



---

## Motivational and Bounce Back Poem Of Rudyard Kipling ‘If....’

---

**Prof. Seema Patil- Koshti**

Prin. Dr. Sudhakar Rao Jadhavar Arts, Commerce and Science College,  
Manaji- Nagar, Narhe-Dhayari, Pune, Maharashtra  
(Affiliated by Savitribai Phule Pune University)

**Corresponding Author- Prof. Seema Patil- Koshti**

Email: [seema.c.koshti@gmail.com](mailto:seema.c.koshti@gmail.com)

DOI- [10.5281/zenodo.14202919](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14202919)

---

### Abstract:

Rudyard Kipling’s poems have various themes; domestic life, love, motivation, life lessons, morals and humanism. These themes expressed in his poems through various forms, versification and diction as per his intention and purpose. In this digital world has to be maintain balanced life. This research paper will help to learner to be motivate and bounce back in disappointment situation or to researcher for further research to know his various dimensions or aspects. ‘If--’(1910) poem is written by Rudyard Kipling. It is didactic poem. Father informs his son how to be in motivate in the life and bounce back at the time of difficult situation. Research source has been used secondary sources. Literature review has been referred internet, thesis and other journal papers. This research paper consists of Description, objectives, methods and findings.

It will help to know how Rudyard convinced life lessons for bounce back in the difficult situation and how to be behave in his life by maintaining balanced life. My research paper assists to understand themes of Rudyard’s poem “If-“ expressed his fatherly love, domestic life, spirituality and morality, self-discipline, justifiable in life, detachment, Resilience and desire.

**Keywords:** Motivation, moral, bounce back, sustainable life, inspiration, spiritual.

---

### Introduction:

Rudyard Kipling is an eminent poet, novelist, journalist and story writer in his contemporary era. He was born on 30 December 1865 in Bombay and his parents from British. Bernice M. Murphy said, “Kipling’s parents considered themselves Anglo-Indians”. So he is known as Anglo-Indian or Euroasian. He was honored by the Noble Prize in literature in 1907. He was the First English-language writer who was youngest (41 age) person to receive this prize to date. He was nominated for the British Poet Laureateship and knighthood but declined both.

His parents John Lockwood and Alice met in 1863 & courted at Rudyard Lake In Rudyard, Staffordshire, England so his parents named their first child as Joseph Rudyard. His father was Professor at the School of Art in Bombay.

His reputation has reformed due to his political and social activity at that time. His conflicting views continued in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. According to critic Douglas Kerr, ‘Kipling is still an author who can inspire passionate disagreement and his place in literary and cultural history is far from settled. But as the age of the European empires recedes, he is recognized as an incomparable, if controversial, interpreter of how empire was experienced. That an increasing recognition of his extraordinary narrative gifts, make him a force to be reckoned with.’

He had written poems; IF---, The Last Sutti, The Story of Uriah, The Sacrifices for ER-HEB, The Two Unknown Goddess, The Question And The Answer, etc. His children’s books are classics; one critic quoted ‘a versatile and luminous narrative gift’. He has expressed various themes in his poems. If – is inspirational/motivational or bounce back poem. It is written in 1895 and published in 1910 in “Brother of Square Toes”; lessons of Rewards and Fairies. He was inspired to compose the poem ‘IF— ‘ by Leander Starr Jameson’s action and the leader Of the Jameson Raid.

In this Poem poet advises to his son how to bounce back and be in motivated in the life. Rudyard Kipling was the most controversial author in English literature yet he applauded by some critics through his well works.

### Methods:

Descriptive Method is used to present this research paper. The Secondary sources referred such as Digital materials and thesis related to the poem; ‘If---‘of Rudyard Kipling. Studied literature and analyzed aspects of his poems, which assist and guide to the people to educate how to handle circumstances in their life. This helps to analyze different aspects of his poems and to understand how to sustain life and bounce back for state of affairs or situation.

**Description of the poem:** “IF---“by Rudyard Kipling:

This poem divided into 4 stanzas. It is exploring fundamental things and universal ideas in the literature. It is advising poem for his son in the metric form and rhyme scheme. He was caring and kind father. He worries about his son so that he advices him some mantras of life to be in motivation and to sustain situation by deciphering hurdles.

#### Stanza 1

*If you can keep your head when all about you  
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;  
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,  
But make allowance for their doubting too;  
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,  
Or, being lied about, don't deal in lies,  
Or, being hated, don't give way to hating,  
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise;*

The poet advises his son if people blame him, he should be peaceful and patience. He should trust himself when other doubt you.

Allow for their doubts on which he should introspect and try to correct himself if there are some flaws or faults. If he is waiting for his work, he has to be wait without tiresome with patience.

If people are lying, he should listen patiently and be unruffled but he should not lie in his life.

If people hate him, he should give way to spread love among the people instead of hate but you neither look too good nor talk too wise. He always keep in connect or among the common people.

Overall poet expresses morals to keep sustainable life and to bounce back by overcoming obstacles of life. According to me the poet expressed common people's psychology so here he said, '*And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise*'. Even it is philosophical line.

**Theme: Patience, justification, introspection, don't show up as good and wise themes are expressed**

#### Stanza 2

*If you can dream—and not make dreams your  
master;  
If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim;  
If you can meet with triumph and disaster  
And treat those two impostors just the same;  
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken  
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,  
Or watch the things you gave your life to broken,  
And stoop and build 'em up with wornout tools;*

If he has dreams he should achieve dreams instead of making his dreams his own master. If he thinks it is his aim. This will not assist to gain his future goals because dreaming and thinking wont work. Along with these things his son has to execute action plan. Hard work should be necessary to obtain dream. I would like to say here of A.P.J.

**Prof. Seema Patil- Koshti**

Abdul Kamal's quote “Dreams are not those which comes while we are sleeping, but dreams are those when you don't sleep before fulfilling them.”

“Triumph and disaster” meet as imposters while executing his action plan to achieve his dreams. He enjoys either extremely happiness or sorrowfulness. These won't live long time. Without distressing and worrying treat them same. Here poet advised to maintain ‘tranquility’. It is the quality or state of being tranquil to go ahead.

He should bear to hear and to speak truth patiently and courageously because fools or cunning people will mislead. He would be trap in betrayers, so ready to face circumferences and consequences to success in life.

As good observer has audacity to observe the things and rebuild his life himself by using worn-out tools in broken condition.

**Theme: Dream and action, treat equal triumph and disaster, patience and awareness, keen observation, detachment and attachment.**

#### Stanza 3

*If you can make one heap of all your winnings  
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,  
And lose, and start again at your beginnings  
And never breathe a word about your loss;  
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew  
To serve your turn long after they are gone  
And so hold on when there is nothing in you  
Except the Will which says to them: “Hold on”;*

One should make a heap of winnings, Taking risk is either one becomes successful or faces defeat and loses everything. Meanwhile he should train to bounce back mindset by self-motivating without distress and anxiety.

Never think of losing. He should train his heart, nerves and sinew how to bounce back again and again to gain his goals along with his vision. One day he will be succeed.

Don't bow in front of defeat by mind. He should keep on trying-trying to train himself to make strong will power when he hasn't anything. He has strong ‘Will Power’ so that he should continue to achieve his dreams or all goals courageously. He will defeat to the defeat one day.

**Theme: Taking risk, balanced mind set, courage, consistency**

#### Stanza 4

*If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,  
Or walk with kings—nor lose the common touch;  
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you;  
If all men count with you, but none too much;  
If you can fill the unforgiving minute  
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run—  
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,  
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!*

One should live among common people but he has to follow virtues or ethics. One should

connect with common people yet he walks or lives with kings it means grate or richest people.

No one hurt him neither his foes nor loving friends without accepting himself. All people will be dependent on him. He will never allow himself to depend on others and other people too.

For poet time is virtuous. Poet says utilize time without passing it and advised him to follow all mantras in his life. Here everything is in front of his son. If he follows all advised mantras he will become true and good man.

**Theme: Virtues and ethics, time, will power, humanism**

**Literature Devices:**

**Apostrophe:** in this poem a speaker advises his son who is not present.

**Assonance:** Repeated vowel sounds preceded and followed by differing consonant sounds. Eg. *And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise-* sound /u/

**Antithesis:** Two opposite or contrasting ideas preset to juxtapose.

Example; *If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,*

**Imagery:** It means figurative language used to represent objects, actions and ideas to appeal our physical sense.

*If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,*

*And stoop and build 'em up with wornout tools;*

**Personification:** Human qualities applied for non-human objects, things, and ideas. We feel they have ability to act like human beings.

*If you can dream—and not make dreams your master;*

**Metaphor:-** This figure of speech is making an implicit, implied or hidden comparison between two things or objects that are poles apart from each-other but have some common characteristics between them.

*If you can meet with triumph and disaster*

*And treat those two impostors just the same;*

*And stoop and build 'em up with wornout tools;*

**Synecdoche:** It is used parts of whole or vice-versa.

*If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew*

**Symbolism:** Symbols are used to give symbolic meanings those are different from literary sense.

*And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,*

**Paradoxes:** The poet makes paradoxical statements knowingly to emphasize his ideas or advises.

*If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,*

*But make allowance for their doubting too;*

**Form and meter of the poem:-**

Above maintained figures of speeches are used in his poem to emphasize his advice and ideas. 'IF—' is composed of 32 lines into four stanzas. Each stanza has 8 lines (octave). It is written in iambic pentameter. Its rhyme scheme is ababcdcd.

**Research objectives:**

- To know how Rudyard convinced life lessons for bounce back in the difficult situation.

- To maintain balanced life.
- To understand themes of Rudyard's poem "If—" expressed his fatherly love, domestic life, spirituality and morality, self-discipline, justifiable in life, detachment, Resilience and desire.

**References:**

1. Researcher, Dixit Sushma, 'The Poetic Ethos of Rudyard Kipling A Re Assessment of His Theme Philosophy and Style'(2009) - <http://hdl.handle.net/10603/252774>
2. Wikipedia- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rudyard\\_Kipling](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rudyard_Kipling)