

Adopt Rotary 4-way Test in Your Life to Eliminate Corruption



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Introduction

The world has changed a lot since the day when the first flower of mankind bloomed on it. Even as the world progresses in various avenues, at the same time, it is also moving toward the darkened ditch of inhumanity, cruelty and greed. On one hand, we have conquered space; on the other hand, we see the devastation caused to Iraq. We are knowingly denying a simple truth that human being, ‘the paragon of animals’ as Shakespeare wrote, is becoming an animal himself. We are forgetting our morals and human values and this has given rise to a number of evils including corruption.

Corruption has many faces. In almost every aspect of our diurnal activities, corruption comes up in dealings with the electricity department, telephone department, and government offices or even in the hospitals and educational institutions. Scams pile one upon another and corruption at high levels has become a routine affair. A government clerk asks for an under the table transaction as his right before opening a file.

Measures taken to eliminate corruption

The fight against the deadly assassin of corruption is being taken up by many non-government organizations. In this context, Rotary, a worldwide organization of business and professional leaders that provides humanitarian service has provided ‘The 4-way test’

as a means by which to eliminate the evil of corruption and is helpful in doing so by provoking the basic human values and morals in the hearts of people.

The 4-way Test

How anachronistic seems Sir Henry Wotton's depiction of an ideally happy man:

*"This man is free from servile bands of hope to rise, or fear to fall,
Lord of himself, though not of lands;
And having nothing, he hath all.
Night's worn, and the morn, rises from the slumberous mass."*

Sir Wotton's words offer an image of what self-satisfaction means. In a similar way, the "4-way test" has its application in the world of human relationships. The 24 golden words, that are sitting on the desks of millions of business and professional leaders around the world are guiding them and making a difference in the lives of billions, are:

- ❖ Is it the Truth?
- ❖ Is it fair to all concerned?
- ❖ Will it build goodwill and better friendships?
- ❖ Will be beneficial to all concerned?

Let us consider these four questions of the 4-Way Test.

- "Is it the truth?"

The first question compels the thinker to think about the thing that is divine in itself, that is, truth. The importance of truth has been understood since time immemorial. A poet of India rightly said "*Sach barabar tap nahin, jhooth barabar paap. jaake hriday saach hai, take hriday aap.*" Translated in English, it says "*Truth is the highest heavenly virtue, untruth is sin and God dwells only in the heart that contains truth.*" According to Gandhi ji, truth includes truth in one's thoughts, words and actions. A lawyer who is going to prove a guilty person to be an innocent because he or she has received a large sum of money will certainly realize that his or her deed is not the truth. Such reflections on one's actions will surely have a positive impact.

- “Is it fair to all concerned?”

The second question deals with the welfare of all the people that are directly or indirectly affected by the person’s actions. Truth is said to be beautiful which is also beneficial for all. Another Indian poet said “*Satyam Shivam Sundaram.*” Translated, “*Any thing that is truth will give benefit to all beings.*” This thought will enable an officer to think about the loss caused to other officials when he seeks a promotion by using bribes or other unsavory means.

- “Will it build good will and better friendships?”

The third question fosters the feeling of human camaraderie as it aims to develop better relations. Vladimir Lenin observed “The aim of life submerges itself in making better relationships, encouraging unity and making others’ lives happy with the sweet fragrances of love and brotherhood”. Any false deed that is harmful for some people can never build goodwill and better friendship among all people. Camaraderie can only be accomplished with work that is done fairly and impartially. If a person is doing a wrong deed, he is harming someone and it can never lead to the development of goodwill. Contemplation of the third question of the 4-Way Test will encourage people to reconsider corrupt actions that are harming the unity of people and will create “goodwill and better friendships”.

- “Will it be beneficial to all concerned?”

The fourth and final question makes one think about the benefit of all concerned people and is based on the feeling of, “*Vasudhaiv Kutumbkam*” i.e. the whole world is one family.

Conclusion

Summing up, we see that the principles of the 4-way test are able to remove corruption. The four principles are interdependent on each other and provide a ray of hope in the darkened world clouded with the fears of brutish acts. The 4-way test encourages qualities like truth, humanity, brotherhood and love and also creates an attitude of moral judgement which are the qualities that set Homo Sapiens apart from other beings on the lower rungs of the evolutionary ladder. The governments of all

countries of our world must make the test mandatory. This will make the world a better place so that posterity can echo. We will make our world a corruption free heaven. Our efforts will lead to the formation of Shakespeare's world: "*How many godly creatures are these here. How beautiful mankind is! O brave new world. That has such people in it*"