

# PATIENCE, A PATHWAY TO PEACE

CREATED BY THE SYMBIOSIS CENTRE FOR EMOTIONAL WELLBEING (SCEW)

There are seasons for action. And then there are seasons of waiting. Waiting for things to be “normal” again. Waiting to meet those people you miss. Waiting to get back on track with those plans. Waiting to move around freely. Waiting for things to get better. Waiting.

And with that waiting can ensue frustration, hopelessness, anger, sadness and feelings of giving up. Generally, a difficult situation pushes for finding solutions in order to make the situation better for ourselves. But what if there are no solutions? Or what if there is a time period before the solution emerges?

When there are no answers to be found, the only virtue that comes to save the day is Patience. The ability to meet adversity with calmness, perseverance, courage, a positive attitude and the gentle knowing that all will be well eventually is when we truly are able to practice the virtue of Patience.

*Evidence of this being practiced can be seen in our communities. Be it big acts or small.*

*Whether it is*

*The grandparent who patiently waits for the day they can hug and hold their grandchildren*

*The college student who waits for the day to meet his friends again at their favourite places.*

*The parent who patiently adjusts to their children’s home schooling schedule.*

*The families who learn to patiently share spaces with each other.*

*The shop owner who waits for his business to take off again.*

*The people who patiently wait for that train or flight back home.*

*The colleagues who adjust to the new working norms.*

*The teams who stay patient as they work through new technology.*

*The doctors who patiently endure their PPE kits while serving others.*

*The people in isolation who wait to get better.*

*There are countless examples of Patience being practiced. We applaud them all.*

In an age of instant gratification, patience is the call of the hour. This is needed more than ever as we all manoeuvre through trying times and wait to come out on the other end of it. We take a look at what Patience is, what it is not, why it is important and how do we cultivate it.

Patience is a form of wisdom. It demonstrates that we understand the fact that sometimes things must unfold in their own time.

*Jon Kabat Zinn*

## PATIENCE HELPS US REACH OUR GOALS

Goals and eventual expected outcomes generally have a gestation period. If we rush before it has come into full fruition, we run the risk of sabotaging the process. Certain goals take time to come into our experience. A college student first started learning ABC's in school, a company was built one person at a time, a fitness regime starts with a step, a book was written starting with a first sentence. The gap between start to finish is bridged with patience. If we impatiently take score too soon, we might give up prematurely and stop enjoying the journey.

## PATIENCE HELPS US IMPROVE OUR MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

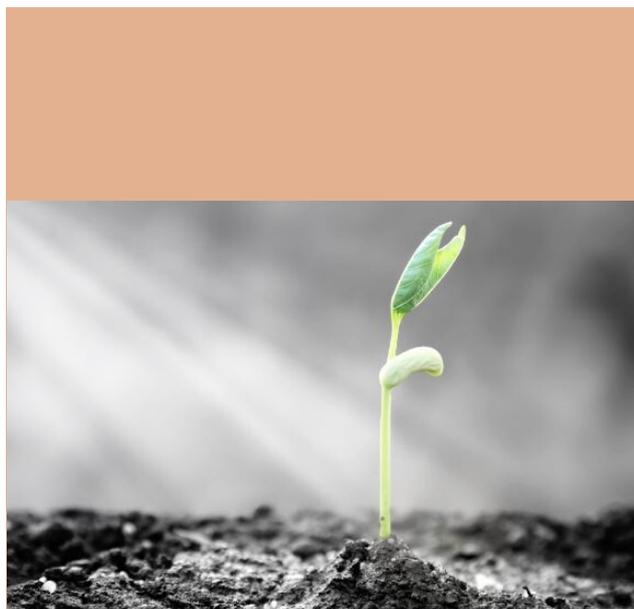
Impatience leads to stress that can impact our mind and body. The person who snaps at the slightest hint of traffic or has an outburst when something doesn't go as planned are examples of situations where people are more likely to feel mental strain, frustration and dissatisfaction towards life and in many cases depression and low motivation.

Our physical health responds to our emotional environment, opening up the potential for a whole host of physical ailments. Patience helps us renegotiate these negative emotions, feel more hopeful and enhance our happiness. When challenging events come by, patience contributes to our endurance to see it through in a calm and peaceful manner.

## PATIENCE IMPROVES OUR RELATIONSHIPS

The practice of patience helps us extend compassion, tolerance, empathy, flexibility and understanding towards those around us. Patience allows us the time to regulate our emotions and see situations holistically, keeping in mind the challenges of everyone involved. Patience allows us to actively listen and hear others out which fosters cooperation. This makes us better peers, parents, siblings, friends and neighbours.

When this patience is directed inward, we build a better relationship with ourselves as well. We are more forgiving and compassionate towards ourselves which contributes to our emotional health and wellbeing. Being patient with ourselves allows us to bounce back from setbacks and learn from them.



## PATIENCE HELPS US MAKE BETTER DECISIONS

Patience gives us time to think about our thoughts and emotions, helping us to move from a reactionary state of mind to a more rational and responsive one. In a rush to push for things to get back to “normal” before its time or while feeling fear of a situation, we may end up doing things in haste or panic. When practising patience we are less likely to have knee jerk reactions to events.

People often mistake patience to mean being complacent or accepting negative situations passively. This is not the case. Patience in fact allows for time to unfold proactive solutions, particularly when things are not in our control, allowing us to reframe, think positively and see things long term, thereby encouraging resilience and better decision making.



## HOW DO WE CULTIVATE PATIENCE?

### 1. Practice using the Power of Breathing:

Breathing helps us slow down and connect with ourselves, diffusing any feelings of irritability and impatience. Let your unrushed breath guide and demonstrate patience through every inhale and exhale.



### 2. Embrace Time as an Ally:

Time can be a great healer, help develop perspective through experience and act as a buffer in emotionally triggering situations. Embrace time in difficult situations to help build on patience. Time also allows other skills and strengths to be cultivated, offers space for reflection, learning and growth, all of which are impactful in the long run. Trust that all hopes and dreams unfold in their own way with time. When it comes to challenges, remember, that this too shall pass.

### 3. Reframe and Practice Gratitude:

We often are quick to point out things that have not gone well, have not been accomplished yet, things that need to be achieved or haven't worked. Instead take a moment to look at how far you've come and the challenges you have overcome in the past. Remind yourself of your strengths, the things you have accomplished or achieved. Remember that you are still on your journey of growth and learning. No matter how long it takes, you have the strength to see it through.



#### **4. Take things a Step at a Time:**

It's okay to work out small achievable goals and take things a step at a time. Focus on what is in your control as opposed to what is not in your control. This can apply to challenging circumstances as well. Instead of losing hope or thinking of the worst-case scenario, bring yourself back into the present moment and do as much as you can in that moment itself. During adversity, Patience is a companion as you walk through a dark tunnel waiting to get out onto the other side. It encourages you to keep taking things a step at a time during that period.



#### **5. Trust:**

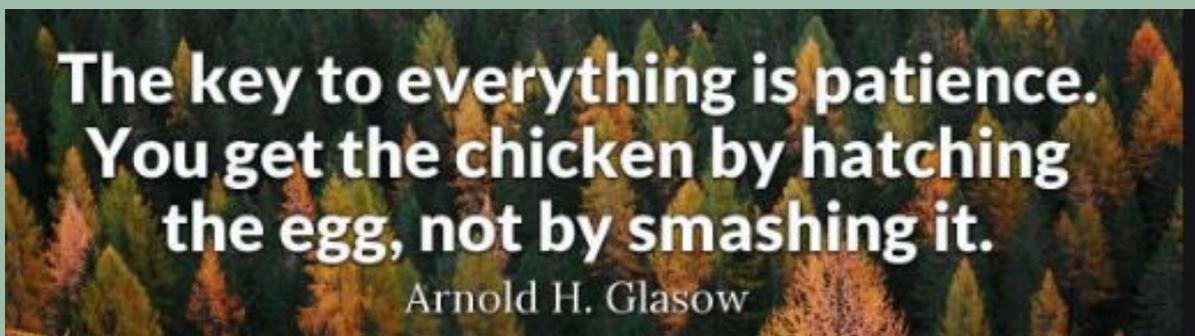
Patience comes with a deep knowing that all will be well and challenges are not setbacks but rather an opportunity for growth and learning. It comes with the belief and trust in the value of all experiences that will eventually lead to a desired and meaningful outcome. It is also accompanied with trust in oneself to persevere and see difficult situations through.

#### **6. Practice Presence and Mindfulness:**

It is easy to feel irritable if your mind wanders to the future and what has not taken place yet. Bring yourself back to the present moment and savour all the things that are pleasing in the moment. This way you can enjoy the process, the journey, the moment's stillness instead of focusing on the outcome.

#### **7. Compassion:**

Practice of compassion towards self and others will help bring a sense of peace when things are not going according to plan. This will facilitate the practice of Patience. This compassion can be experienced through the practice of kind thoughts, kind words and kind actions. We hope that Patience comes to your aide through your journey. We leave you with a final quote.



**IN CASE OF ANY MENTAL HEALTH EMERGENCIES, REACH OUT  
TO YOUR SCEW CAMPUS COUNSELLOR VIA PHONE OR AT  
MINDHELP@SIU.EDU.IN**

**SYMBIOSIS INTERNATIONAL (DEEMED UNIVERSITY)**

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