

WHERE IS THE LIFE WE HAVE LOST IN LIVING?

A passenger jet was cruising through mid-air. The pilot came over on the address system and spoke: "Ladies and gentlemen, I am your pilot and I have an announcement to make. We have some good news and a bad news. The bad news first. Our navigation system has broken down due to some unknown technical fault. We don't know where or which way we are headed". He paused for a while and said: "Now the good news. We are going at full speed".

The situation of the modern, urban man is very similar to that of the passengers in that plane. Yes, we are all going and going at full speed. Life is moving on the fast lane. But we don't know where we are going. We are running simply because everyone around us is running. From daybreak till nightfall, it's always rush hour. Of course, some would protest saying: 'We do know where we are going. We are moving towards our goals like money, power and position". Granted. But no one seems to have arrived! Surely some of us, by now, should have reached? But nobody is home. All are still on the race track.

The Desiderata (Latin: desired things), a prose poem by Max Ehrmann begins with the words:

*Go placidly, amid the noise and haste and remember what
Peace there may be in silence...*

Sage advice no doubt, but for us, there is no question of going placidly... it's always peak hour in our lives. And what have we got to do with silence? Here all is din and noise.

An extract from my book *An Odyssey of the Mind*
Chapter 2: Go Placidly