

**1. We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.**  
**Comment.**

**Introduction**

Aristotle also said, “These virtues are formed in man by his doing the right actions.” To bring these two selections together, philosopher and historian Will Durant elegantly clarified their communion by stating between them, “We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.”

**Body**

“Repetition is the mother of learning, the father of action, which makes it the architect of accomplishment.” (Zig Ziglar). This quote shoes the importance of the repetitive activities

Repetition can be powerful in three ways. First, as we repeat something, like a sports move or a piano piece, we move toward mastering it. Second, we can accomplish a giant task with frequent small actions toward the goal. Third, repetition creates habits.

**Significance of the quote:**

- **Perseverance:** Excellence is what that has been continuously overcome the constraints and loopholes. It is neither a one top shot nor embracing a zenith rather its reaching to a state where you balance your deeds, duty and authority. Example: Nelson Mandela was in island jail for 27 years and then he became the president of South Africa.
- **Subconscious level:** The subconscious mind regards the words and thoughts that get lodged inside it as expressing and describing a real situation, and therefore endeavours to align the words and thoughts with reality. It works diligently to make these words and thoughts a reality in the life of the person saying or thinking them. Example: Rich becomes richer and poor becomes the poorer concept.
- **Perfect practice:** Practice helps us in avoiding errors and completes the task with perfection. Action performed with proper planning and regular practice leads a person towards perfect performance. Example: Bruce Lee said “I fear not the man who has practiced 10,000 kicks once, but I fear the man who has practiced one kick 10,000 times”
- **Karmayoga:** The intention when practicing karma yoga is to give selflessly for the good of others without thought of one's self or attachment to the results of one's actions. Example: Saalumara Thimmakka growing close to 400 Banyan trees, and nurturing them as her children, on a 4km stretch between Hulikal and Kudur in Karnataka.
- **Habits:** Habit serves as a means for doing morally good or evil actions. Sometimes it causes actions which are neither good nor evil. In the first case

it is called good nature, or virtue. Example: Generosity, bravery, gentleness depends on how we cultivate day by day.

- **Patience:** Patience allows us to suspend judgment long enough to make informed decisions, thus paving the path to a happy and peaceful life. Example: freedom movement by freedom fighters for attaining independence.

### Conclusion

Perseverance is the key to success, thus Swami Vivekananda rightly said “Take up one idea. Make that one idea your life - think of it, dream of it, and live on that idea. Let the brain, muscles, nerves, every part of your body, be full of that idea, and just leave every other idea alone. This is the way to success.”

**2. The strongest is never strong enough to be always the master, unless he transforms strength into right, and obedience into duty. Elucidate.**

### Introduction

The above lines are written by **Jean-Jacques Rousseau** in his book "**social contract**". His political philosophy influenced the progress of the Enlightenment throughout Europe, as well as aspects of the French Revolution and the development of modern political, economic and educational thought.

### Body

- In the Social Contract Rousseau discusses the best way to run a state and uses philosophical arguments to argue his case. He also uses the ideas of force, right and freedom to support his argument. He feels we require a civil state, as opposed to living in the state of nature, as 'it substitutes justice for instinct and gives his actions a moral quality'.
- He believed that it is not right that you should obey someone just because of force and that for the state to be run properly **the power it has must be legitimate.**
- He says 'authority is legitimate if the person (or institution) possesses the right to command others', in other words, authority cannot use naked force to command obedience.
- He also believed that 'to be legitimate, the authority the state has over the people must come from the people themselves, and not from a single person such as the king.'
- To prove the point that might do not equal right, that is that 'because you can force me to obey you, is it right that I should obey you?', Rousseau uses

the example of 'The strongest is never strong enough to be master all the time, unless he transforms force into right and obedience into duty....**Force is a physical power**; I fail to see what morality can result from its effects.'

- In other words, unless the authority is legitimate and the people feel obliged to obey, rather than forced to obey when the authority is absent, the people 'will not necessarily obey'.
- Rousseau's "social contract" discusses the corruptness of non-democratic form of government.
- 1780's **France** was characterised by unjustly high taxes and wealthy monarchy because of which people faced serious economic difficulties. People were influenced by ideas of Rousseau and Voltaire, which finally led to dethroning of the king by Famous French Revolution.
- **Arab spring**: Modern times are no different. The wind of change swept Northern Africa and middle east countries like Tunisia, Libya, Syria etc., recently. Though the issues were not completely the same, living under a dictatorial regime is tantamount to the same abuse of power as the unequal distribution of wealth.

### Conclusion

In recent times, there is unemployment, harsh rural poverty and rapidly rising prices. But, the rich are growing richer and richer. Democracy is being gnawed away to the point that the ruling hegemony and the rich should bear Rousseau's words in mind and keep a sharp look over their shoulders lest another French revolution awaits.

### 3. They who can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety. Comment

#### Introduction

The above quote is given by Benjamin Franklin in line with the conditions prevalent in Pennsylvania, USA. Liberty refers to the state of being free within the society from oppressive restrictions imposed by authority on one's way of life, behaviour, or political views.

#### Body

Franklin's line plays on the idea that liberty is the thing we would be protecting by choosing safety. In opting to give up liberty in favour of safety, we are essentially gaining nothing. This statement is against the idea of social contract theory given by Thomas Hobbes.

If we get into the history, after the Reichstag Fire of 1933 the German people, in a move that was to prove pivotal in the establishment of a Nazi dictatorship, submitted to a repression that resulted in the suspension of all civil liberties, ostensibly to safeguard the national security. Hitler – having been Chancellor for a mere four weeks – was able to ensure that such a decree was passed by convincing people that the communist party represented a major threat, and his success demonstrated not only how susceptible human nature is to the fear of danger and civil unrest, but also how effectively those in power can capitalise on this susceptibility in order to deprive people of fundamental rights.

The above mentioned quote became point of contention post the 9/11 attack, the government of US has made strict monitoring of data and invaded privacy aimed at ensuring national security. Post 9/11 attacks many surveys held showed that majority of people were ready to give up elements of civil liberty for national security. Even the recent notification by Ministry of Home Affairs, which seeks to monitor data has sparked of similar debate.

The plight of Indian workers in Arab too can be noted here. Many aiming for better life are subjected to harassment by the owners. International communities have time and again been vocal about such issues. Same goes with the lives of refugees, how they are subjected to harassment and oppression, when they seek support of refugee nation (Syria and few African nations).

Raif Badawi, human rights activist, promotes secular and scientific thinking was arrested by Saudi Arabia officials, in the name of national security. He highlights the restrictions imposed on Saudi women, shows how oppressive authority could be and how they oppose liberty to protect their stereotypes.

The global human rights communities have been vocal on North Korea, where people are under a regime that doesn't provide basic freedom and are subjected to poor living and oppression.

But again, sometimes it might be necessary for national interest to protect the state from any possible terrorist attacks. During Emergency, people might have to give up few essential liberties, to protect themselves from external harm. Again depends on the type of government, how they restore the liberties post such situation.

### **Conclusion**

John Locke speaks about natural rights to social contract theory, where he stresses on states duty to protect the natural rights (Right to life, liberty and property). A universal concept of liberty does not exist. As citizens of a democratic state, we must decide for ourselves what our own essential liberty should be; we must find our own balance between a security which does not compromise our fundamental rights and a freedom which does not lay us bare to attack. In the face of increasing threats to our national and international security, we can only hope that we are able to remain committed to our convictions, not allowing them to become distorted by fear or the

threat of danger in such a way as to permit us to sacrifice one thing for the sake of the other; for only through true freedom can true security exist.

#### **Additional Examples**

Can mention about bonded labour (Brick kiln industry in Tamilnadu), Asia Bibi blasphemy case and data privacy issues etc.

#### **4. Discuss the contribution of various philosophers in the evolution of democratic principles.**

##### **Introduction:**

The term "democracy" first appeared in ancient Greek political and philosophical thought. The original Greek word "Demokratia" means the common people (demos) rule (Kratos).

##### **Body:**

Throughout history, democracy has been an evolution. The democratic principle continues to evolve, and with democracy, there are multiple ideas in action. Various philosophers contributed to the evolution of democratic principles, some are discussed below:

**Freedom by Aristotle** (384BC – 322 BC) for Aristotle the underlying principle of democracy is freedom, since only in a democracy can the citizens have a share in freedom. In essence, he argues that this is what every democracy should make its aim.

**Equality by John Locke** (1632-1704) John Locke made important contributions to the theory of liberal democracy. In his "The two treatises of the government" Locke argued that a government's right to rule must be based on the consent of its people. Locke emphasised the idea of a 'social contract' – power sanctioned by the people. Locke also emphasised that all men were equal – at a time when societies were very hierarchical.

**Separation of power by Baron de Montesquieu** (1689 – 1755) Montesquieu advocated for 'separation of powers' and other democratic principles. In his *The Spirit of the Laws* (1748), he distinguished democracy from other types of government.

**Representative Democracy by Jean Jacques Rousseau** (1712 – 1778) Rousseau was a Genevan philosopher who wrote *The Social Contract* – an influential political tract which argued for the government through representation – ideally through direct democracy. Rousseau's democratic ideals were influential in the French Revolution.

**Republican government by Thomas Paine (1737- 1809)** Thomas Paine powerfully argued for the democratic-republican government. Paine's writings were influential in inspiring the American Revolution. Paine wanted to see an end to executive tyranny and felt the extension of political power to all was the best way to achieve this.

**Republicanism by Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826)** Thomas Jefferson believed in the principle of republicanism. The idea that all citizens should partake in the democratic activity and help prevent abuses of power. Jefferson drafted the US Declaration of Independence, which stated: "All men are created equal"

**Universal suffrage and liberty by J.S. Mill (1806-1873)** John Stuart Mill was a leading liberal philosopher of the Nineteenth Century. He argued for universal suffrage (extending the vote to women and all classes of people) Mill also expounded the principle of liberty – which is an important principle of liberal democracy.

**Accountability by Karl Popper (1902- 1994)** He defined democracy in contrast to dictatorship or tyranny, thus focusing on opportunities for the people to control their leaders and to oust them without the need for a revolution.

#### **Conclusion:**

In recent centuries, democracy has included principles such as liberty, equality and individual freedom. Given the rise in population size, direct democracy is rarely practised; instead, democracy tends to involve elected representatives. Arguably, there are no 'perfect democracies' – But, some societies are more democratic than others.

#### **5. Love does not claim possession, but gives freedom. What meaning did you derive out of this statement?**

##### **Introduction:**

Love is a selfless act of unconditional care and affection directed towards a person, object or even something abstract. It has little to do with what you are expecting to get and more with what you are expecting to give – which is everything. Rabindranath Tagore here talks about two intertwined important necessities of life- love and freedom.

##### **Body:**

- Love by nature is an unconditional act; hence ideally it should free us from the expectations inherent in an otherwise transactional human relationship

existing all around us. In view of this, when a person loves truly, he/she emanates a sense of freedom, a liberated environment for the other person to grow and exist.

- When love does not claim possession, it exists as a beautiful engagement of motivation, respect and admiration for the receiving person or the object. For example: Relationships between youngsters, respect for teachers and parents etc.
- The privilege of freedom associated with love can be seen in different societal institutions:
  - A mother's love for her children is all encompassing, with no expectations of return, helping them grow, giving them free choices, freedom to learn from actions, all of it while being a protective parent. If a mother were to think her child is her possession, there are unrealistic expectations on the child, and a rigid existence with no freedom to learn and take decisions on their own.
  - Relationships between a husband and wife, life partners often flourish and spread harmony and happiness when there is freedom between the two. A partner who treats the other as a possession, restricting their choices, actions, and decisions is indirectly hampering the overall betterment of the person or their relationship.
- There are frequent instances where a misguided idea of love often results in a false exertion of possession and leads to extremities:
  - There are cases of murder, harm and crimes due to love gone bitter or wrong, arising out of feelings of possession of the other.
  - Retarding the growth of an individual, development of his/her full capacity, due to narrow ideas of love and protectiveness.
  - Suffering inflicted due to actions of vengeance and payback by partners, parents and friends.

**Conclusion:**

Love is truly realised when linked not to possession of the other but to submission of the self. It should enable an individual to feel content and be accepting of one another, paving way for a peaceful co-existence, rather than curbing freedom and base their actions on the lines of possessiveness and misunderstood idea of love.