

Whittle down your worries

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By Nandini Sarkar

Using the Pareto principle, Nandini Sarkar illustrates how to resolve sticky situations in life by identifying resolving the root causes



Recently, I made a new friend. She is spirited and compassionate also has another attribute. Problems. Recurring, nagging, v kind of problems. Her Whatsapp DP says: O God...no more problems...please! I found myself thinking about her issues figure out what I would do in her place. The Bard famously world's a stage, and the men and women only actors", so ir I tell myself that it's only a game and I need to figure out the strategy. Why take situations too seriously or allow emotion when at the end of it all, it's only a game (the journey home challenge is to figure out the best plan? Your life changes w

discovery and becomes the joy it was actually meant to be.

Problem	Frequency	Root Cause
1. Stomach Cramps and Acidity	12	Relationship anxiety
2. Accidents including spilling hot water on self, pick-pocket, bike running over foot & sprained ankle while getting into metro	4	Absent-mindedness
3. Breathing problems/ Suffocation	4	Relationship anxiety
4. Childhood sweetheart gets drunk and creates violent scene at her home	1	Has been keeping bad company recently
5. Forced to lodge FIR against childhood sweetheart for drunken behaviour	1	Furious at the insult and injury to self and parents' reputation
6. Parents of childhood sweetheart are looking for another bride	1	Furious at her for lodging FIR against son; want to break off ties and move on
7. Marriage was to have happened in 2015 but was repeatedly postponed	3	Growing discomfort with the violent and abusive behaviour of sweetheart

Management gurus are the modern-day generals and mas strategy. One of the vital strategic tools they use is called th Principle. It is also called the 80: 20 solution. Pareto, an emi sociologist and economist, proved that when faced with mu challenges, 80 per cent of the problems can actually be solv focusing on only 20 per cent of the root causes. Hence, his us to focus on 'the vital few' causes rather than 'the trivial n The value of the Pareto Principle is that it reminds us to cor the 20 per cent of things that actually matter. Of all the thin resolve a crisis, only 20 per cent are really important, Paret Those 20 per cent produce 80 per cent of our results. So, w identify and focus on those 20 per cent things first. Thus, th

Principle challenges us look at problems in a creative way rather than allow our will to become paralysed be problems seem too big. Says Yubraj Trigunait, an audit manager who effectively uses the Pareto Principle: " through so many, many problems, that now I don't remember any of them! Mountains of problems stop ap

1. Make a table with three columns: problem, frequency and root cause.
2. In the first column make a list of all the problems you are facing.
3. In the second column, write down the number of times each problem has occurred.
4. In the third column, insert the root cause of each problem, as it appears to you.
5. Now go over your entire list and group the issues that have the same root cause.
6. Add up the frequencies in each group to get the group score.
7. Identify the top 20 per cent of causes by looking at the scores.
8. Take action

I decided to follow the Pareto Principle and made a list of the problems that my friend had spoken about. I discovered the 20 per cent of causes that could solve 80 per cent of her problems and where efforts should be made to achieve the greatest improvement.

From the above table, it was clear that the top causes of her problems were relationship anxiety and her sweethearts' errant behaviour:

- Total score for issues 1 and 3 related to relationship stress: $12+4=16$
- Total score for issues 4,5 and 7 related to sweetheart's behaviour: $1+1+3=5$

My friend and her parents had hoped for a 2015 wedding but the groom's wayward behaviour had caused her to change her mind. He was keeping bad company and had developed bad habits. He was repeatedly promising to change but was returning to his drunken and violent ways. Then she lodged the FIR with the police and things reached a point of no return between the two families. The other problem was that, instead of giving her time to heal her wounds and move on, he started fretting that perhaps she would never get married after this break-up. After all, she was 34, they said incessant nagging and the pain of seeing a long-term relationship crumble were making her deeply stressed. To release the stress, she started experiencing frequent stomach cramps and acidity, breathlessness, suffocating feelings, absent-mindedness, leading to frequent accidents. Now that the root cause had been found, it was time to follow Pareto's plan. My friend agreed and listened with interest and openness, when I told her about this.

It is a well-established fact that when problems come, they bring a three-point agenda:

- To teach us to behave and/or
- To trigger a lifestyle change and/or
- To bring about spiritual awakening

My friend felt in her case it was time for a spiritual transition. However, the spiritual path requires patience and consistency. There is no instant nirvana, just as there are no free lunches. That is why Lahiri Mahasaya's famous saying, *banat, banat ban jaaye*, (make consistent effort, then one day, behold! the goal is reached) holds so much value. My friend's problems were making her mentally restless. Desperate for a quick solution, she started jumping

making her feel worse. Though she was ready to work on a spiritual solution to her problems, she was becoming a spiritual voyeur, without realising it. If she had followed Pareto's advice of staying focussed, here is what she did instead:

Gracefully bury the dead relationship that was causing stress, health issues and accidents and act wisely, to improve your future. There is no better tonic than a mix of wisdom and patience, to reverse a bad situation.

- I always recommend this second step to people wanting to make a new and beautiful beginning. I have personally experienced miraculous results from it. Conduct a Gayatri yagya or fire ceremony at home and dump all bitterness, resentment, sense of being wronged and past memories into the rising flames. With each swa to the fire, throw the past into the scorching flames and watch it rise and go away with the smoke. The past is a relevant prop for your role in the game of life, hence it no longer needs to exist. Simple.
- To be prepared for your new role in life you need a new brief, so now, invoke and invite the light of wisdom. Gayatri, in the Vedic tradition. This invocation has a powerful effect on the chakras as well, which have become blocked and dysfunctional due to pain and distress. As you invoke Gayatri's presence, the chakras will also open and start functioning properly. Chant the full Gayatri mantra 108 times, or at least 14 times, with deep concentration over the fire.
- Experience the fire lending power to your intention, as you chant the full Gayatri and understand its grandeur. The Gayatri mantra is a universal prayer, like the prayer of St Francis and works for all, irrespective of religious leanings. You don't need to believe in God either to chant this mantra because you are simply tuning in to divine intelligence for a briefing.
- Here is the meaning with which I chant the Gayatri. You can also download the mantra on your mobile phone from YouTube and chant along with it. Don't lose the meaning of the mantra because knowing the meaning gives tremendous power to your intention.

Surrender your worries to the fire

AUM bhUH, AUM bhuvah, AUM svaH, AUM mahaH

AUM janaH, AUM tapaH, AUM satyam

AUM tatsaviturvarenyM bhargo devasya dhImahi

dhIyo yo nH prachodayAt.h.

AUM Apo jyotiH rasomRRitaM

AUM, the primordial sound, resides in all elements of the universe. It permeates the earth (-bhUH), water (-k (-svaH), air (-mahaH), ether (-janaH), intelligence (-tapaH) and consciousness (-satyam). We pay homage to the intelligence, Gayatri, the one who shines like the sun (tat savitur), the one who destroys our ignorance through effulgent light. Please give light to our path and lead us to higher consciousness and to our true purpose in life. Shine your light (-jyotiH) on our path so we may enjoy the nectar (rasomRitaM), which is hidden within our Soma. Chanting the primordial sound, Aum.

- At some point during the fire ceremony, shift your attention from the fire to your spine. Close your eyes and focus on each chakra as you chant the Gayatri. Mentally walk up and down the spine chanting the Gayatri at each chakra. Implant the Gayatri mantra in each chakra and experience how the chakra blossoms and functions. You will become a different person you will become!
- Even after the formal fire ceremony is over don't let go of Gayatri. Make the mantra your friend and chant it at least once, for at least 14 times, before you start or end your day. Don't forget the meaning of what you are chanting and walk up and down your spine mentally with your mantra, to open your chakras.
- Knock and the door shall be opened. And once you have knocked, be patient. What needs to happen will happen if you are ready for it. But wonderful results are guaranteed and they will far exceed your expectations. In my opinion, I say that if you can stick it out for 10 years, then you will become king! After patience, it is consistency which is the key element. If you have found a spiritual path that resonates with you, stick to it and build on its framework through reading and research. In my life, I have followed the Kriya Yoga path as shown by Paramahansa Yogananda for 30 years, from age 17 to my current age, 46. His teachings resonated with me so strongly that I never felt the need to look for something else. And I have been richly rewarded, so much so, that today, I can say with humility and gratitude that the cup runneth over. Paramahansa Yogananda's How to Live teachings were powerful beacons of light that guided me through all the important milestones in my life: job, marriage, business, children, health and getting along with my Master had passed on before I was born, I did a lot of online research and read to build on the foundation given me. I did not depend on institutions or miracle mongers, astrologers or swamis for the right strategy. Through diligent research supported by the love of a benign universe revealed to me, that the different methods all teach the same thing, though they package it differently. Learn to behave, learn to breathe and learn to be grateful. Then health is ours and sickness a dream; then wealth is ours and poverty a dream; then bliss is ours and sorrow a dream. So what are you waiting for? Go, grab your share of the credits before they roll out on this life.

About the author: Nandini Sarkar is Co-founder, C-Quel, a management services company. A lover of the scriptures, she is a follower in the Kriya Yoga tradition.

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Denis Khan

'All the blessings of the Lord are holistic and not split into different neat categories. Spiritual exercises are good for our bodies, minds and spirits. The spiritual exercises I have practiced are meditation, prayer walks, spiritual breathing wherein we breathe in the qualities of God and breathe out our negative values and qualities. Even our simple physical exercises can have spiritual connotations. When we raise our hands, we are praising the Lord. When we touch our feet, we are acknowledging our sinfulness. When we turn to the right we are thanking the Lord for the blessings of grace and when we turn to the left, we are thanking the Lord for the blessings of peace. Lying still and knowing that " I am not God but He is God", communicating heart to heart, mind to mind with the Lord is another holistic exercise we can practice on a regular basis to increase our connectedness with the Lord. To lie still and to know that " I am not God" implies that we recognize our limitations. To acknowledge He is God is to recognize His infinite goodness,