



SELF-RELIANCE: CHANGE YOUR LIFE FOR THE BETTER- RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Amit¹

(Ph.D Scholar), Department of English,
Baba Mastnath University, Rohtak

Abstract : *“Modern Man is the victim of the very instruments he values most. Every gain in power, every mastery of natural forces, every scientific addition to knowledge, has proved potentially dangerous, because it has not been accompanied by equal gains in selfunderstanding and self-discipline”. (Internet)*

Modern man is surrounded by many problems like despair, aimlessness, frustration, uncertainty and futility. The causes of all these problems are rigid and stereotypical thinking of society. Many people are not able to progress in their life because they keep thinking that if they do something different, people will misunderstand them. The present research papers are all about that how an individual can solve all the problems. The famous American philosopher and writer Ralph Waldo Emerson believed that all these problems can be solved by Self - Realisation. He says that many famous people were misunderstood by society but they are held in the highest regard because they spoke what they thought. Self-realization or know Thyself is an idea or expression always used in Western Philosophy, Spirituality, Psychology and the Indian religious system. After having a study of Western Philosophy about Self-realization then we find that it is the achievement by oneself of your capabilities of one's character or personality. Indian Religious beliefs have also the same concept to know the true self. Self-knowledge is all-encompassing. What is accomplished on one scale of experience can be applied to all scales. It is the highest form of knowledge surpassing all other knowledge. Self-realization is also timeless, which means that what is gained in one era, benefits all subsequent generations. Wherever and whenever the aphorism originated, Selfrealization was universally accepted and placed at the foundation of true Knowledge, the cornerstone on which, the temples of Philosophy should be erected. "The essence of knowledge is self-knowledge," claimed Greek philosopher Plato. The Hindu Upanishads also confirmed, centuries before him, " Enquiry into the truth of the self is knowledge ."

Keywords : *Transcendentalism, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Individualism, Self – Realisation, Aphorism, Self Knowledge.*

INTRODUCTION

Ralph Waldo Emerson an American essayist, philosopher abolitionist and poet also strongly believed in Self-realization. His philosophical movement "Transcendentalism" originated in the late 1820s and 1830s in the Eastern United States based on self-esteem individualism, Selfrealization self-knowledge and Unitarianism. Transcendentalists are strong believers in the power of individualism. Other important transcendentalists were Henry David Thoreau, Margaret Fuller, Lydia Maria Child, Amos Bronson Alcott, Frederic Henry Hedge, Elizabeth Palmer Peabody, and Theodore Parker. Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr. described Ralph Waldo Emerson's famous speech entitled The American Scholar in 1837 as America s "Intellectual Declaration of Independence " Wherever we go, whatever we do ourselves is the sole subject we study and learn. He is primarily known as the chief leader of the philosophical

movement transcendentalism, which emphasis on individualism. Ralph Waldo Emerson, an American poet and essayist, was born in Boston in 1803. Emerson was elected as the minister of the Second Church in 1829. He left the church in 1832 because of profound differences in explanations and confusion about church perception. He went to England and interact with British writers and philosophers. He influenced by a lot of people like ThomasCarlyle, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Victor Cousin, René Descartes, Mary Moody Emerson. It was during this first excursion abroad that Emerson developed his main ideas for Self-Reliance or Self-realization. He came back to the United States in 1833 and settled in Concord, Massachusetts. He started lecturing in Boston. His first book was Nature (1836) which was published anonymously. This book talks about his ideas and has to be known as his most important original work based on his philosophy of transcendentalism. Self-Reliance was first published in his first volume of essays (1841). Emerson befriended and influenced several famous American authors and poets like Henry David Thoreau, Carl Marx, Harold Bloom, Walt Whitman and many other. He died in Concord on April 27, 1882, at the age of 78 and is buried in Sleepy Hollow.His famous works are The Lord's Supper, Nature, St. Augustine Confessions, Harvard Divinity School Address, The American Scholar, Representative Men, English Traits, The Conduct of Life etc.

“Insist on yourself; never imitate. Your own gift you can present every moment with the cumulative force of a whole life’s cultivation; but of the adopted talent of another you have, only an extemporaneous half possession. That which each can do best, none but his Maker can teach him.” (Internet)

When Emerson open his essay he emphasis on genius. According to him, a genius person believes his idea. He believes that what is true for him in his heart is true for all man. Emerson discusses individuals like Moses, Plato and Milton are held in the highest regard because they said what they thought because they didn't trust others' words, books or tradition.

“A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines. With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do. He may as well concern himself with his shadow on the wall. Speak what you think now in hard words, and to-morrow speak what to-morrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradict every thing you said to-day. — 'Ah, so you shall be sure to be misunderstood.' — Is it so bad, then, to be misunderstood? Pythagoras was misunderstood, and Socrates, and Jesus, and Luther, and Copernicus, and Galileo, and Newton, and every pure and wise spirit that ever took flesh. To be great is to be misunderstood.” (Internet)

We should trust in ourselves and listen our mind lies in society's conspiracy against the individual because society values conformity. As youth, we act with independence and responsibility and issue judgements based on our real views. We are free from thoughts about consequences or interests However, as we grow up society teaches us to curb our thoughts and actions, seek the approval of others and concern ourselves with names, prestige and customs. to be a self-reliant person one has to return to the neutrality of youth and be a nonconformist. for the non-conformity, no law may be sacred to me but is of my nature. Emerson advocates nonconformity, not for rebellion but because the world can know you or who you are, and so you can focus your time and effort on strengthening your character on your terms. Society's assessment of conformity is not the only obstacle is the fear of self-sustainability. Emerson gave a person about prayer that people pray for foreign addition to lives, whereby prayer servers as a means to a personal and such as for the desired object, so prayer is like a form of begging. However, prayer should be a way to reflect on life and connect with God. An individual who trusts in himself or herself do not pray for something but rather incorporate prayer contemplation and integration with God.

“The prayer of the farmer kneeling in his field to weed it, the prayer of the rower kneeling with the stroke of his oar, are true prayers heard throughout nature.” (Internet)

He explains how individuals can achieve self-reliance, according to Emerson to live self reliably with real thought and action, one must rely on oneself. When someone trusts in the nature and power of inner capacity for independence is called Spontaneity. This spontaneity is based on our intuition, our inner wisdom that we learn from others. Intuition emerges from the connection between our

soul and the divine spirit. It is very easy to follow in the footsteps of others, self-sufficient life world is completely strange. Self-reliance should be applied to all aspects of life and shows how society would benefit from such applications.

“Be yourself; no base imitator of another, but your best self. There is something which you can do better than another. Listen to the inward voice and bravely obey that. Do the things at which you are great, not what you were never made for. To be great is to be misunderstood” – (Internet)

True prayer consists in avoiding regret and resentment, indicating a personal weakness of will, as well as sympathy for the suffering of others, which only exacerbates their frailty, and instead accompanies them with truth and health, to return to their reason, must be controlled awakening stressed that education fosters a restless mind that causes people to travels far from themselves in the hope of finding something greater than what they have. He also talks about the desire of educated people, they like to travel to foreign places like England, Italy and Egypt for amusement and decorate their houses with foreign taste. Emerson believed that individual is important than religion so we need to focus on the transformation of an individual by spiritual awakening him, trusting the voice of your conscience.

“Great men are they who see that spiritual is stronger than any material force - that thoughts rule the world.” (Internet)

It aims to move beyond the social construct of the society and focus on the inner self and this awakening of the inner self is often termed as the self-reliance spirit. The man is complete in himself so you don't have to meditate elsewhere the focus is on you just like you sit and meditate and focus on your breath that is the only thing that you need to focus on yourself. there is no need to look out for direction as the true star is within you and that star is going to direct you to the things that you want to achieve in life.

“A political victory, a rise of rents, the recovery of your sick, or return of your absent friend, or some other quite external event, raises your spirits, and you think good days are preparing for you. Do not believe it. Nothing can bring you peace but yourself. Nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principles”. (Internet)

CONCLUSION

In this way, we can conclude that selfreliance helps in spiritual development along with carrying out despair, boredom, bitterness suffering and unhappiness. Modern man is living in a dilemma and contradicts in choice-making, one should make own's choice so that no one influenced his taste. Self - Reliance teaches us that how can become responsible people and take responsibility for our actions. A self-reliant person needn't take permission of another person to do something because you think it's right. Being content and having a strong sense of selfesteem is also another part of self-reliance. Permit yourself to feel satisfied with yourself and your surroundings. Permit yourself to make decisions that will benefit your recovery in the short and long term. You get to choose how to proceed, so make sure you are thinking through your decisions fuelled by emotion. Think about your decisions with a level head.

INTEXT CITED

- https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/51834.Lewis_Mumford&ved=2ahUKEwi0_uuJlq7yAhXP4nMBHQA_Bc0QFnoECAUQAQ&usq=AOvVaw3NeFVWbEEj08lf44VUEva9&cshid=162886379_8011
- <http://edan.si.edu/saam/id/object/1984.124.95>
- <https://margaretharrell.com/0201/11/atransparent-eyeball/>
- <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=https://www.inspiringquotes.us/author/1171-ralph-waldoemerson/aboutprayer%23%20%3D%25E2%2580%259C%20%2520prayer%2520of%2520the%2520farmer,see%2520prayer%2520in%2520all>

%2520action.%25E2%2580%259D&ved=2ahUKEwj65afil67yAhVMVH0KHbHqC0AQF

noECAMQBQ&usg=AOvVaw2dFcCIE-

- QJuHQGr6zzoH_sed=2ahUKEwjTsN_Hl67yAhVLSX0KHQI9C e4QFnoECAwQAQ&usg=AOvVaw0Jrf1WJ
- Nv-6mXqmjidwTQQ
- https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=https://www.allcreatures.org/quotes/emerson_ralphwaldo.html&ved=2ahUKEwiRhOOll67yAhVSfSsK HZL5D4UQFnoECAMQAQ&usg=AOvVaw2 t1IP4XZSRUo63agdGylxb

REFERENCES

- [1] Emerson, Ralph Waldo. *The Journals of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, Volume XI. A.W. Plumstead et. Al., editors. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1975.
- [2] Emerson, Ralph Waldo. *The Journals of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, Volume XIII. Ralph H. Orth and Alfred R. Ferguson, editors. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1977.
- [3] Emerson, Ralph Waldo, Digital Humanities
- [4] https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/ralph_waldo_emerson_389682&ved=2ahUKEwiRhOOll67yAhVSfSsK HZL5D4UQFnoECAMQAQ&usg=AOvVaw2 t1IP4XZSRUo63agdGylxb

