

**The People in our Lives:  
Everyday Psychology**

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**Dr Gagandeep Kaur**



**Highbrow Scribes Publications**  
New Delhi

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## **Dedication**

This book is dedicated to my parents.  
Brigadier K.S. Mander: Papa, you went  
too soon.

Mrs Jaswinder Kaur: Mama, I miss you  
every single day. You taught me what  
love was.

I hope I make you proud.  
Till we meet again.

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To my readers, thank you for embarking on this journey with me. Your support and enthusiasm are the driving forces behind every word written. I hope this book stirs your hearts and ignites your passions. And lastly, a big shout out to my family for supporting all my endeavours.

Happy reading!

## About the Author

Dr Gagandeep Kaur is both a Doctor and a Health and Wellness Coach. Having completed her medical degree from Pune University and has over 20 years of experience in the medical field, Dr Gagandeep Kaur is passionate about the need for a more holistic approach towards treating a person rather than just giving medication for a particular disease.

This approach is what has led her to explore the various aspects of a person and has motivated her to write this book. She is on a constant endeavour to find ways to improve oneself and live a more meaningful life on earth hoping to make a positive change, however small, to the lives of people she has touched.

## Introduction

Why did I write this book?

The answer lies in all the life I have lived so far.

The earliest memories I have are as an eight-year-old playing hide and seek with my friends in our house. A lot of memories persist after that..... randomly related to some events, a movie, a function, happy occasions, getting scolded, crying, feeling lost, unhappy, excited and a wide range of emotions. The most common thread in all these events are the people I can see and feel in those memories. As an only child of a mother who was socially a recluse, I did not learn much about people and how they behave till much later. It took me years to understand a person's intentions and I still make mistakes. After my parents passed, it took me time to find myself and realize that the bliss my mother felt in her solitude was what all of us are searching for eventually. Every person is unique, no two people will think alike. This is my attempt to make sense of this crazy world and to finally heal. I am hoping that by understanding how people work, I may see some understanding of the things they do and why. Though not an extensive study it is my first attempt to help myself and others.



## CHAPTER 1

# Life

The cycle of birth and life is Nature's phenomenon and as human beings, we are tied to this vicious cycle. The beauty of this life is that we do not know for how many years we shall live on this planet yet it is our hope and belief that keeps us going.

We spend the majority of our lives doing mundane chores to fulfil our basic needs like bathing, eating, sleeping, education, job, marriage, shopping, etc. Amidst these endeavours, we shall go through a new experience each day – happiness, sadness, perils, betrayal, mistakes, learnings, triumphs, etc. – not necessary in this order. Irrespective of the roles we play as a child, spouse, parent and professional, these experiences shall always remain a part of our lives.

Gradually, as we progress in life, we gain intellect and wisdom and we realise that in the end, only one thing matters the most in life – relationships.

No matter whether you own an expensive car, a sprawling mansion and a seven-figure bank balance, if you have no one to share your endeavours, your life is fruitless.

Happiness is the core element to a healthy living. Sadness and loneliness are our foes. So how can we make our journey worth living? It is through living the moment, acknowledging different experiences and acquiring new learnings. Is this possible without having people around you and engineering a relationship? You already know the answer.

As a medical student, I was constantly studying the human body and mind. A patient will share the symptoms. However, there are signs that as a doctor, I can see without a patient sharing with me their physical or mental ailments. By examining a patient's mind and body, I can diagnose the root cause of the problem.

I feel that in practical life too we consciously or unknowingly perceive others based on our knowledge and understanding. People communicate by sharing stories, gossip, personal experiences, memories, etc. With patience and an unbiased mind, you must learn to observe and understand the other person's point of view. This will not only help you to come to a better conclusion but also strengthen your bond with them. Such an experience will become a blessing.

Every situation has consequences which depend upon your reaction. Greeting someone in the room with a smile irrespective of whether the person is good or bad, makes a big difference in your life. You earn compassion no matter if the other person does not reciprocate.

I am not dictating to you to follow any thumb

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rule. I want you to be in complete control of your situation rather than being controlled.

I started this book by talking about the vicious cycle of birth and death. Most of you may not agree with me but I strongly believe in this theory that we all have a soul and our body is the medium to go through the cycle of life and death.

I consider a soul to be an energy belonging to a higher realm. We are sent in our mortal bodies to learn and elevate ourselves to the ultimate level where we will then merge with our source and will no longer need to come back as a human being. In simple terms – to fulfil our karmic cycle. No matter which religion we follow, our scriptures and holy texts always talk of a higher energy guiding us.

We may define our rebirth as a reincarnation of the soul and our death as going back to our Maker. In each cycle of birth and death, there is a new opportunity to learn how to live our lives better in that particular epoch.

Talking about divine energy may seem a dichotomy to science which was my subject when I was striving to become a doctor. However, I believe that there are certain realms which are beyond the reach of science and can only be comprehended through experiences.

I envision the body as a medium to travel through the time I am on earth. As mortal beings, we are mostly obsessed with worldly possessions – money, luxury, comfort, status – and we remain entangled

in this maze. And when we reflect upon our life lived so far, we realise that we have never utilised our time efficiently and now our end is near. Many such books have been written on the ethics of living.

We have discussed how to elevate our karma, the energy we accumulate throughout our lives. Over the centuries, the human condition has been studied from many perspectives. Medical sciences have examined the ailments of the body and mind, seeking ways to cure illnesses. Astronomy has endeavoured to study the planets and the moon, seeking answers to why certain phenomena occur. Psychology aims to understand and explain behaviours. Human beings are capable of performing acts of great kindness as well as committing horrific deeds against each other and themselves.

What prompts us to take certain actions? Where do we come from? Where do we go ultimately? No one has a precise answer because we cannot interact with those who have left for their heavenly abode.

We live our lives with hope and belief. Our culture teaches us that our life is karma which is divided into good and bad. If we lead an honest and spiritual life, we shall find a place in heaven. Those who are dishonest and commit sins shall rot in hell.

To me, all life leads to this hope: the hope that I can become a better version of myself through learning and the hope that I can make my life worthy of my time here on Earth.

## CHAPTER 2

### Who am I?

Who am I? This is the simplest question with a complex answer. Can we truly define our identity? If you respond that I am a child, parent, spouse, sibling, professional, etc., these all are the different roles that we play in our everyday lives.

Then how can we define ourselves? By understanding our purpose in life, working on our mission and fulfilling our responsibilities in society. Can we accomplish them without supporting one another? Definitely not.

Life is all about meeting people from different walks of life while we are treading on our path to achieve our goals. Some will become our lifetime companions. Some will act as our advisors and teach us a lesson. While some will meet us only once. These relationships will determine the quality of our life.

A single mistake is enough to ruin your relationship and cause eternal heartbreak. Does it mean that this will happen one day or the other? Absolutely not!

As I have said in the beginning, once we understand ourselves, we will learn to empathise with others. This will not only help us to handle



everyday situations but will also help us to understand ourselves much better.

Now if I ask you who are you? Your answer could be – I am a body, a soul or a person. There is no precise definition to describe anyone,

The dictionary defines a person as a human being regarded as an individual.

It might sound vague but that is how the theory goes. A person is said to have both physical (tangible) and intangible existence. Our body and sense organs help to define our physical form while our mind is without any form and it can only be felt through awareness and experience.

What about consciousness and soul? It depends upon our beliefs. They are not visible yet they are a part of our being.

It is also true that more than the physical presence it is always the nonphysical mind that will play the biggest role in a person's life.

Combining both our body and mind, there is one organ that determines our every move and action – Our Brain.

A brain is defined as the organ within the skull that controls movements, thoughts, memories and feelings.

Then what is the role of the mind? The mind is the mechanism that signals the brain to perceive, think, feel and react.

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The brain is treated by neurosurgeons and neuro physicians while the mind is studied and treated by a psychiatrist or a psychologist. The major difference between the two is that the brain has a physical presence. It can be seen, touched and operated upon. It has different parts like the cerebellum, cerebrum and brain stem. The cerebrum is the part of the brain which is responsible for our sensory, motor and higher functions. Damage to the brain can result in a marked change in the quality of life one leads. This is why the physical well-being of the brain is paramount.

The mind on the other hand can only be studied through a person's thoughts, reactions and memory. There is no physical presence of any of these yet they exist. A change in the quality of a person's mind can also have far-reaching consequences on their own well-being as well as their life with others. The mind thus is equally important.

Mind is defined as that part of a person that thinks, Imagines, remembers and takes action. It is what makes a person capable of doing things in the world.

Psychologists have classified the mind into the conscious and the subconscious mind. The conscious mind creates awareness and the ability to think and remember. The subconscious mind may not always be actively used. It comprises our perceptions, thoughts, expectations and biased behaviour. These attributes are what make a person.

Each person holds distinct attributes based on the various factors in their lives. This is what makes life interesting. You can never predict what a person will say or do when faced with a certain situation. Sometimes you may not even be able to predict your reactions.

We often talk about the longevity of our life. Death is inevitable and unpredictable yet we still wonder about our life span.

A life span can be defined as the time between birth and death. The average life expectancy over the years has gradually risen between seventy and seventy-five years. This is because of a number of reasons like safer environments, improved medical resources, better nutrition and many other factors. In the early centuries, the issues were always about survival against the environment or disease; this has gradually changed. Most of us will live a life close to our life expectancy unless killed in an accident, natural disaster or due to a fatal medical condition. The challenge now has come to be about how to have a better quality of life. This extends to most areas of our day-to-day living. We want to have a higher standard of living, eat healthy food, have better health and also happy relationships. We constantly strive for this. We educate ourselves, we get jobs or start a business, we meditate, we exercise and perform lots of other activities. We work to make ourselves and others better.

As human beings, we need to understand that each of our lives is but a journey. An individual



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journey towards a higher and better self. We cannot be more than a witness to each other's lives.

Parents are a means for the soul to reincarnate onto this earth and live its life span.

A sibling is a companion who from their birth is joined to us by karmic bonds that have resulted in us having the same set of parents.

A spouse is but a witness to our journey and an energy being who will help to bring more souls into this life, connected to us through old connections.

In the end, each of us is alone. Why did I say this?

We may support each other, we may help each other and be there for each other but the suffering whether physical or mental is yours alone. No matter how close you are, you cannot feel their physical pain. You can hold their hand and comfort them but that is as far as you can go. The sooner we understand this the easier and better it is for us.

Since time immemorial, humans have been interested in studying other humans. How does the body and mind work? What causes disease? Why do some people get sick and die earlier while others live a long life? These are some of the questions that have been raised over many decades. Interest in the human mind and body has been documented in ancient civilizations. Cultures throughout history have given birth to many inquisitive minds who made attempts to answer these questions. This led to the development of the various branches of science.