in an intense state, immunity and the power to resist diseases can be increased to a great extent. One may not be able to restore it completely, but one can increase it to a large extent. If one pays attention to how one eats, breathes, acts and lives, one can increase the power to resist this disease. When there is suffering, what caused it is not important. There is no such thing as one kind of suffering being greater and another kind of suffering being small. It is not right to think that if one suffers from cancer you should give him love and if another suffers from AIDS you must not give him love.

When the Tsunami happened, everyone was reaching out. I do not understand why people are not reaching out to tackle the HIV situation in the same way.

Clearly, compassion cannot choose...

— SADHGURU JAGGI VASDEEV is a yogi and spiritual master. He is the founder of the Isha Foundation