

Nelson Mandela - Conversations with Myself

Fragment from a letter to Winnie Mandela, 1 February 1975

In judging our progress as individuals we tend to concentrate on external factors such as one's social position, influence and popularity, wealth and standard of education. These are, of course, important in measuring one's success in material matters and it is perfectly understandable if many people exert themselves mainly to achieve all these. But internal factors may be even more crucial in assessing one's development as a human being. Honesty, sincerity, simplicity, humility, pure generosity, absence of vanity, readiness to serve others - qualities which are within easy reach of every soul - are the foundation of one's spiritual life.