

SEVEN DEADLY SINS AS PER MAHATMA GANDHI

"Dr. Stephen R. Covey - one of the world's leading management consultants and author of the bestselling books. He provides consultancy services to Fortune 500 companies as well as thousands of small and mid-size companies, educational institutions, government, and other organisations world-wide.

Mahatma Gandhi said that seven things will destroy us. Notice that all of them have to do with social and political conditions. Note also that the antidote of each of these "deadly sins" is an explicit external standard or something that is based on natural principles and laws,

**Wealth Without Work
Pleasure Without Conscience
Knowledge Without Character
Commerce (Business) Without Morality (Ethics)
Science Without Humanity
Religion Without Sacrifice
Politics Without Principle**

Wealth Without Work

This refers to the practice of getting something for nothing - manipulating markets and assets so you don't have to work or produce added value, just manipulate people and things. Today there are professions built around making wealth without working, making much money without paying taxes, benefiting from free government programs without carrying a fair share of the financial burdens, and enjoying all the perks of citizenship of country and membership of corporation without assuming any of the risk or responsibility.

Pleasure Without Conscience

The chief query of the immature, greedy, selfish, and sensuous has always been, "What's in it for me? Will this please me? Will it ease me?" Lately many people seem to want these pleasures without conscience or sense of responsibility, even abandoning or utterly neglecting spouses and children in the name of doing their thing. To learn to give and take, to live selflessly, to be sensitive, to be considerate, is our challenge. Otherwise, there is no sense of social responsibility or accountability in our pleasurable activities.

Knowledge without Character

As dangerous as a little knowledge is, even more dangerous is much knowledge without a strong, principled character. Purely intellectual development without commensurate internal character development makes as much sense as putting a high-powered sports car in the hands of a teenager who is high on drugs. Yet

all too often in the academic world, that's exactly what we do by not focusing on the character development of young people.

One of the reasons I'm excited about taking the Seven Habits into the schools is that it is character education. Some people don't like character education because, they say, "that's your value system." But you can get a common set of values that everyone agrees on. It is not that difficult to decide, for example, that kindness, fairness, dignity, contribution, and integrity are worth keeping. No one will fight you on those. So, let's start with values that are unarguable and infuse them in our education system and in our corporate training and development programs. Let's achieve a better balance between the development of character and intellect.

The people who are transforming education today are doing it by building consensus around a common set of principles, values, and priorities and debunking the high degree of specialization, departmentalization, and partisan politics.

Commerce (Business) Without Morality (Ethics)

Moral Sentiment, which preceded Wealth of Nations, Adam Smith explained how foundational to the success of our systems is the moral foundation: how we treat each other, the spirit of benevolence, of service, of contribution. If we ignore the moral foundation and allow economic systems to operate without moral foundation and without continued education, we will soon create an amoral, if not immoral, society and business. Economic and political systems are ultimately based on a moral foundation

Science Without Humanity

If science becomes all technique and technology, it quickly degenerates into man against humanity. Technologies come from the paradigms of science. And if there's very little understanding of the higher human purposes that the technology is striving to serve, we become victims of our own technocracy. We see otherwise highly educated people climbing the scientific ladder of success, even though it's often missing the rung called humanity and leaning against the wrong wall.

Religion Without Sacrifice

In other words, we go for the social façade {Pretending, deceptive outward appearance) of religion and the piety {A belief which is accepted with unthinking conventional reverence} of religious practices. There is no real walking with people or going the second mile or trying to deal with our social problems that may eventually undo our economic system. It takes sacrifice to serve the needs of other people - the sacrifice of our own pride and prejudice, among other things.

If a religion is seen as just another hierarchical system, its members won't have a sense of service or inner work ship. Instead, they will be into outward observances and all the visible accoutrements of religion. But they are neither God-centred nor principle-centred.

The principles of three of the Seven Habits pertain to how we deal with other people, how we serve them, how we sacrifice for them, how we contribute.

Politics Without Principle

If there is no principle, there is no true north, nothing you can depend upon. The focus on the personality ethic is the instant creation of an image that sells well in the social and economic marketplace.

In the best societies and organizations, natural laws and principles govern - that's the Constitution - and even the top people must bow to the principle. No one is above it.

You see politicians spending millions of dollars to create an image, even though it's superficial, lacking substance, to get votes and gain office. And when it works, it leads to a political system operating independently of the natural laws that should govern - - that are built into the Declaration of Independence: "We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness . . . "

In other words, they are describing self-evident, external, observable, natural, unarguable, self-evident laws: "We hold these Truths to be self-evident." The key to a healthy society is to get the social will, the value system, aligned with correct principles. You then have the compass needle pointing to true north - true north representing the external or the natural law - and the indicator says that is what we are building our value system on: they are aligned.

But if you get a sick social will behind the political will that is independent of principle, you could have a very sick organization or society with distorted values.

For instance, the professed mission and shared values of criminals who rape, rob a plunder might sound very much like many corporate mission statements, using such words as "teamwork," "cooperation," "loyalty," "profitability," "innovation," and "creativity." The problem is that their value system is not based on a natural law.

Chapter 9 - Principle-Centered Power - Page 108

To some, these principles, and the ideals they represent are readily attributable to notable leaders of distinction such as Mahatma Gandhi, but they are harder to find in the much more common experiences of everyday living. In response to this concern, Gandhi replied, "I claim to be no more than an average man with less than average ability. I am not a visionary. I claim to be a practical idealist. Nor can I claim any special merit for what I have been able to achieve with laborious research.

A Personal Note - Page 323

Gandhi emphasized: "A person cannot do right in one department whilst attempting to do wrong in another department. Life is one indivisible whole."

