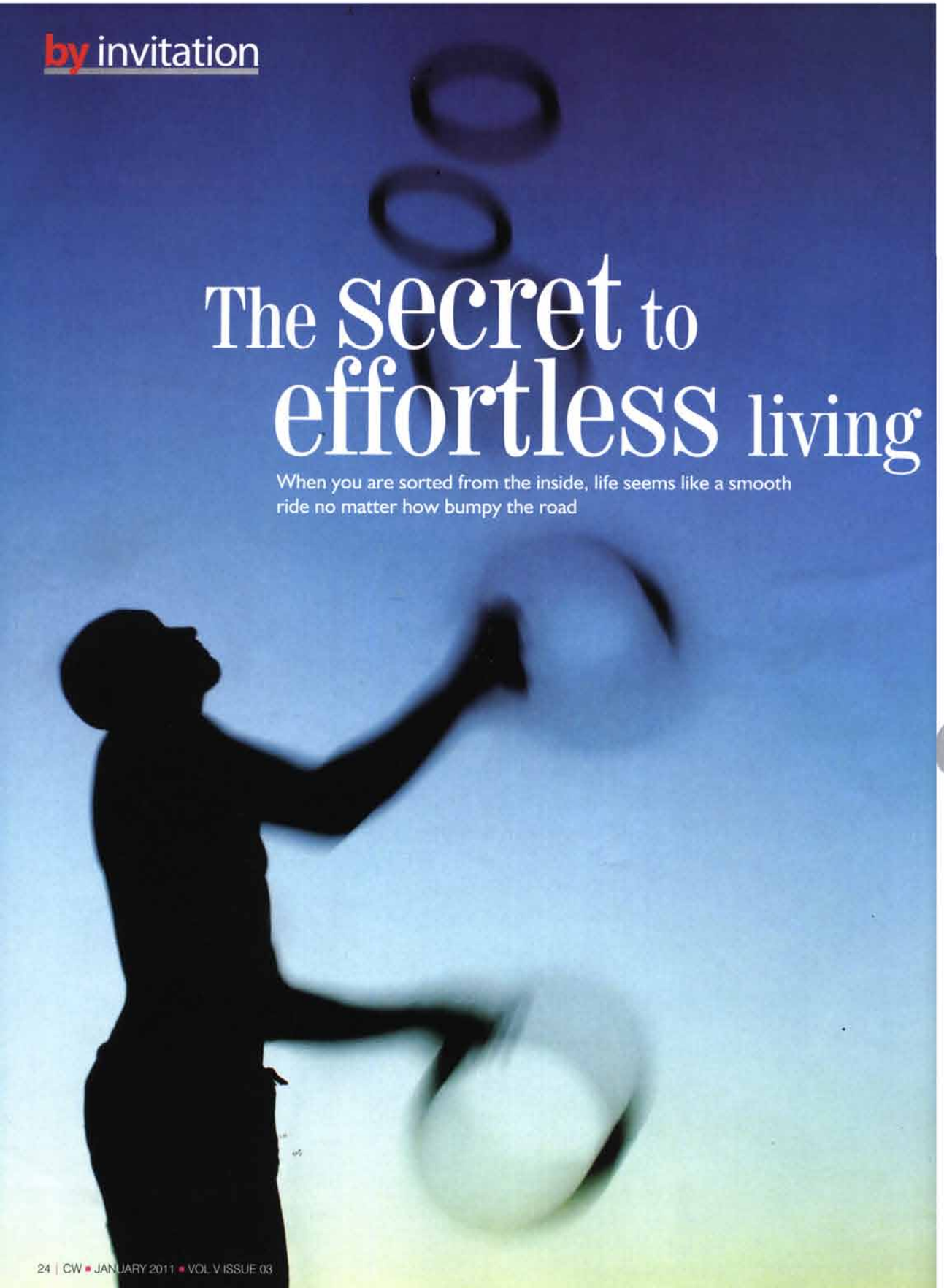
by invitation

The secret to effortless living

When you are sorted from the inside, life seems like a smooth ride no matter how bumpy the road



There was a time when survival for a human being meant food and shelter. Today, food and shelter are getting more and more complicated and expensive. It is fine to have all those things but they should not become the determining factors of your life. What kind of food you eat, what kind of clothes you wear, what kind of home you live in—each one organises these things according to his capability but they should not become limiting factors; they are only the supporting factors of your life. Whether you travelled from your home to your office on foot or on a bicycle or in a Maruti or a Mercedes, it is just a question of different people's financial capabilities, choice and opportunity.

The important thing is you got there; the means of travel is only incidental. This is true with every aspect of your life. But the incidental factors have taken on such phenomenal importance that the basic thing about life has been completely forgotten. The process has become more important than the real thing. We are trying to graduate from one material thing to another because we believe that is happiness.

> Before taking on anything in your life, ask yourself: are you willing to pay the price?

Don't follow the herd

It is in pursuit of happiness that you do the entire circus in your life. Different people may have different ideas about how to get there, but everybody is in pursuit of happiness. The human race has been doing so much to achieve happiness and wellbeing on this planet that in this pursuit, we are destroying the very planet on which we live. We must first understand what our idea of wealth is. Is it just about more buildings, more machines, more cars, more… everything?

If I go to the West and ask them, "Why don't you meditate?" the common retort is, "Oh but we've got to pay bills." I say, "Why do you guys generate so many bills? If your whole life is about paying bills, why generate them? You can curtail yourself and live more comfortably, isn't it? To pay those bills, you are just working endlessly. What's the point?" The answer often is, "everyone is doing it." It doesn't matter; they are all driven by somebody else. You don't try to do what somebody else does. When it comes to outside situations, we have not come with equal capabilities. No two human beings are made with the same level of capability. There maybe somebody who can do a thousand things in a day without suffering or being stressed. Maybe you can do only three things in a day; it's okay.

Limit juggling to what you can

Life places us in many situations where managing things is like juggling. For example, being in the family is a big juggling process. Keep your emotions aside and just look at it sincerely. Our lives have many complex activities. We have various types of relationships and various levels of involvement with different types of people on a day-to-day basis. We are constantly shifting from one type of relationship to another. Initially, maybe you were just juggling with two balls and it was quite simple.

Then you picked up more balls and the juggling became complicated. When you want to take up more activity, there will be more juggling. You can't help it; that's the way it is. So once you take to juggling, you had better develop some skill. Otherwise, the balls will be scattered all over the place and you will be freaking out every day because you can't hold things in place. How smoothly you carry your life simply depends on the level of mastery you have over juggling. This moment you may be on the phone with your business partner and the next moment you may be talking to your wife or your child. Life is like this; it is constantly shifting. You can't just tune yourself: "Ok, right now I am going to be like this." So, because of the complexity of this adjustment, if you happen to treat your wife like you treat your business partner, immediately you will be in trouble. Or if you treat your business partner like your wife, you will be in trouble, isn't it?

So before we enter any situation, you must look at your ability to juggle. "Can I juggle all this and still be happy or will I get lost in the process of juggling?" If you are not much of a juggler, you better remain alone and juggle yourself. Everything comes with a certain pain and pleasure. There is a price to pay in every aspect of life.

So before taking on anything in your life, you must ask yourself: are you willing to pay the price? Every human being has to decide how much of what is right

for him. Your neighbour may have a 100-bedroom house—maybe he likes to live in a hotel. For yourself, you must decide how much you need. You don't do things like him. This is the biggest problem; we are trying to do things like somebody else. That's the wrong way to approach life. We need to decide how much of what we should do in our lives—how much outside activity or inner wellbeing or social wellbeing would keep our life balanced without ruining us and the atmosphere around us. Unfortunately, such intelligence is missing in the world; we are just going rampant. It is insane the way we are going because the kind of lifestyle the world has chosen is just not sustainable.

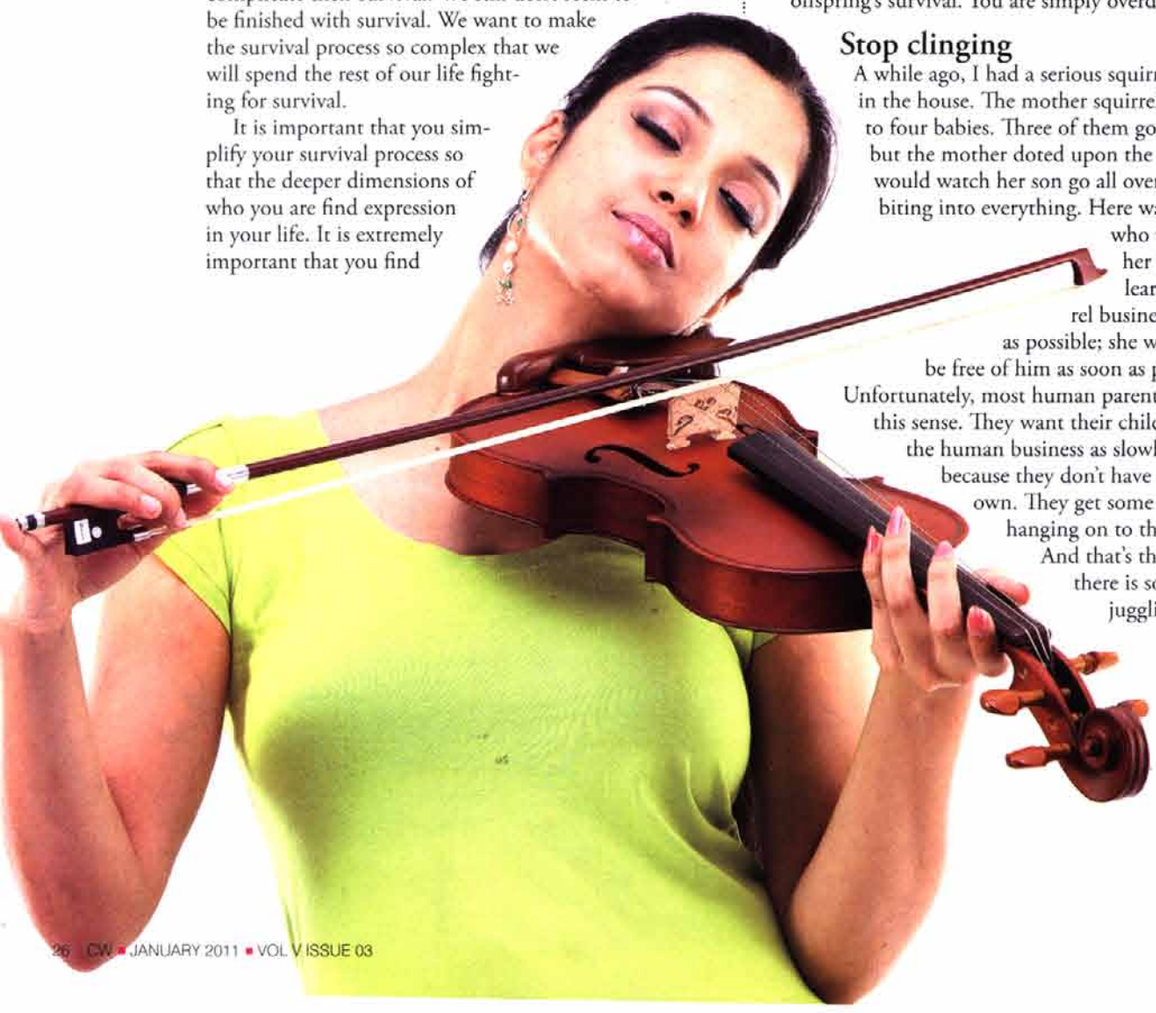
Don't die surviving

Today, if you have enough money, you can go into a store and buy everything that you need for a whole year. It has never been like that on this planet. Survival has always been a great struggle. But now, for the first time, the survival process has become totally organised. Now is the time to find expression to deeper dimensions of being a human. Unfortunately, most people choose to complicate their survival. We still don't seem to be finished with survival. We want to make the survival process so complex that we will spend the rest of our life fighting for survival.

It is important that you simplify your survival process so that the deeper dimensions of who you are find expression in your life. It is extremely important that you find out what it means to just sit here and reverberate as a piece of life because that is the ultimate ecstasy of being here. And now that our survival is generally taken care of, I think we must cause a wave of bliss wherever we go. And because we don't do that, we conclude that a human being means being a miserable, useless 'nothing'.

When you use the expression, "Oh, I'm just human," it means, "I'm just helpless nonsense." We need to change the context of what it means to be human. When somebody says, "I'm human" he must mean "I'm ecstatic. I'm capable of wonderful things within myself." We've chosen to make a human being into a miserable worm who just fights for his survival throughout his life. We are capable of organising our survival in such a way that we don't have to struggle for survival on a daily basis—unless we complicate the survival process.

For most human beings, the survival process itself is becoming a full-time job. Just to earn a living, to reproduce and to die one day, what a fuss they make! Even a worm and an insect with their minute brains handle their survival quite well. Nature has given every human substantial intelligence to take care of his and his offspring's survival. You are simply overdoing it.



Stop clinging

A while ago, I had a serious squirrel problem in the house. The mother squirrel gave birth to four babies. Three of them got eaten up but the mother doted upon the last one. She would watch her son go all over my things, biting into everything. Here was a mother who was eager for her little one to learn its squirrel business as quickly as possible; she wanted to be free of him as soon as possible. Unfortunately, most human parents don't have this sense. They want their children to learn the human business as slowly as possible because they don't have a life of their own. They get some life only by hanging on to their children. And that's the reason there is so much juggling. Human beings claim to be the most intelligent species. Then our children should be free of their parents much faster than anybody else, isn't it? But that doesn't happen because we look at our children as a capital based on which we can live our future lives—when we are alive and also after we are dead. It is because of this that the juggling seems so much of a hassle; not otherwise. Family is not the problem; your own insecurity and your own 'want' to cling to things around you is the real problem.

Don't do anything for fulfilment

Human life does not end with survival; it begins only when survival is taken care of. If we had come to this planet like any other creature, then eating, sleeping, reproducing and dying one day would have been a complete process by itself. Even as a human you need to do all these things. But somehow for humans life doesn't seem to be fulfilled with them. Whatever action you may have performed, life has not attained fulfilment. In every stage of your life you think, "If this happens, my life will become complete." As a child you thought, "If I get this toy, my life will be complete." You got it but after three days, you threw it away. Life did not attain fulfilment.

Then you thought that if you complete your education, life would be complete. That too happened but there was no fulfilment. Then you began to think, "What's the use of working like a donkey? If only I get married to that man or woman I love, my life would be made." That happened and then you know what happened.

Fulfilment does not come because of some action you perform. Only if your inner nature is complete, will your life attain fulfilment. Right now, the human condition is such that without knowing anything about the nature of his existence, you are trying to make a living and somehow pass through the world. Your body, mind, emotion and energies are the vehicles through which you travel through your life. Without any understanding, control or subjective experience about them, you are trying to live your life. This is an accidental existence. When you exist accidentally, even if you manage to get somewhere in life, it will only be by accident. So, when a person is going through his whole life in an accidental manner, experiencing anxiety, fear and struggle is natural. Then we go about saying, "Life is a struggle." Life is not a struggle.

Get a grip on yourself

You are getting stressed out simply because you don't know how to function smoothly within yourself. You have no control over your own system. If your mind, body and energies were taking instructions from you and behaving the way you wanted them to, you wouldn't get stressed no matter what was happening around you. You need to do something about this. If this does not happen, you will continue living life by accident and always be hoping that situations work out.

Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev

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If you are seeking to expand the scope and play of your life, if you are seeking challenging situations, then you have to do something about the way you function. Challenging situations mean that you will face situations that you have no clue about. If you are the kind who gets stressed, naturally you will avoid those situations.

When you avoid those situations, you will naturally avoid all possible growth for yourself. Today, so many people are getting into challenging jobs and are multitasking, but a large number of them may not be naturally equipped to handle such situations. This is why we see so many people losing their effectiveness and just breaking up in the process of pursuing their careers—succumbing to burnouts.

If you are constantly looking for challenges in your life, and you don't equip yourself with an inner stability and an inner sense of joy within yourself by your own nature, you are bound to become a disaster over a period of time. You may be successful in your career but as a human you would have failed because you cannot enjoy the process of life. Such people are no longer joyful or peaceful; they have become stressful. If you are stressful, that means in some way you have failed yourself, isn't it?

When you fine-tune yourself to such a point that the

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fundamental faculties function so beautifully within you, then naturally the best of your abilities will just flow out of you. If you really want to bring quality into your life and to perpetuate that quality into life around you, the first and foremost thing that you need to do is to establish your inner realities in a certain way with a certain stability. What is within you—your mind, your emotions and your system should not go through upheavals when facing the challenges of life. Only when there are no inner upheavals and issues can you handle the outside issues well.

Take the first step

So is there a way to create an inner situation? Yes. As there is a science and technology to creating external situations the way we want them, we have a whole science and technology to create inner situations the way we want them. As we have engineered the world, we can also engineer our interiority. Without it, we end up functioning by accident.

The first and foremost step that every human being should take is: equip yourself to make yourself the way you want to be. If this happens, creating the outside will become effortless. You tell me, when can you use your mind and body well? When you are happy or unhappy? When you are happy you can effortlessly handle things, but when you are stressed or unhappy, the same little things freak you out. If you are joyful, going up a mountain is also effortless, isn't it? It may take a lot of physical effort, but you feel it's effortless because you are doing it joyfully. When you are doing it joylessly, everything is burdensome. When you are doing it joyfully, everything is effortless.

Effortless does not mean lying on a couch. When I say effortless, I am saying, once you get into a certain state of pleasantness within yourself, once you are joyful by your own nature, everything is effortless. When you are happy, you are willing to run around and do everything because you don't feel the effort of it. Effortlessness does not mean lethargy; effortlessness means that in your experience, it's not burdensome.

Once a person is at ease within himself, naturally he functions at his best. Bringing this sense of ease, bringing this sense of effortlessness within you is essential. So, if you truly want to enhance the quality of your life, you have to take this step and be willing to invest a little bit of time for your inner wellbeing. If this is done, you will see a remarkable change in the way you function. The necessary technology is there—I call it Inner Engineering, the peak of wellbeing.

Inner Engineering is just this, that you engineer your interiority so that you function effortlessly within yourself. This does not mean you avoid challenging situations. When you are effortless within you, you seek them. Inner Engineering means you learn how to conduct this piece of life. If you know how to conduct it, then according to your ability, you can also conduct the outside effortlessly.

If your wellbeing is constantly under threat, you will not handle the outside well. If you want to handle everything well on the outside, if you want to be successful in your life, you must simply learn how to use these four limbs and a few brain cells; that's all that's needed. How vibrant and focused your mind is, how vibrant and healthy your body is, that's what decides how successful you are.

Stay Well

Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev, lovingly called, 'Sadhguru' is a yogi and profound mystic, visionary humanitarian, and a prominent spiritual leader. A contemporary Guru, who is as comfortable in jeans as in a loincloth, Sadhguru works tirelessly towards the physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing of all.