

Toughness within, manifested without

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Mental toughness is obtained through self-searching honesty, which identifies and admits frankly the deficiencies within. Simultaneously with this, is the comprehension of various aspects and traits, which are congruous with a tough and resilient personality. Dealing with these in detail in his poem "IF," Rudyard Kipling talks of the need "to keep your head when all about you are losing theirs and blaming it on you." This verily is also equanimity, conceived as samatvam by Bhagwad Gita (2, 48) which also exhorts on the need to be balanced in honour and ridicule (6, 7) and also in heat and cold" (figuratively standing for hostility and indifference without)

Absence of falsehood and hatred is also indicative of inner strength. Kipling advises that on being 'lied about, don't deal in lies / or being hated, don't give way to hating." The bible also extols forgiveness and in fact doing a good turn even to those who are inimical or unfair(Luke:6-7 to 38: Mathew:5-11, 43, 44&22,39). Valluvar, the great Tamil writer also deals with this virtue of forbearance in his Kural 151 to 160).

Toughness within is also revealed in the person's impartiality and broadness in outlook- the ancient Sanskrit concept of vasudhaivika kudumbikam. The aspect too has been brought out beautifully by Kipling's reference to talk with the crowd and keep your virtue,/ Or walk with the kings- nor lose the common touch." The Bhagwad Gita, in two separate contexts, (5, 18,; 6,9) also points to the need to treat all alike – a so called high caste or an outcaste, a cow or a dog, a lover or a foe, strangers, foreigners or relatives.

Inner strength and mental toughness however attain fulfillment only by also being effective, efficient, hardworking and creative- The Kipling concept, to fill the unforgiving minute / with sixty seconds' worth of distance run. "This verily is also persistence – Rudyard Kipling's inspiration to "hold on when there is nothing in you / except the will that says to you: "Hold on!"

Applied in practice, the approach calls for an eager want and dwelling on the needed virtues, internalizing these and evolving for oneself a positive self image, which would be in harmony with such virtues. Contrary and militating mental formalities would drop off by and by, revealing to the aspirant the strength within- so real, though thus far dominant and untapped.