



Mains Practice Question

Q. What does this quotation convey to you in the present context?

“The simplest acts of kindness are by far more powerful than a thousand heads bowing in prayer”.

–Mahatma Gandhi (Answer in 150 words, UPSC Mains 2023)

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Approach:

- Begin with the meaning of the quotation.
- Discuss what meaning does the quote possess in the present context.
- Summarize the central idea of the quote and conclude.

Introduction:

Mahatma Gandhi's quote suggests that kindness holds more efficacy than ritualistic prayers in fostering positive change in the world. It highlights that kindness is not merely a passive sentiment but an active demonstration of compassion and empathy towards others.

Body:

In the present context, this **quote resonates with the importance of practical kindness and societal impact.**

- **Tangible Impact of Philanthropy:** **Azim Premji**, the founder of Wipro, has donated a significant portion of his wealth to education through the **Azim Premji Foundation**, positively impacting the lives of millions of underprivileged children.
- **Community-Based Initiatives:** The **Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA)** in India empowers women from low-income backgrounds through various economic and social initiatives.
- **Empowerment Through Microfinance:** Nobel laureate **Muhammad Yunus's pioneering work in microfinance** through Grameen Bank has provided **microloans to impoverished individuals**, helping them escape poverty and build sustainable livelihoods.
- **Social Entrepreneurs' Impact:** Social entrepreneurs like **Arunachalam Muruganantham**, known as the "**Padman**" of India, have made substantial contributions by addressing critical social issues.
 - His **low-cost sanitary pad-making machines** have improved menstrual hygiene and women's health in rural areas.
- **Kindness in Education:** Institutions like the **Akshaya Patra Foundation** exemplify the transformative potential of kindness by **providing mid-day meals to school children**, they not only address hunger but also incentivize education.

Conclusion:

Therefore, the quotation reminds us of the importance and power of kindness in our lives. It urges us to be kind to ourselves and to others, and to practice kindness in our thoughts, words, and deeds.

