

“The Power of Humility by Dr PV Ramana Murthy”



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Dr PV Ramana is a top-notch CHRO, the CHRO of Coca-Cola India and the Taj Group of Hotels. His book launch was yesterday at the New Delhi Institute of Management. He asked me to do the introductory speech on humility at the launch. Here are key points from my speech:

1. Humility is not about thinking less of yourself, it is about thinking of yourself less. We naturally feel small and humble when we visit a place of worship, no one thinks of himself as being above god. How can we think like that in more situations?
2. To be a good leader, you must listen well, be open to learning, and accept differences. Obama said, "In a democracy, even when you are 100% right, you need to compromise."
3. Humility is not inherited, it's not a skill you are born with, it is something that is learned through repeated practice. Great musicians have it since they see themselves as a small part of a larger musical creative landscape.
4. Humility is not a lack of self-confidence, the humblest people I know have high self-confidence + high self-esteem + his self-respect. Roger Federer is a great example of this.
5. Humility is part and parcel of a larger system. One can be humble as an individual, as a family, as a gated community, as a society and as a country, if any of the parts are not humble then it is difficult for individuals to be humble.
6. Humility is also a reflection of what happens in society, is there a free and fair exchange of ideas, are rituals inclusive, what type of lists does society celebrate (the wealthy, the powerful or the humble?) and who are role models. Cricketers are possibly not the humblest today and hence may be poor role models for humility.
7. Is it possible to be humble in a 24/7 social media world where endless self-gratification seems to be the norm. Social media has taught everyone the art of the 'humble brag' and hence it's difficult to know who is genuine and who isn't.

8. Humility is a strength, pride could be a weakness and arrogance is certainly a derail.
9. It isn't easy to be humble when you are successful, it's easier to be humble when you have taken a few knocks.
10. Having clear feedback and emotional anchors like your spouse to keep you grounded is a recipe to stay humble.

Nelson Mandela said, "The great peacemakers in the world have integrity, honesty and humility."

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Shiv

www.shivshivakumar.com

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