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## Meaning

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## Meaning

We seek meaning in most of what we observe and perceive. Also, we want to avoid being unkind or mean to anyone. But how do we deal with “mean meanings” that occur in our minds in the course of study, enquiry or analysis of the events, occurrences and considerations that are part of our lives?

Since we do not want to be the source of negative feelings in others, we do well to avoid letting negativity enter our own attempts at rightly understanding whatever we encounter in the course of a day’s activities. In our quite reasonable desire to find meaning in all that we engage, we are subject to the possibility of insisting on achieving clear understanding when such is not really possible, which leads us to unnecessary frustration. We do not expect little children to understand electrical current, though we teach them to avoid touching an electric heater or poking a metal object into an electrical plug. And we do not have to know the meaning of every thought, word or deed that comes to our attention, as long as we exercise our capacity to judge well what we are to do or to avoid.

Sometimes we can struggle futilely to find “the correct meaning” of something we read or hear when it is not of any real importance for us to know. Besides, in most human interactions and statements a range of meanings are not only possible, but highly probable. The meaning that we need at this time, that will be helpful to us and very likely to those with whom we interact, is that which we receive, allow or invite rather than anything we can gain by reading or listening again and again to the same words or expressions.

Often, the best and deepest meaning we can find is not always according to straightforward logic, or accurate according to historical facts. The meaning of many things is partly a mystery, which is not at all the same as having an incomplete or flawed understanding. When we realize the beauty and truth of real mystery as part of the meaning in the events we encounter and in the words we read and hear from others, or even from our own thoughts and words, we have found what we most deeply want and need. Much of the gratitude we experience arises from our appreciation for life, for friends and for all kinds of blessings which we can never fully understand, but which we accept. Like children who follow rules that have been given them by a trusted source, we can receive with thanks much in our lives that are full of meaning precisely because we accept as gifts what we cannot fully explain by reason. Real love, wherever we find it, is recognizable, but we can never completely understand it.

Our spiritual outlook is a wonderful asset when we seek meaning in all that comes to our attention. Our gifts of intelligent enquiry originate in God, who supports every aspect of our humanity when we apply ourselves wholeheartedly to the search for proper meaning according to the subject under consideration. But we do not have to act as though all depends upon us and our efforts. We are intelligent and wise when, not finding what we think of as the "right" meaning, we ask God directly for inspiration and assistance in the exercise of reasoning and intuition.

Everything has meaning, but not always in the form of information that satisfies our minds. We will receive whatever is helpful, every time we ask with open minds – and, more importantly, open hearts.