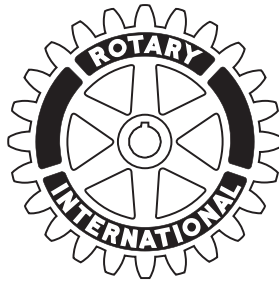


From Where I Am

A View of Rotary



by
Rtn. ASHOK MAHAJAN
Director, Rotary International 2007-09

From Where I Am - A View of Rotary

By

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Preface



RI Director Ashok Mahajan's *From Where I Am* has provided an opportunity for your esteemed director to communicate directly to you about matters that concern all of us. He has made transparency in our organisation a priority, and he has not been shy about asking difficult questions and pressing for explanations on a variety of topics that are relevant and pertinent to the entire Rotary world.

I hope that you will take the time, as I have, to discover a view of Rotary through the vantage point of Director Mahajan. In addition to educating you on a plethora of Rotary subjects, I trust that these well-written, thoughtful articles will inspire and motivate you to continue to be the best Rotarian you can be and to continue to do good in the world. After all, *The Future of Rotary is in Your Hands*.

*Edwin H Futa
General Secretary
Rotary International*

In my Defence



I think that I came to know my country well only when I explored India as part of my work in Rotary. I travelled extensively in many states of India and visited hundreds of villages in rural India. During my travel, I had the opportunity to meet people, some who were obsessed with money and fame and others who were not even educated but mature. My writings in this book are based on my thoughts which were inspired by my interaction with Rotary members and others who have given me an insight into the meaning of a service organisation.

Rotarians are heirs to the tradition of serving humanity. They have the quality of *satwa*. This is the Indian way of expressing a concern of people and other forms of life around us. My journey in Rotary was propelled by unseen forces. But I was able to feel them clearly. I have not allowed anyone to build edifices or make public announcements about my personal work in the community. I went into rural areas, into hamlets ravaged by illiteracy and poverty and into communities devastated by diseases such as polio. I was able to understand the needs of the people and chart a course for the Rotary clubs to solve most of the problems that exist.

I thank the subscribers of the *Rotary News* magazine who have read these articles in its pages and have shared my views on how Rotary should evolve in the years to come. However, it would be a pity if the benefits of these thoughts stop with the pleasure of reading them.

The success of Rotary is in serving the community and its excellence is the true worth of the organisation. I do not claim to have all the answers for the growth of Rotary. What I know is that it is important to work in the club and how one works in Rotary is much more important than monetary contributions. Or maybe this is my opinion.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ashok Mahajan'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Ashok Mahajan

Director

Rotary International, 2007–2009

Smile - Serve - Sacrifice - Satisfy

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Make Dreams Real

What is Rotary's dream? To help the community in times of need. In times of difficulties, everyone needs a hand of help, a hand of solace, a hand of compassion and a hand of assurance. Some human needs are never going to end. Rotary will always be relevant and a guiding force for the needy. Rotarians dream of tackling some of the problems of the community. They put in their best, gather people with similar intentions and reach the arena of service to solve problems. When done with love, humility and a smile, the results are outstanding and the satisfaction of being of some help to the needy is our reward.

Just as the Rotarians dream of making things real, the community, too, dreams of a saviour, riding a white horse coming to their rescue. Their dreams too should be made real by our sincerest efforts and a compassionate attitude.

When millions of children below the age of eight years succumb to the cruelty of fate, Rotarians should try to solve some of the problems responsible for their untimely exit. If poverty is the root cause of many of their problems, Rotary should combat poverty. This is extremely challenging, but Rotary can make a difference.

Poverty is due to very poor sources of income. Rotary can train the youth in various vocations and professions, thus ensuring a source of income for them. Yes, the results will be seen only after a decade or so, but in due course of time, there will be less poverty and better health. The potentials are great and since a large number of Rotarians are associated with schools, colleges and training institutes, the task would not be impossible. If Rotarians can identify the needy and offer some assistance, the results would really be gratifying. It is so well said that "Give a man a fish and you will abolish hunger for a day. Teach a man how to fish, and you will abolish hunger for a lifetime."

Some people only dream of great accomplishments, while others stay awake and make them happen. Former President of India, Dr. A P J Abdul Kalam says "Dream is not what you see in sleep. Dream is the thing which does not allow you to sleep." If you have no dreams, you will never achieve them. Dream and Dream big. Our world is full of opportunities that are waiting to be tapped. But don't just dream, do something about it. Put it into action to make them real. Someone had said, "No dream comes true unless you wake up and go to work."

Nobody on earth can stop you from achieving the best, doing the best and being the best except one person in the world — you, yourself.

Go out and look for opportunities to make dreams real.

Commitment is Vital to Success

A person full of commitment is a glittering jewel. She/he is a heartthrob for his colleagues. She/he is an inspiration for the less energetic and a constant prod for the lazy and the lethargic.

Commitment is the complete devotion you have towards anything you do, kindled by a strong motivation and interest in the deep cave of your heart. Nothing great has ever been achieved by any individual without enthusiasm and interest. To generate enthusiasm, one requires deep interest, involvement and commitment towards whatever she/he wishes or desires to achieve.

Today the world simply admires and opens its way to anyone who is found girded with commitment and enthusiasm. The rise of Dhirubhai Ambani from scratch, the soaring of Manoj Bajpai in Bollywood, the achievement of space martyr Kalpana Chawla, the surpassing love of Mother Teresa and above all, the Presidential ascension of Dr. A P J Abdul Kalam are but precise feats of those who proved the world that committed people have no option but success. They made mistakes but mistakes and failures never mesmerised them. They stood to the end with unwavering faith and commitment. Difficulties and disappointments never corroded their steely commitment to accomplish!

If he or she could do that, why can't you and I? Success is guaranteed if you have the passion to plunge in, commitment to cruise over and faith enough to fly on.

Rotary thrives today only because of men and women committed to service. At the heart of every service, there is commitment. Commitment is vital to the success of any service project. Rotarians commit to others, to Rotarians, to leadership and to the community. They thus commit to God. They commit to their dreams. There is a difference between interest and commitment. When you are interested in doing something, you do it when it is convenient. When you are committed, you accept no excuses — you only want results.

There is a story of a great ruler, who ruled his kingdom with love and compassion. He knew that many of the people were in need — in need of money, love, health, prosperity and education. When he became old, he selected a second-in-command to help him manage the kingdom. He took him outside to a balcony of the palace that gave a majestic view of the land under his jurisdiction. The second-in-command asked "Sir, what must be the most vital attribute that I should possess to carry out your wishes?" "Son," the king replied, "There are only two things you should have. You should have commitment and compassion."

Community Service

What is the relevance of Rotary in today's world? It is relevant only because it is an organisation that offers a helping hand without asking for anything in return. It is this selfless service that props up its existence and offers what others do not. Community Service, therefore, is the heartbeat of Rotary. A heartbeat is a device to pump vital nutrients to all the hungry areas of the body. Rotary pumps the vital assistance to all those areas that are hungry for aid. A pump that has power and capability controls a heartbeat. Rotary not only has capability and power but also a desire that makes spreading helpful acts a pleasure.

The needs of the community are often so gigantic that Rotary may be unable to rectify the problem or tackle the problem only partially. It is, therefore, essential for Rotary to measure its own strength and offer assistance that it is capable of. When the community realises that Rotary can solve some of its problems but not all, it will understand our shortcomings and will cooperate with Rotary in managing a problem. This exercise of informing and educating the community about our limitation and our strengths will result in erasing any disappointments that may come as a result of our limited assistance. This step is vital for continued co-operation and mutual understanding which will build bridges of communication facilitating future coordination in the avenue of service to them.

Service to the needy community must be laced by personal participation of Rotarians and their families. The helping hand offered by Rotarians must be visible through our presence and participation. Rewarding service acts by Rotarians are paid for by the currency of personal participation. We not only need a healthy budget but also a bigger heart. When such a heart beats for the needy, the flow of help will be better appreciated, better utilised and better understood. The community will appreciate our compassion, our love and determination to help and will always be at our side when we undertake other service activities for these communities.

Service is a habit with a Rotarian just as our hearts beat with regularity. This is one addiction that is excellent for health and satisfaction. It is one habit that needs to be cultivated with finesse.

Rotary will continue to be present for many generations. It will disappear only when the needs of all communities are met. Such a time, perhaps, will never come and so Rotary is entrenched in this world with many more years of service. Let our service be timely, productive, satisfying and compassionate. Rotary will, then, live forever in the hearts of all those that are touched by our love, Viva La Rotary.

Youth today need practical Idealism

One of the greatest strength of Rotary is the youth. It is the youth, who will represent Rotary tomorrow. Rotary's success stories, advancements, journeys and destinations all are seeped in "Tomorrow" and the youth is our tomorrow. Rotarians, therefore, should involve themselves in building for the future. Our job is to light the way, show the way, ease the way and tread the way for the youth to learn to be helpful.

Youth is like a lamp. One tube light will spread light but cannot light another lamp. A lamp can, however, light hundreds of others. Our job is to be a lamp.

Youth is but transgressing time. If you transgress 30, 40, 50 years, you are still young. It is said that you are as young as you feel and when you embark on the path of service, you always feel young. Let us transfer this philosophy to the youth we meet. Let them feel eternally young. Let us teach them to live and solve the problems of the present and not delve in the problems of the past. Don't worry if youth doesn't seem to be listening to you. They are watching you.

The challenges before the youth are clear. No matter what their political affiliations are, no matter from which part of the country they come from, no matter what religion they practice, they will have to address four problems of the century:

1. Poverty, disease and squalour
2. Degradation of environment both at home and their work place
3. The cancer of regionalism, casteism and terrorism
4. The lack of peace at home and abroad

The task is daunting but Rotarians can be a strong supporting body to cooperate with youth and progress positively.

Traditionally, the role of youth has been to stand on the touch-line, criticising the older generation. For the first time in history, the twenties and thirties are better educated than the fifties to sixties. From now on, youth should be on the field to play and not on the sidelines. They should participate in decisions, actions and challenges. Rotary can be a strong support to these men and women, who will be at the helm of running industries, professions and even the country. Rotary can ensure that ideologies do not clash and the unity of purpose prevails. Youth today need practical idealism.

The world will judge Rotary by our success or failure of harnessing the youth to reach that level of efficiency and commitment that Rotary desires and the world deserves.

Serve with Enthusiasm

To *Make Dreams Real*, you need not only to dream, act and succeed but you also have to demonstrate enthusiasm. Unless sustained by enthusiasm, many people would be apt to give in at the first sign of opposition or set back and stop short of the goal, when only with a little more persistence, they would have found success just round the corner.

Enthusiasm is the bubbly sprit of energy, commitment and purposeful action. If you place a glass full of water next to a glass full of soda, the only difference you can perceive is the presence of bubbles in the glass of soda. This bubbling phenomenon is akin to enthusiasm. Moreover, enthusiasm has an infectious quality. An enthusiastic person easily communicates his enthusiasm to others. He not only generates power for himself but also for his colleagues and associates. He is a human dynamo who electrifies the whole organisation. He not only issues orders but radiates strength, hope and confidence to those who come in contact with him. Thereby he keeps up the morale and creates in them an inner urge to give their zealous co-operation and support in the accomplishment of the common task.

Success stories in Rotary and even in all walks of life are dependent upon the enthusiasm with which one approaches the task in hand. In every service project of a club, we can easily discern the enthusiasm of Rotarians. Enthusiasm is infectious and spreads like wild fire. It energises, motivates and lends speed to action.

Enthusiasm unlocks stores of energy as nothing else will. It is an indispensable ally of anyone who is holding a leadership position and is responsible for getting things done. He must himself be enthusiastic, if he wants others to be enthusiastic. Enthusiasm can be kept alive as long as possible. It is the distinguishing feature of youth and if you can keep it up, you will retain mental faculties in a youthful condition even when the body has grown old.

A young boy employed at a local store was seen singing and dancing as he pushed a cart uphill to make the deliveries. Asked a stranger "Why do you seem so cheerful? You are pushing a heavily laden cart uphill. Don't you feel exhausted?" "No, Sir!" replied the boy "when you work with enthusiasm, tiredness disappears."

Friends! Let service be laced with enthusiasm. Let Dreams be realised with enthusiasm. Service with enthusiasm can negate tiredness or strain.

Rotary Awareness

Are we aware of Rotary and its role in bettering the lives of millions? Are we aware of the role Rotary is playing in promoting peace and understanding? Are we aware of the near end of the road reaching total polio eradication? Are we aware of the thousands of communities that are smiling today because Rotary came into their lives when they were weeping?

Rotary has thousands of faces and we cannot, perhaps know all what Rotary is doing worldwide. We must, however be generally aware of our aim, our goal, our final destination of a happy, peaceful, healthy and prosperous community. The roads to our goal are many and at places there are no roads — we have to create new roads — but the final target must be achieved through concentrated and joint action. In order to understand what is being done and what should be done we must be aware of Rotary's role in conquering the problems.

Rotary awareness is not just simple Rotary information. It is education, perception and understanding.

When a new Rotarian enters Rotary, we provide Rotary information just enough to initiate the new Rotarian into the world of service through Rotary. Real awareness programme starts a little later and has to be provided in small doses so that this information is digested and enters the realm of memory. Rotarians have a continuous need to be informed and re-informed. Their roles in providing useful services have to be stressed and re-stressed. The aim of Rotary Awareness Programme is to produce an army of knowledgeable, committed, enthusiastic and purposeful Rotarians who can change the face of misery, ill health, poverty and illiteracy, to offer this world a more peaceful, happy and strong society.

Rotary Awareness should also be spread to our communities so that they can join hands with us to overcome as many problems as possible.

Therefore, we must take an extra step to inform prospective members about the privileges and responsibilities of Rotary Club membership. They should know the history, objectives and activities of Rotary at all levels. Remember a well-informed Rotarian is always more active and is an asset to Rotary.

Rotary Awareness is for everybody. Rotary Awareness is for our families too. Unless a concentrated effort is put in to fight the evils, we will not succeed. Let us spread Rotary Awareness all around.

What are you waiting for?

Procrastination is a malady peculiar to the non-confidants. Delay in action or planning can lead to serious setbacks.

Most of us spend our life waiting for the “right time” to happen to make a move and do something in our lives. We wait and wait and eventually when we realise “it is the right time,” it is too late as someone else has already done what we had in mind. We miss out on the important things in life while waiting for the right things to occur.

Time is very precious and none of us know what is around the corner. Time is not something we can tamper with or take for granted; it just keeps ticking on regardless of who and what we are. Never wait until tomorrow for what we can accomplish and afford today. If we wait and fail to do what we think is right, then we are denying ourselves of what should have been our life’s greatest accomplishments. “Do not wait till the eleventh hour, for the end may come at 10.45,” goes the saying.

Time is like a bank that credits us every morning 86,400 seconds and every night writes off, as lost, whatever of this we have failed to invest to good purpose. It carries no balance over and allows no overdraft. If we fail to use the day’s deposits, the loss is ours because there is no drawing against “tomorrow.”

It’s the time to act immediately. As Rotary leaders, we have just 365 days to fulfill our dreams. Some dreams can be realised even after our days in office are over — but the sooner we make a path of attainment, better it will be for the community.

Natural calamities such as floods, earthquakes, tsunamis and other disasters need immediate action. Catastrophes wait for nobody and the resolve to help must be put into action without any delay.

Bad times are good times for service and therefore for Rotary. Rotary exists because of bad times for some. We, therefore, cannot afford to be complacent or wait for a more suitable time. Now is the time and now is the need to act.

Rotary has strong fundamentals and these strong fundamentals are responsible for our success stories. “When fundamentals are strong, bankruptcy is far away.” That is what is said in business language. When Rotary’s strong fundamentals are evident, there cannot be any bankruptcy of action. We can weather another ride on the roller-coaster of service, if we have faith, enthusiasm and a strong resolve to *Make Dreams Real*.

Let’s not wait for the future. The time is now and tomorrow’s history is going to be written today. Let’s be an important part of tomorrow by acting today.

Dare to be yourself

We live in a world that gives a lot of attention to the externals of life. The kind of house we live in, the car we drive, the grade on our certificates etc., seem to define us. In addition, our physical appearance, shape, weight or colour, do matter when it is assumed that after all it is the “beautiful people” who make it in this world.

As a result we wear hundreds of masks, masks that we are afraid to take off and none of them is us. We panic at the thought of our limitations and fear of being exposed. That is why, we frantically create masks to hide behind, a nonchalant sophisticated façade to help us pretend that we are better than others.

The only person who knows his or her assets and liabilities is the person himself or herself.

Often, others see us as we want them to do so. We wear a mask that hides the true self. We may fool most of the people some of the time and some of the people most of the time, but we cannot fool the person we see in front of the mirror.

Rotarians are judged by fellow Rotarians and more importantly by the communities that are touched by Rotary. If Rotary has to produce and reproduce stalwarts of service, it will have to reach Rotarians not only to be seen as instruments of service, but also to be practicing all the laws of service — service with kindness and compassion, service without expectations and service with total dedication.

True, Rotarians are but a part of community and will have those weaknesses that we see in common men and women, but a Rotarian should rise above these weaknesses and show that leaders are instilled with a sense to excel.

As we see Rotary worldwide, we see many practices that are a blot on our credentials, we see unhealthy responses to situations and we see lowering of our prestige. May be, this lowering of our standards may go unnoticed in the community, but we have to answer our own hearts about the ethicality and correctness of our actions and we often fail on this front.

I urge all Rotarians to dare to change — to dare to improve — to dare to be yourself. There is no shame in accepting our weaknesses, as long as we are prepared to do something to improve. Rotary will be judged, is being judged, by the men and women it enrolls. Rotary will prosper not only by the service it offers but by people who offer these services.

There is a challenge in front of us. We must dare to correct the faults and improve Rotary, improve Rotarians, improve self.

Let us accept this challenge and dare to be ourselves.

Stop Making Excuses

Most of us make excuses to defend our conduct and live with the strong notion that making excuses is something that everybody does. So it is OK. Over the years we have cultivated the art of making excuses with creative ways to avoid doing something that needs to be done. We think that with excuses we do not have to be accountable for our words and deeds. Is it too much to say that we are addicted to excuses?

Procrastination is a habit of many. We tend to give reasons for not being what we are expected to be and for not doing what we are expected to do.

Rotary has taken your promise to be helpful to others and help the needy when you joined Rotary. One reason why you were invited to be a Rotarian was because you saw an opportunity to help others and then you promised to fulfill this obligation.

Rotary needs — more than ever — your involvement and assistance in carrying out the projects planned for execution. Rotary cannot work by itself. It is totally dependent on the men and women who have projected their willingness to work. If, therefore, you fail to meet your obligations, you are not only a liability and a burden, but also a defaulter.

When we make excuses and repeat them often enough, they become a belief. The belief then becomes a self-fulfilling habit and then failures are bound to happen. Excuses set limits on our will and blocks the road to our purpose and passion. It is only when we accept responsibility, we can evaluate our actions and take corrective measures to find solutions to our problems.

Rotarians should not only stop making excuses, but they need to develop “switches.” Just as a household gadget or room accessories have switches that can activate or deactivate functions, Rotarians need switches to activate action. We need a switch for imagination, a switch for enthusiasm, a switch for compassion and a major switch for service. The remote control should be in the hands of leadership. We have extension chords in our dwellings. Let Rotary dwelling too have a switch board with remote control in the hands of our leaders.

Let us remember that life is too short for us to entertain the negative habit of making excuses. If we want to achieve something in life, there is no doubt that we will find a way. If on the other hand, we don't want to do something, and scared of difficulties and challenges, we can always find an excuse. Therefore, don't let excuses hold us back from developing our full potential. When the door is closed, why don't we look through the open window?

Stop making excuses and dare to be what you want to be!

Be Yourself

Every once in a while, we wear a mask to hide our emotions, our faces, our deficiencies. Whilst it may be necessary to do so under certain circumstances, we tend to overuse our masks. What's really beneath the mask is more important, more vital and more ethical.

Rotarians are meant to be sincere, compassionate and benevolent. Our worth is more than we realise. The community you have touched may forget the name "Rotary," but will not forget your face. Let our faces reflect what we are and let us improve this picture by being what we are meant to be — more caring, more involved and more committed.

Has someone ever asked you why are you settling for brass when you are made of gold? Whatever be the reasons, by doing so, you are degrading your true worth and drifting away from God's creative plan. You should try to be better than the best instead of settling for the mediocre.

The general trend today is that people settle for instant happiness, unsatisfying careers, shallow relationships etc. Settling for something worthwhile is all about embracing what is best for you. When you settle for the average, you accept less than what you deserve and less than what you are capable of becoming. "The minute you settle for less than you deserve, you get even less than you settled for!" remarks Maureen Dowd.

The only way to truly embrace your greatness is to stop settling for something mediocre and to aim high. Set big exciting goals in life because the more excited you are about something, the more motivated you will be to push through and accomplish them. You never know what you can accomplish till you try. In the process, even if you fail, you are closer to something that is worth living for.

Wouldn't you like to see the best version of yourself come to life? Then, never settle for less! Set your aims always high and you will get great results.

Tap yourselves. Be what you are meant to be. Rotary needs your true face behind the mask.

Rotary can make a difference

We all tend to belittle the efforts of individual Rotarians in the arena of mega services. We also tend to feel unimportant in the vast sea of miseries and wants. "What can a single Rotarian do?" is often a question that Rotarians ask themselves. True, the magnitude of a problem seems gigantic and individual action may look to be insignificant but unless that "ONE" person sets out to meet a challenge, no gainful purpose will ever be served. No concern is too insignificant, no service too minor. No effort too flimsy. Today's problems of calamities, terrorism, corruption, hunger, disease, cruelties and many more added to this list seem to be beyond an individual — and that is true — but it will have to be an individual who will take that first step to motivate millions of others to join the crusade.

In this world, all major achievements have been at the door step of individuals. Paul Harris was one man who dreamt and Rotary is today's reality. There are umpteen names that stand out as our role models in the arena of success. Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Theresa, Nelson Mandela, Alexander Fleming and many more did not hesitate to be that "ONE" person who changed the destiny of humanity.

Rotarians are individuals but have the backing of a great organisation that is globally active and wedded to the goal of Peace. There cannot be Peace when there is rampant hunger, unsatisfactory health, widespread discontent, looming natural calamities and hovering terrorism. It will have to be individual Rotarians to take those first steps to combat these demons. Polio eradication programme of Rotary was started by individuals in Philippines and later adopted by Rotary International. Twenty three long years have passed and we are not close enough to declare this planet as "Polio Free." Individuals will again have to take new steps to combat an old enemy. What have you done?

Any smallest act of service, which benefits only a very small handful may be dismissed as unimportant but remember that for the recipients of that service, it means a great lot. It is only a multitude of small acts that a bigger outcome is possible. A drop in an ocean may seem negligible but were it not for that drop — and many such other drops — the ocean would be incomplete.

Rotary is crying out for many many small acts of service that will, one day, translate into a global action. Let us not be little small acts of service. They always make a difference.

Look at the brighter side

When you look at the shining sun, the bright lights tend to dazzle your eyes and in turn the eyes close. No sun has however, ever hurt the eyes, if you are careful to look at the brightness and derive strength, that keeps your vision intact.

In Rotary, when we meet obstacles, failure or disappointments — these are the darker sides of life and unless we train ourselves to overcome these feelings and look at positive sides, we will never achieve perfection. Pessimism is an unwanted trait and optimism is the prism of light that will unfold the colours of a rainbow. A rainbow is impossible without clouds and wet showers. If there is a glass half full of water, the pessimist will tell you that it is half empty and an optimist will say it is half full.

Rotary's quest for service leads Rotarians through paths that may sometimes be difficult or even impossible to travel. If we look at the bright side, we will search for a newer path or navigate through difficult terrains but if we do not search for an alternative, we fail to succeed. Success is no easy reward and the reward is much sweeter if it accrues after hard work or after passing through challenges. It is the obligation of Rotary leadership to teach Rotarians to look at brighter side. It is the function of Rotary leadership to show how to look at the brighter side.

Thomas Alva Edison failed hundreds of times when he was experimenting with the electric bulb. When he didn't give up, a friend said "You have failed to succeed in your mission. Are you not disappointed? Will you now give up?" Edison smiled and said "Yes, I am disappointed but not disheartened. In fact, I have succeeded because 99 percent of experiments that were undertaken have shown me another way that may succeed. Failure teaches us newer routes to success.

Friends! Rotary urges you to be ever optimistic. Rotary teaches you the lessons of patience. Rotary teaches you not to loose hope. Rotary teaches you that there is always light at the end of the dark tunnel. Optimism, patience, perseverance and faith can convert a dark alley into a well lighted path to success. The path to success is not a paved road. At times, there is no road at all and we may have to make new roads for others to travel. Paul Harris and his colleagues never lost hope and rarely did they become despondent when faced with a problem. "Perseverance is the tool of success" they claimed.

Let us all, therefore, be vigilant and always look for the brighter side of a problem.

About the Author



Rtn. Ashok Mahajan
RI Director 2007–2009

Rtn. Ashok Mulkraj Mahajan, member of Rotary Club of Mulund, RI District 3140, Mumbai, India has been involved in Rotary since 1973 and rose from an ordinary member to the coveted position of RI Director 2007–2009 by his commitment to the Rotary movement. He was the President of RC Mulund in 1982–83 and District Governor, RI District 3140 in 1993–94.

Born on July 23, 1947, he graduated with a Bachelor of Engineering degree from the Bombay University with distinction and then took a Diploma in Operations Management and Business Management from the Bombay University. He now runs an industry for manufacturing electrical and electronic components.

He has been RI President's representative to District Conferences many times and was also appointed as the Zonal Coordinator for Membership Task Force in 1995–96 and again in 1998–99.

He is associated with the National PolioPlus Committee for over 10 years and now he is a member of the International PolioPlus Committee of RI. He also served as the Zonal coordinator for Avoidable Blindness Task Force during 2000–02 and was a member in the India Presidential PolioPlus Summit 2001–02. He represented RI District 3140 at the 2001 Council on Legislation, Chicago.

Rtn. Ashok Mahajan was conferred with the Distinguished Service Award, Service above Self Award, Regional Service Award for a Polio free world and the Golden Century Award. He is a major donor to TRF, benefactor and a member of the Paul Harris Society.

Rtn. Ashok Mahajan has been inducted as a Trustee of The Rotary Foundation of RI for the period 2009–2013. This assignment has been given to him immediately after he completed his tenure as RI Director in June 2009.

Rtn. Ashok Mahajan's wife Nayantara, his son Nikhil and daughter Namrata ably support him in his work in Rotary and create the perfect atmosphere for the family to celebrate the blessings of life. A deeply religious person, Rtn. Ashok Mahajan enjoys reading, cricket and social service.