

Reflections



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Bad is quick, good takes time

HAVE we ever stopped to think why we learn 'bad' things quickly while 'good' behaviour takes time and effort?

If we want to develop our physique we need to exercise for prolonged periods but we don't need to do much to develop obesity. Addictions are easy, entertaining and quick but recovery is difficult, draining and slow.

If we want to lead a healthy life, we need to maintain a nutritious diet but a piece of rotten meat can bring our good health to a standstill within hours. A healthy person can immediately die from the smell of certain poisons but there is no opposite cure to quickly bring a dying person back to life. We can be quick to lose our temper but it takes time to calm down. It takes little effort and

time to talk nonsense but real concentration to speak sense.

Why is it that 'bad' is quick while the 'good' takes time?

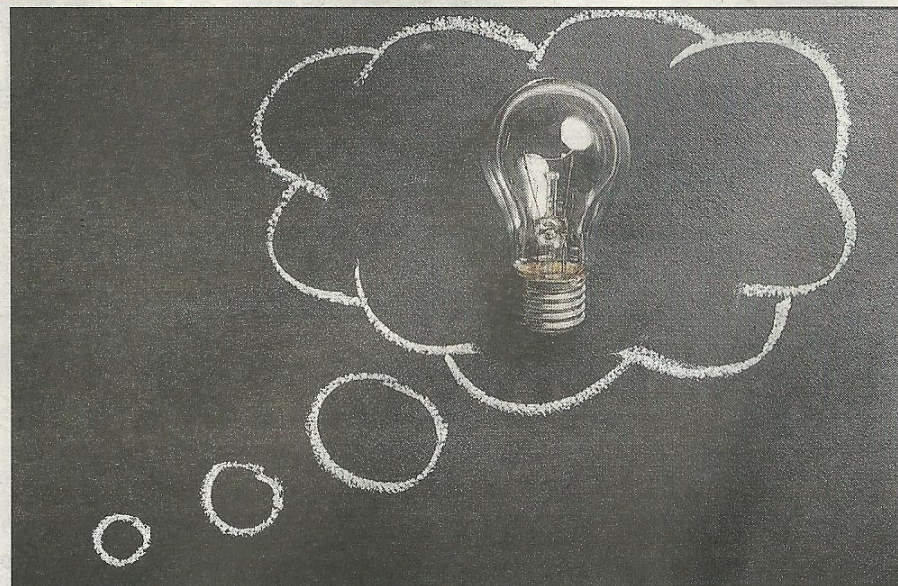
The brain has one system of thinking fast that is instinctive and emotional, while another slow form is more deliberative and logical (*Thinking, Fast and Slow*).

Darwin's evolutionary principles of 'survival of the fittest' and 'natural selection' indicate that the most used primary emotions are anger and fear-related. These have dominated humans for many millennia but the civilised society into which we have evolved fosters other emotions such as happiness, surprise, sadness, embarrassment, guilt and pride.

Although anger and fear were instrumental in our early evolution, they are considered somewhat detrimental to our current civilisation. They are, however, quick and easy habits as they have been around so much longer than other emotions. As the saying goes, 'old habits die hard', and it is difficult to change such embedded emotions.

We are still evolving. We need to concentrate on more deliberative thinking in order to reverse things so that we become quicker at 'good' and slower at 'bad'.

Brain plasticity is the lasting change to the brain throughout an individual's life course and shows that our brains are ready,



even for structural change, in response to a changing environment.

Let us work to

create environments that are good, safe, healthy and holy. Even if we don't see the benefits of 'good'

coming naturally quicker, let us at least hope that future generations will reap the fruits of our hard

labour. 'Do your duty without expecting any reward for your labour' (Bhagavat Gita).