Chapter 8 Harmony in the Family – Understanding the Values in Human-Human Relationships

Basic Human Aspiration

Continuous Happiness and Prosperity

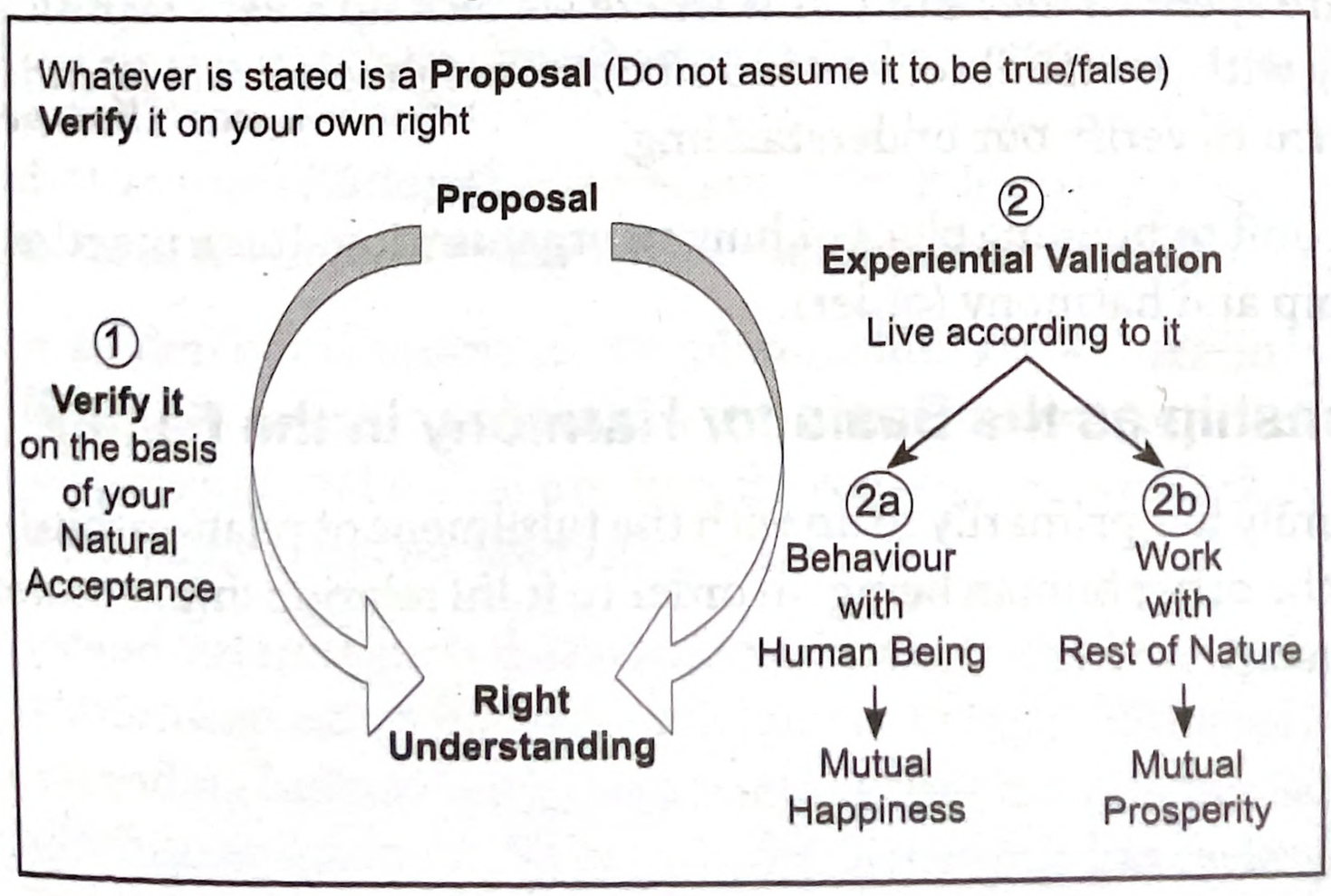
Happiness is to be in Harmony

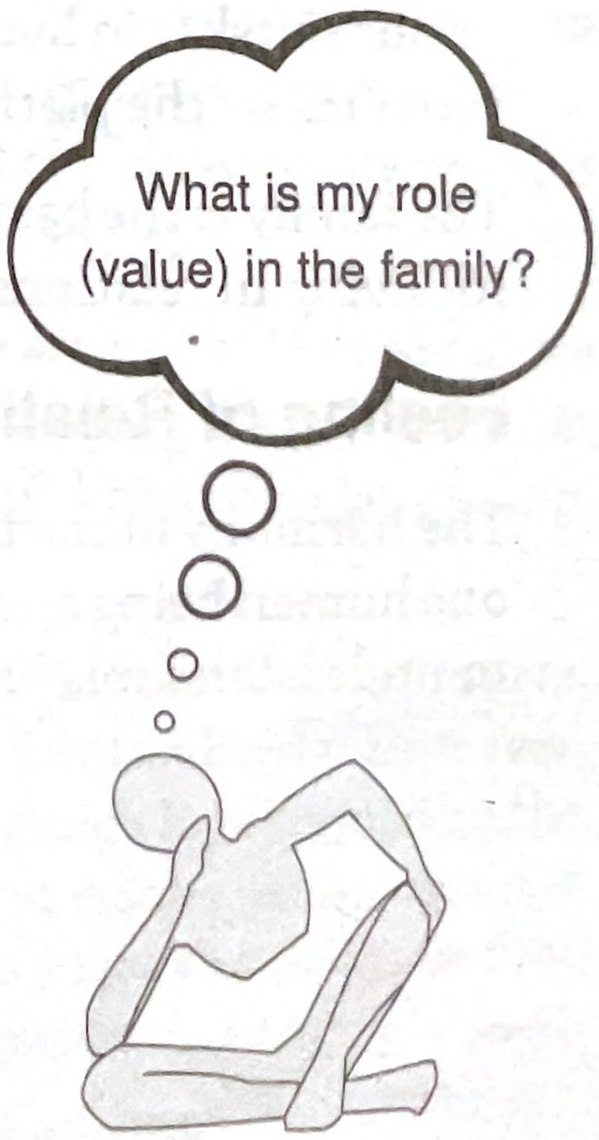
Program for Fulfilment of Human Aspiration

Understanding Harmony and Living in Harmony at All Levels of Being

	Harmony in the Human Being	Chapter 5-7 ✓
☞	**Harmony in the Family**	**Chapter 8**
	Harmony in the Society	Chapter 9
	Harmony in Nature/Existence	Chapter 10-11

Process of Understanding





Recap

In the previous three chapters, we investigated into the harmony in human being through the process of self-exploration. We tried to understand the human being as the co-existence of the Self and the Body. The Self is the domain of consciousness and the Body is the domain of material. We discussed the difference between needs and activities of the two entities, and how the Self is the seer, doer and enjoyer (experiencer), while the Body is used as an instrument in this process. Next, we explored into the activities of the Self, and the process to ensure harmony among all the activities of the Self. This leads to a state of harmony in the Self and paves the way for ensuring continuity of happiness in the Self. Having discussed this, we saw how the Self can be responsible towards the Body.

The programme for continuous happiness is to ensure right understanding, i.e. understanding of the harmony in human being, family, society and nature/existence and to live in harmony at all these levels. On the basis of understanding the human being, particularly the Self, we can now proceed to understand relationship between one Self and the other Self which is the essential part of relationship and of harmony in the family. We want to explore into it in this chapter.

Family as the Basic Unit of Human Interaction

Every human being is born in a family and is part of a family, in which there are parents, grandparents, children, youth, uncles and aunts, cousins, so many relatives and friends. It is the family where we are nurtured and developed from childhood, cared for in sickness and in old age. It is where we start learning to interact with other human beings, to share and to care. It is the place where we start becoming aware of relationship. The moment we hear the word mother, there is a whole lot of feeling. Similarly, every relationship name has an associated feeling which becomes more and more enriched as we interact. Our basic grooming for living in relationship starts in the family. The first few years, what we call the formative years, are spent in the family. It is where we pick up a very significant part of our sanskar in living with our family elders and siblings, neighbours and friends. It also provides us the platform to verify our understanding.

The family is the basic unit or building block of human organisation. It is a practice ground for living in relationship and harmony (order).

Feeling of Relationship as the Basis for Harmony in the Family

The harmony in the family has primarily to do with the fulfilment of relationship between one human being and the other human being. In order to fulfil relationship, it is necessary to understand relationship.

Understanding Relationship

We will now explore into the four important aspects of relationship:

1. Relationship is – between one Self (I_1) and another Self (I_2)
2. There are feelings in relationship – in one Self (I_1) for the other Self (I_2)
3. These feelings can be recognized – they are definite
4. The fulfilment of these feelings and their right evaluation lead to mutual happiness

Let us explore these four aspects one by one.

1. Relationship is – between one Self (I_1) and another Self (I_2)

When we talk about relationship, we can make two important observations.

The first is that the relationship is already there, we are in fact embedded in relationship. We are already related to each other – whether we recognize it or not. We do not have to construct or create relationship. All we need to do is to understand relationship.

We are part of a family, with the parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters. We have neighbours, relatives and friends. We are connected to the people who are producing, processing, packaging, marketing, delivering, repairing all the things we use. We are dependent on the people who provide services to us. There are a lot of people who depend on us – for the goods and services that we produce or provide. It is interesting to find out how many people are involved even in the smallest thing we may be consuming, like a glass of milk that we may be having in the morning. There is the milkman who delivered the bottle of milk, the people involved in making the glass bottle, the people in the dairy, the farmers growing, harvesting and making the fodder available and so on. You will find this list is pretty long! Like that we are embedded in relationship with other human beings.

When we recognize the relationship and see that it is there, we think in terms of accepting it and fulfilling it. We have asked many times if it is naturally acceptable to live in relationship or opposition and every time, we can see that it is naturally acceptable to live in relationship. It indicates that relationship is already there, it is a part and parcel of human existence and existence as a whole. We only need to understand it to fulfil relationship.

When we don't understand it, the relationship is still there but we are not able to see it, we are not able to accept it and therefore, we don't think in terms of ensuring the fulfilment in the relationship; and we have to face the consequences of lack of fulfilment of relationship. That is a major crisis we are facing today.

The second observation is that relationship is between one Self and the other Self. Of course, the relationship exists between one human being and the other human being. However, understanding human being, we can easily see that it is the Self which is recognizing the relationship, and not the Body. It is the Self which has feelings in relationship, and not the Body. Also, these feelings are recognized by the other Self and not the Body. In that sense, the relationship is between one Self and the other Self. It is the Self that is able to

see or understand relationship, accept relationship and fulfil relationship. The Body may be used as an instrument in the process of fulfilling the relationship by both human beings.

Needless to say, while we all do want to fulfil relationship, we are not able to do it until we understand the human being. As long as we consider human being to be just the Body, it is not possible to understand relationship; and without understanding relationship, it is not possible to fulfil relationship. The clarity that human being is co-existence of Self and Body, is essential for understanding relationship and fulfilling it.

2. There are feelings in relationship – in one Self (I_1) for the other Self (I_2)

The important issue in human relationship is that of the feelings. We can see that feelings are in the Self, not in the Body. It is the Self which has the feelings and which recognises the feelings. To understand relationship, one has to understand the Self and the feelings in the Self.

Feelings like respect and affection are more important rather than merely the exchange of physical facility. For example, you are happy with your mother's cooking even if it is very simple, because of the feelings in that relationship. You may complain about very similar hostel mess food, if you haven't realised the feelings in the relationship with the mess staff.

The major crisis we are facing in relationship today is because of the failure to understand the Self. We are trying to assume relationship on the basis of body, trying to fulfil relationship on the basis of body and it does not work. If we don't understand the Self, we don't understand the feelings and therefore, we are not able to ensure the fulfilment of the feelings in relationship. We end up trying to ensure the fulfilment of the relationship through physical facility.

Feelings are central to human relationship. No amount of physical facility can ensure the fulfilment of feelings and therefore, no amount of physical facility alone can ensure fulfilment in relationship.

3. These feelings can be recognized – they are definite

The third important issue is that these feelings can be recognised, they are definite. There are nine feelings in relationship. These are the feelings which we can understand which we can ensure within ourselves which we can share with others and thus ensure mutual fulfilment in relationship. These are the feelings which are naturally acceptable to us in the relationship with the other human being.

Feelings (values) in relationship – nine feelings

1. Trust (foundation value)
2. Respect
3. Affection
4. Care
5. Guidance
6. Reverence
7. Glory
8. Gratitude
9. Love (complete value)

First of all, let us investigate if these feelings are naturally acceptable to us or not. For example, we can ask ourselves what is naturally acceptable to us:

- Feeling of trust or mistrust
- Feeling of respect or disrespect
- Feeling of affection or jealousy
- Feeling of care or exploitation
- Feeling of guidance or misguidance
- Feeling of reverence or irreverence
- Feeling of glory or inglorious feelings
- Feeling of gratitude or ingratitude
- Feeling of love or hatred

It will be quite obvious which feelings are naturally acceptable to us. Then we can explore if these feelings are naturally acceptable just to us or they are naturally acceptable to others, and ultimately, to everyone.

You will see that these feelings are naturally acceptable to you, therefore, having these feelings in yourself leads to your happiness. When you have a feeling of respect within you, you are comfortable within, you are in harmony within – because this feeling of respect is naturally acceptable to you. When you are in harmony within, you are in a state of happiness.

On the other hand, if you have a feeling of disrespect for the other, you are uncomfortable within because you are in contradiction within – the feeling of disrespect is not naturally acceptable to you. Just by having this feeling of disrespect, it leads to contradiction within yourself and therefore, leads to a state of unhappiness within. This is the case even if you have not shared it with the other, even if you have not expressed it to the other. This disharmony within is making you uncomfortable and therefore, unhappy. Are you able to see that? Also, you can find out if the complaints regarding the lack of fulfilment in relationship have to do with the absence of these feelings.

4. Fulfilment of feelings in relationship and their evaluation leads to mutual happiness

When we have naturally acceptable feelings in the Self, we share them with the other and when we are both able to evaluate the feelings rightly, it leads to mutual happiness, i.e. the happiness of oneself as well as the happiness of the other.

The important observation is that these feelings are naturally acceptable to us therefore, having these feelings in us leads to our happiness. Similarly, these feelings are naturally acceptable to the other, so when we share these feelings with the other, it leads to happiness of the other as well. Evaluation is required to verify whether we have these feelings or not, whether we have expressed these feelings to the other or not, whether the same feeling has reached to the other or not and ultimately evaluation is required to see if the result is mutual happiness or not.

For example, if I have a feeling of respect, it leads to harmony within, therefore, happiness within. This feeling of respect within myself leads to my happiness. When I share this feeling of respect with you, it leads to your happiness – that is how it leads to mutual happiness. This can be verified for all other feelings – trust, affection care, gratitude, etc.

The harmony in family has to do with relationship and relationship has to do with these four aspects. Only when we understand these four aspects, we understand the relationship, we are able to accept relationship and we are able to ensure the feelings in relationship leading to the fulfilment in relationship. Therefore, having right understanding or clarity about relationship is at the base of fulfilment in relationship.

Appraisal of the Current Status

Today, we have much more physical facility than ever before; yet a significant percentage of people don't get enough to eat and don't have enough clothes to protect their body. It is certainly not a problem of production, but of distribution. You see, within your family, you have an acceptance for the others – for the children, for the older people and so on – so you share quite unconditionally. Outside that family, that acceptance of relationship is not there, so in spite of having more than enough, the distribution does not take place. Not only is the acceptance of relationship not there, we have a feeling of opposition for people outside a limited circle of people. That is why, we are collectively spending a very large percentage of our resources preparing for war. Isn't it quite paradoxical?

The problem today is that we assume ourselves to be the Body and we try to see the relationship on the basis of the Body. We, therefore, fail to understand relationship and consequently, we fail to fulfil relationship, despite all our good intentions. That is why, we have so much of complaint regarding relationship. We keep thinking and talking about the lack of fulfilment in relationship, but we hardly know what to do about it. Most of the time, finding lack of fulfilment of relationship, we try to fulfil it through physical facility, but it does not work. We had explored in chapter 3, whether the unhappiness in our families is more due to lack of fulfilment in the relationship or more due to lack of physical facility. And we had observed that much of our unhappiness has to do with the lack of fulfilment in relationship, while we may be spending major part of our time and effort for physical facility.

The problems in relationship today are due to absence of one or more of the right feelings. And we try to make up this gap by physical facility or by trying to demand these feelings from others, rather than ensuring these feelings in ourselves and sharing it with others.

We can recall the question that if you are thinking of taking revenge with someone for two hours and after two hours you drop the idea. You were unhappy. The other person would not even know about it, because you have not expressed it, but your unhappiness is definite. If you look at this unhappiness, the basic reason is that you had a feeling of opposition for the other. Since this feeling of opposition is not naturally acceptable to you, therefore, you were uncomfortable within. Instead of having a feeling of relationship (like affection),

you had the feeling of opposition (like jealousy) which is not naturally acceptable to you, therefore, it was leading to a contradiction within and therefore, unhappiness within.

The majority of complaints in relationship have to do with the lack of fulfilment of naturally acceptable feelings. Since we do not understand the Self, we do not understand the feelings, we do not have these feelings in ourselves, and we are not able to express them to the other, leading to lack of fulfilment in relationship. In fact, we are not even able to appreciate that the problem is because of lack of fulfilment of feelings. Instead we try to compensate it with physical facility. We think that if we only had more physical facility, we would have resolved the problem in relationship. Lack of physical facility is not really the cause – the complaint is about the lack of feeling and not just the physical facility. Because we don't understand relationship, and because we do not ensure these feelings in relationship, we are not able to ensure the fulfilment in relationship. Let us look at the following episode in this context.

> *A couple was sharing their situation. "I like to go for a walk in the morning", she said, added "and he likes to play badminton, and so it goes – we keep fighting about this". Now, is their problem one of their physical activities or does it have to do with the lack of feelings – lack of affection for each other? What do you think? If they had the feeling of affection for each other, one would like to fulfil the expectation of the other first or the husband may play the badminton and the wife may walk around the badminton court. The gap between them is the lack of feeling. If the feelings are there, they can always work out a joint programme for living together with fulfilment.*

We attempt to fill this gap in feelings with physical facility. We go for elaborate dinners, give exclusive gifts, go to exotic holiday destinations; we celebrate occasions like birthdays, wedding anniversaries and so on. Do such activities actually fill the gap, if the feelings are lacking? Can physical facility be substituted for feelings in the relationship?

We have seen that fulfilment in relationship is on account of ensuring the right feelings and no amount of physical facility can ensure the fulfilment of feelings. While we have physical facility, we have not understood these feelings and they are not there in us – that is the problem. Now we are further not working to understand the feelings and ensure them in the Self, rather we only expect the other to express right feelings to us – we are just expecting these feelings from the other. If the other is expressing the right feelings to us, we feel happy, and if the other is not expressing the right feelings to us, we feel unhappy. For example, we want the feeling of respect. Now if the other respects me, I feel happy, and if the other does not respect me, I feel unhappy. That is how we go about it generally. In fact, majority of our programs today are woven around it.

Find out, if you think in terms of having the feeling of respect and sharing this feeling of respect with the other, or you think in terms of just getting respect from other. If you think in terms of getting the feeling of respect from the other or even demand for it, it doesn't work. In case the other person has not understood relationship, has not understood the Self which is the source of the feelings, has not understood the feelings in the Self, (s)he does not have the feeling of respect within. Now when the other does not have the feeling of respect within, (s)he cannot express it, cannot share it with you either. Therefore, you

don't get the respect from the other, not because (s)he does not want to respect you, but because the other does not have that feeling of respect within. When this respect is not forthcoming from the other, we keep doing many things to get respect from the other – we wear fashionable clothes, build big houses and so many other things like that. Does all this effort work? It may appear to work temporarily, but it doesn't really work.

Refer to the question that we asked earlier, "When you go to a party with an exclusive dress, does it generate a feeling of respect or create feeling of jealousy in the other"? It creates a feeling of jealousy mostly. Sometimes you do get a feeling of respect from one who already has a feeling of respect for you, for your past behaviour (rather than on account of the exclusive dress). If you already have a relationship with the other, and the other is comfortable with you, (s)he will have that respect for you. Otherwise the other will have that feeling of jealousy, because (s)he himself is trying to get respect from you. We have become competitors. We spend so much effort, time and money to dress up exclusively and what we get in return is the feeling of jealousy rather than the feeling of respect.

What is happening is that people are not able to express the feeling of respect to the other, because they do not have it. This is because they do not understand the feeling. Rather, they are trying to get it from the other. You want to get the feeling from the other. You yourself do not have that feeling. You do not have it because you don't understand the relationship, the feelings in relationship. Same is the problem with the other. (S)he also has not understood relationship, the feeling in relationship. Therefore, (s)he does not have the feeling of respect, and hence (s)he is not able to express it to you. Ultimately the situation is that most people are begging for respect and almost everyone's bowl is empty. We are begging for respect and we are not getting it from the other because the other's bowl is empty. And we're not able to give the respect to the other because our own bowl is also empty. We can see that we are stuck with this problem of lack of fulfilment in relationship because of three things:

1. We are not able to ensure the fulfilment of feelings which are naturally acceptable to us in the relationship (and we try to compensate for it by physical facility which does not work).
2. We are not able to ensure feelings in ourselves because we have not understood the Self and
3. We are not able to understand that the relationship is between one Self and the other Self.

The major issue in relationship is that of feeling; and not of physical facility alone.

The larger issues of domination, exploitation, adultery, divorce, breakdown of the family system, etc. can also be seen as symptoms of lack of understanding of relationship and of lack of feelings in relationship.

These problems point to the need to understand human being, to know the Self, to understand the relationship, to ensure the right feelings in the Self, to share these feelings in relationship with the other and to evaluate them, ensuring mutual happiness.

The Way Ahead

With this background, let's see what we need to do to ensure fulfilment in relationship. The most fundamental thing is to understand these feelings. If we understand these feelings, we will have these feelings in us. If we want to ensure fulfilment of a relationship, it is essential to understand the feelings. When we understand them, we have the right (naturally acceptable) feelings in us. When we have these feelings in us:

1. We are comfortable within. These feelings are naturally acceptable to us, therefore, we're in a state of harmony (happiness) within. The moment we understand the feelings in relationship we have these feelings in ourselves leading to a state of harmony (happiness) within. This much is definite.
2. We share these feelings with the other. That is very natural. If we have a feeling of respect for you, we express the feeling of respect to you. Similarly, the feeling of affection, feeling of care, feeling of guidance, etc., will get expressed.
3. Since these feelings are also naturally acceptable to you, it will lead to happiness for you. Ultimately it will lead to mutual happiness.

During the discussion on relationship, seeing a ray of hope, a student confided in his human values teacher. He told her about the bitter relationship with his father. For two and half years both of them had not spoken to each other. Their only means of communicating during this time was through the mother. Could he do something to make up with his father? The teacher told him that if his desire was genuine, he would figure out a way to reconcile and patch up things, 'All it takes is a little effort'.

The boy looked thoughtful and nodded his head as he remembered. Two and half years of not speaking to each other, a strenuous relationship of a father and son, living in the same house is quite unthinkable. It had started one evening when the parents were out. The boy like any youth took advantage of the situation and invited his friends over for a party and a game of cards. Just as they started their fun, the parents walked in unexpectedly much to the dismay of the boy and his friends. The father was furious. He not only scolded the boys, but he also beat up his son in the process. It was not just embarrassing but a humiliating experience for the son, being beaten in front of his friends, not to mention the scolding of his friends.

A few days later the boy, on his return from college, found his father playing cards with his friends at home! How could this be all right for the father but not for a grown-up son? 'Should he not practice what he was preaches'? Engulfed with frustration and resentment, the son pointed this out to his dad. Unfortunately, the father immediately flared up and once more, he beat up the boy – only this time in front of his own friends. This incident was the last straw for the son and thus father and son relationship turned silently sour. The boy stopped talking to his father.

In all this, the boy was not comfortable within. In the classroom discussion on relationship, he had figured out that the father must also be unhappy, so he had decided to look at the situation afresh.

'All it takes is a little effort', the words of his teacher resonated in the January air. It was New Year and the boy thought it could be a good time to heal the broken relationship. He got a beautiful flower and went to greet his father, who was getting ready to go to work. Rather awkwardly the boy held up the flower, like a man proposing to a lady.

The father asked curtly, 'what is this'? The boy, 'it is a flower'. The father said loudly, 'I can see that it is a flower, but why are you giving it to me? What do you want'? The father waved his hand indicating that he didn't have the time; he was already late for office.

The son turned away sadly and tried to fight the tears that were already trickling down his cheeks. 'The flower is just an excuse – I want to talk to you. I have much to say. I only wanted some of your time", he whispered.

The father couldn't but help notice his son's hunched shoulders and head hung low. The image of this gripped the heart of the father and then he very softly said, 'OK, let us talk..."

Two and half years of silence was finally broken. Talk they did. They shared their deepest feelings, sometimes interrupted by tears and sometimes by laughter. It was a new beginning for them.

Now in this incident, can you see that it was the understanding of relationship which made a difference?

The programme for ensuring the fulfilment of relationship is as follows:

First, to understand and accept the relationship, identify the feelings in relationship, to understand these feelings and ensure that these feelings are there in us. In fact, the moment we understand the feelings, we have the feelings in us. We don't have to do anything else to create these feelings, except to understand them.

Secondly, we have to share these feelings with the other. Because this is naturally acceptable to the other as well, it will lead to happiness in the other also. Thus, it will lead to mutual happiness. And that is how the fulfilment in relationship will take place.

In this way, with understanding and acceptance of relationship, understanding the feelings in relationship, having the feelings, expressing these feelings and right evaluation of feelings lead to mutual happiness.

We can see that ultimately the fulfilment of the relationship calls for the understanding these nine feelings and their fulfilment. We will now try to investigate into each of these feelings one by one starting from trust.

(***Note:*** This chapter is particularly large and contains detailed discussion on the basic values in relationship. To facilitate understanding on the part of students, we are providing the 'Salient Points' and 'Test Your Understanding' after each major section of the chapter).

Salient Points regarding Relationship

- *The family is the basic unit of human organisation for living in relationship and harmony (order).*
- *To live with fulfilment in relationship, it is essential to understand relationship. Assuming relationship without understanding does not work.*
- *Relationship is, it is already there. In human-human relationship, it exists between one Self (I_1) and the other Self (I_2). We are embedded in relationship – whether we recognize it or not. When we recognize the relationship, we think in terms of accepting it and fulfilling it. When we don't understand relationship, the relationship is still there but we are not able to see it, we are not able to accept it and therefore, we don't think in terms of ensuring the fulfilment in the relationship.*
- *The unhappiness in the family is more due to lack of fulfilment in the relationship, but also due to lack of physical facility. The major issue is that of fulfilment of feelings in relationship; and with that, the minor issue is lack of physical facility. By itself, physical facility cannot compensate for lack of feelings.*
- *The base of relationship is feelings – in one Self (I_1) for other Self (I_2). Feelings are in the Self, not in the Body. Feelings are fundamental to fulfilment in relationship.*
- *These feelings are definite, so they can be understood. There are nine naturally acceptable feelings in relationship – from trust (foundation value) to love (complete value).*
- *When we ensure these naturally acceptable feelings in ourselves, we share them with the other and when we are both able to evaluate the feelings rightly, it leads to mutual happiness.*

Test Your Understanding regarding Relationship

Part 1: Questions for Self-evaluation

(Have we grasped the basic proposals made in this chapter?)

1. Is it possible to live in relationship without understanding relationship? How is a family the basic ground for understanding relationships? Explain.
2. 'Relationship is – between one Self (I_1) and another Self (I_2)'. Examine this statement.
3. Feelings in the Self are fundamental to live with fulfilment in relationship. Evaluate this statement.
4. What are the feelings (values) in human relationship? Are they naturally acceptable to you? Do you think these feelings are also naturally acceptable to others?

Contd...

5. What is the outcome when we try to identify relationship based on the exchange of physical facility alone?

Part 2: Practice Exercises for Self-exploration

(To help connect the content to one's life, at least at the level of thought, these exercises may be done individually or in a group, particularly with friends and family members)

1. What is the meaning of family for you? List down the people in your family/ extended family.
   a. What do you call these people? You may be calling them by a relationship name like father, mother, brother, sister, chacha, chachi, mama, mami, etc. or by a family name (pet-name) or their formal name.
   b. What are your expectations from each of these people?
   c. What are your responsibilities towards each of them?
   d. What is your state of harmony with each person?

   Now, write down your conclusions from this exercise.
2. Make a list of at least ten relationship pairs in the family (e.g. father-mother, mother-daughter, mother-son, father-son, father-daughter, brother-brother, brother-sister, chacha-chachi, mama-mami, chacha-mama, etc.). For each pair, write down
   a. The rough evaluation of the state of harmony of that pair. If your parents are in harmony with each other, write 100% in front of father-mother. If your chacha is in 50% harmony with your mama, write 50% in front of chacha-mama.
   b. The reason for that state of harmony or disharmony.
   c. How can you contribute to ensuring harmony in these relationships (wherever you find it lacking)?

   What is your conclusion from this exercise?
3. Take the relationship in which you have the most dissatisfaction or complaints. If you are in harmony with every member of your family, you can skip this exercise or you can do it for someone in your extended family or friends circle.
   a. Make a list of your dissatisfaction, complaints and all the things that you dislike about the other person.
   b. Make a list of some of the good qualities about the other person.
   c. In these lists, find out the points that have to do with physical facility and the points that have to do with feeling.

   What are your conclusions from this exercise?

Trust as the Foundation Value

We can see that the fulfilment of the relationship calls for the understanding and expressing these nine feelings so, let us begin with the feeling of trust. Trust is "to be assured".

Trust is to be assured that the other intends to make me happy and prosperous.

Do you feel assured when you have the clarity that the other wants to make you happy and prosperous? Since our basic aspiration is happiness, prosperity and its continuity, so if we are clear that the other person wants to make us happy and prosperous, we feel assured of him – that's what is meant by having a feeling of trust. On the other hand, if we have even a small doubt that the other person wants to make us unhappy or deprived, we will not feel assured of him. We will have doubt and apprehension or fear. We will have the feeling of mistrust for him.

Is this definition of trust naturally acceptable to you? Let's not hurry to answer that, but do explore further.

In order to evaluate trust between two individuals, we will examine eight statements. While you are reading this, think of yourself as the first person and someone close to you as the second person – like your mother, father, brother, sister, etc.

Let's evaluate the first set of four statements:

1a. I want to make myself happy.

2a. I want to make the other happy.

3a. The other wants to make herself/himself happy.

4a. The other wants to make me happy.

These statements are about our natural acceptance about our intention.

Statement 1a – I want to make myself happy.

Is this statement true for you? Is it naturally acceptable to you? What is your natural acceptance – to make yourself happy or unhappy?

Observation 1a – Yes, I want to make myself happy. In fact, I can see that my every action is to make myself happy. The answer is yes. In fig. 8-1, we have put a tick mark against 1a.

Statement 2a – I want to make the other happy.

What is your natural acceptance – to make the other happy or unhappy? Your spontaneous and natural response will be to make the other happy. However, you may have a second thought, you may feel that it is OK to make this effort only for those who have been good to you; you may be least bothered about strangers; and you may even want to take revenge from some. Give some more thought to this. Look into your natural acceptance (and not your ability, your competence) and ask, given all the choice, will you prefer to make the other happy or unhappy? Finally, the answer will be, given all the choice, you will prefer to make the other happy.

Observation 2a – Yes, I want to make the other happy. Given a choice, I always want to make the other happy. The answer is yes.

Statement 3a – The other wants to make herself or himself happy.

You may well ask, "how do I evaluate what the other person's intentions are"? While we may start with a guess of their natural acceptance, ultimately, we have to find it out. If you can see that the other is just like you, his natural acceptance is the same as yours. If you can see your own natural acceptance, you know the natural acceptance of the other also. But don't assume this – find it out.

Observation 3a – Yes, it is true. As I want to be happy, the same holds true for the other as well.

Statement 4a – The other wants to make me happy.

Observation 4a – I am not so sure. We are putting a question mark in 4a on fig. 8-1.

That is the problem; that is where the doubt comes in. That is where the mistrust comes in.

About your Natural Acceptance	About your Ability
1a. I want to make myself happy ✓	1b. I am able to make myself always happy ?
2a. I want to make the other happy ✓	2b. I am able to make the other always happy ?
3a. The other wants to make herself/himself happy ✓	3b. The other is able to make herself/himself always happy ?
4a. The other wants to make me happy ?	4b. The other is able to make me always happy ??
Intention – Natural Acceptance	**Competence**
What is Naturally Acceptable to You	What You Are (∑ D, T, E)

Fig. 8-1 Evaluating Trust between two Individuals

Please keep in mind that all these questions are regarding our natural acceptance, our intention. They are not about our ability or our competence. We will look into the status about our ability next and then come back to this statement 4a, for more clarity.

Now let us look at the statements which are based on or relate to ability.

1b. I am always able to make myself happy

2b. I am always able to make the other happy

3b. The other is always able to make herself/himself happy

4b. The other is always able to make me happy

Statement 1b – I am always able to make myself happy.

Is it a tick mark or question mark? Are you able to always make yourself happy?

Observation 1b – Not always. There is a question mark.

You can see that as far as your intention is concerned, as far as your natural acceptance is concerned, you want to be happy, always happy; but when it comes to living according to

this natural acceptance, this intention, you may find it difficult – sometimes you are able to make yourself happy and sometimes you are not. Since we cannot say with confidence that yes, we are always able to make ourselves happy. Therefore, there is a question mark on this statement. We can, of course, say firmly that we always want to make ourselves happy – because that is our intention, our natural acceptance.

Statement 2b – I am always able to make the other happy.

Observation 2b – Sometimes yes, sometimes no. There is a question mark.

Statement 3b – The other is always able to make herself or himself happy.

Observation 3b – Again not sure, there is a question mark.

Statement 4b – The other is always able to make me happy.

Observation 4b – Now, there is a big or even a double question mark!

In most workshops that we have conducted, as far as the statements about the intention, i.e. natural acceptance, are concerned, there is a tick mark in 1a, 2a and 3a, and there is a question mark in 4a. When we look at the competence, at the ability, there is a question mark, from the beginning – there is a question mark on 1b, 2b, 3b and on 4b there is a big question mark. Now, what does this indicate?

Distinguishing between Intention and Competence

(The common mistake in relationship is due to confusion between intention and competence)

Now if you try to analyse this set of responses, many things will get clarified. Look at the whole situation. Look at your response to these statements, about your intention (natural acceptance) and about your competence (ability). You'll find that while evaluating yourself, you evaluate on the basis of your intention (natural acceptance). You think that you are a good person as your intentions are good.

About your Natural Acceptance	About your Ability
1a. I want to make myself happy ✓	1b. I am able to make myself always happy ?
2a. I want to make the other happy ✓	2b. I am able to make the other always happy ?
3a. The other wants to make herself/himself happy ✓	3b. The other is able to make herself/himself always happy ?
4a. The other wants to make me happy ?	4b. The other is able to make me always happy ??
Intention – Natural Acceptance	**Competence**
What is Naturally Acceptable to You	What You Are (∑ D, T, E)

Fig. 8-2 Doubt on Intention

Refer to fig. 8-2. Can you see that you evaluate yourself on the basis of your intention? On the other hand, when you evaluate the other, you evaluate him on the basis of his competence. You find that he is not able to make you happy all the time. Many times, or most of the time he ends up making you unhappy. Therefore, you think that the other wants to make you unhappy. You have a doubt on other's intention. When you find that the competence is missing, you have the doubt. But this doubt does not remain limited to the competence, rather you start concluding about his intention. On the basis of his state of the competence, you start doubting his intention!

> *To take an example, let's say a glass breaks. It is made of some fragile material and such an event keeps happening. When a glass breaks, there are two interpretations possible. If you are the one who is involved in it, your interpretation is one way. If the other person is involved in it, your interpretation is in a very different way. If you are involved, you say "the glass broke by accident". But, if it is about the other, you say "the other broke the glass". When it breaks by you then you say that it was by accident, it was not your intention. When the same thing happens by the other person, you do not say the same thing, you do not say that it broke by accident. You say that "he broke the glass" which means he had the intention to break the glass.*

You can see that as far as your performance is concerned, your action is concerned, even if you make the same mistake hundred times, you never doubt your intention. You feel that you make mistakes by accident. You have a feeling that you are well meaning. You reinforce that you are good. And, mostly you do not make effort to improve upon your competence.

On the other hand, for the other, we keep concluding that he makes mistakes intentionally. We have this doubt on his intention. We assume his lack of competence to be the lack of intention. When we doubt the intention, we have a feeling of mistrust or even opposition. And if we have this feeling of opposition, we tend to get irritated; we tend to get angry and so on. We conclude that his intentions are wrong. By doing this, we reinforce the belief that the other is bad, he cannot improve and thus we do not bother to help him improve his competence.

Find out if this is what has been happening in your life. Find out if this doubt on intention of the other has been a major source of problem in your relationships. Find out if this doubt has led to the feeling of opposition, irritation or anger in you and if you stopped speaking to the other for days and weeks; or you have broken relationships. Look back and see if you have lost friends and relatives because of this confusion between intention and competence.

Now, if you can see that the intention of the other is same as your intention and he might be lacking competence then your response will be very different.

> *One time, when we were conducting a workshop in an educational institute, amongst the students attending, there was a student named Suresh. Two days after this discussion on the feeling of trust, he shared his experience. He said "the previous evening when I was going to the mess, I saw my friend rushing towards the mess. I wished him but he didn't respond. He didn't even look at me. I was quite hurt and*

unhappy about it. But then, on second thought, I thought maybe he has some problem, perhaps it is a problem of his competence, not his intention. Maybe I should not doubt his intention on the basis of what he has done, i.e. not responding to my greeting. So today, when I met him, I asked him what happened. I reminded him that I had wished him when he was rushing towards the mess yesterday evening and he did not even look at me or respond to me. He said "oh yes, when I went back to my room, I realized that I left my wallet in the mess. I was rushing to the mess to get it back. I was in so much of a hurry and so worked up that I did not even notice you, let alone see you wishing me." Suresh further shared "if I had not gone through this workshop, understanding the difference between intention and competence, I would have doubted his intention, I would have felt very bad, I would not have spoken to him, not clarified what happened... I would have lost that friend. We wouldn't have talked for days or we would not have talked at all. Such a simple thing may be a reason for break-up of relationship or create so much of a problem, so much of tension in relationship".

This is the common mistake that we make in relationship today. On the basis of lack of competence, we conclude about the lack of intention of the other. When we doubt their intention, instead of accepting the other as a relative, we have a feeling of opposition. This feeling of opposition will come out as irritation or anger and so on. This is something which you can check in your day-to-day interaction with people to whom you are related. Every now and then this keeps happening. In very small incidents and creating whole lot of problems in relationship.

One of our colleagues keeps quoting this example, the example of his uncle who had a heart attack: When the uncle came back from the hospital, I went to see him and asked "what happened, uncle"? We are very close, so he opened up. He said oh, you know your auntie, sometimes she says such things which are very hurting. It so happened that day his (uncle's) friend came from Kolkata and he wanted some financial help (cf course, for a huge amount). Uncle decided to extend that help to his friend.

The friend went back satisfied, but auntie was quite unhappy about the incident. She said certain things to uncle. In response or reaction to her being unhappy and what she said seemed to be so hurting for the uncle that he met with a heart-attack.

I just asked uncle, "tell me – did you get hurt because of the words that auntie said or because of the fact that you doubted her intention (she wants to hurt you) on the basis of what she said"? He said, "because of the words". I said, "okay. Let me ask another question. If the same words were uttered by someone whom you knew was mad, would you have got hurt"? He said no. I said, "okay. Let me ask this question again. Were you hurt by the words that she said or because you started doubting her intention on the basis of what she said? And therefore, you had a feeling of opposition in you for her"? He was silent for a few minutes and then he said, "yes! What you are saying is making sense".

This is what is happening. Uncle and auntie belong to a highly respected family in a city in North India. They have been leading a married life for fifty years, but they still have doubt on intention of each other and such small incidents can cause the

doubt on intention. With a doubt on intention, there is a feeling of opposition. With that feeling of opposition, there is a hurt and it might even damage to the extent of meeting a heart attack.

This is what keeps happening if you look at the interaction between the husband and wife; most of the time you find that they talk as if they are fighting, as if they are at war. Because the doubt on intention is there and that feeling of opposition is there and therefore, there is so much of irritation and anger. Start observing in your day-to-day interaction with your friends, with your relatives, with your co-workers.

Now that we have clarity about intention and competence, let us explore this question:

If you have unconditional, continuous trust on intention, on the natural acceptance of the other and if the other is lacking competence, what will you do?

(a) Try to improve upon his competence

(b) Get irritated

(c) Get angry

(d) Have a feeling of opposition

The answer is obviously (a). If there is trust on intention, this is the response. If you have trust on intention of the other and if you find that the other is lacking competence, you will try to improve upon his competence. On the other hand, if you have doubt on intention of the other, (b), (c) and (d) will happen. You will get irritated or angry or carry a feeling of opposition. That is the reaction out of your doubt on intention of the other.

a) try to improve upon his competence b) get irritated	Trust on Intention → Response
c) get angry d) have a feeling of opposition	Doubt on Intention → Reaction

The action may be same, on the part of the other; but your response or reaction depends on you, your perception. If you have trust on intention, you will respond in terms of trying to improve upon the competence of the other. On the other hand, if there is doubt on intention then you will react in terms of getting irritated or angry or carrying a feeling of opposition.

Now with these indicators, find out how many people are there in your life on whom you have trust on intention (natural acceptance) which is unconditional and continuous. In order to check this, find out the names of those people with whom you do not get irritated, you do not get angry and you do not have the feeling of opposition, even for a moment, even if they keep committing mistakes over and over again.

Most of the time, we find the answer to be 'none'! This is a serious matter – in relationship between husband and wife, father and son, between friends and so on. It indicates lack of trust on intention. Further, we seem to be doing nothing much to address the issue.

Hardly anyone is paying attention to understanding relationship and in developing their competence to live in relationship. We can see that people keep doing things they don't mean to. They don't want to get angry (intention), but end up getting angry (lack of competence).

The question about how many people we have unconditional trust is a very fundamental question. It is an indicator of how much you have understood relationship, how much acceptance you have in relationship from your side. This will tell you exactly how many people you have been able to accept as being related to you (the moment there is doubt on intention of the other, instead of feeling related to the other, you feel opposed to the other, so those names will not be in the list). Now, from here you can start working to develop your understanding about relationship and be able to live with feelings which are mutually fulfilling, from your side.

Of course, there may be many questions and doubts; because this is in sharp contrast to what is prevailing in the society today. Generally, we don't make a distinction between intention and competence, so we are not paying attention to the intention (natural acceptance) at all. As a result, the word trust gets used only to indicate the level of competence (or lack of competence). With such an assumption about trust, the feeling of acceptance is almost completely missing; rather there is a feeling of opposition. With that, we reinforce assumptions like:

- Strangers can't be trusted – Every human being, including strangers, have the same natural acceptance. However, the competence may or may not be present. For a stranger, we may need time to evaluate their competence (but not to know their natural acceptance).
- Trust is developed over a long time – true for competence, but is it true for trust on natural acceptance (intention)?
- Never trust anyone blindly – we need to have trust on intention (natural acceptance), and evaluate their competence before making a programme with them – we will discuss this in detail next.

Feelings which are based on incidents are indefinite; they are conditional and not continuous. Basing our relationship on incidents is another major mistake that we keep making today. If we try to base our feelings and our relationship on the basis of incidents, it does not work because these incidents depend on our mutual competence, my competence as well as the competence of the other which may be fluctuating and therefore, it might lead to lack of continuity in the fulfilment in relationship.

On the other hand, when you are able to understand your own natural acceptance, you can conclude about the natural acceptance of the other. You want to be happy and make the other happy, but you may have lack of competence. The other also has the same natural acceptance and (s)he also may be lacking in competence, just like you. When we have this clarity, we can have that trust on intention at the base of our relationship. That is what we want to explore in more detail now.

Let us recall, from chapter 6, that our intention is the same as our natural acceptance. On the other hand, competence is what we are – the collection of all desires, thoughts and expectations, i.e. all of our imaginations. Since desires may be coming from preconditioning, sensation as well as natural acceptance; desire is not necessarily the same as intention. Only some part of the desires that are coming from natural acceptance are our intention, the others may or may not be our intention (refer to fig. 6-6 in chapter 6). For instance:

- Our natural acceptance (intention) is to be happy and make others happy, but we may have a desire for taking revenge!
- We keep getting hurt by the behaviour of others and we keep hurting others with our behaviour. We don't have a natural acceptance for it, but it is a part of our desire!

Competence includes all the desires, thoughts and expectations (from all three sources). The intention (natural acceptance), on the other hand, is always same – to be happy and make the other happy.

Trust on Intention

Trust is to have the clarity that the other intends to make me happy.

With this background of exploration, (refer to fig. 8-3) let us look back at these four statements again and find out whether there will be a question mark or a tick mark in 4a.

About your Natural Acceptance	About your Ability
1a. I want to make myself happy ✓	1b. I am able to make myself always happy ?
2a. I want to make the other happy ✓	2b. I am able to make the other always happy ?
3a. The other wants to make herself/himself happy ✓	3b. The other is able to make herself/himself always happy ?
4a. The other wants to make me happy ✓	4b. The other is able to make me always happy ??
Intention – Natural Acceptance	**Competence**
What is Naturally Acceptable to You	What You Are (∑ D, T, E)

Fig. 8-3 Trust on Intention

Statement 4a – The other wants to make me happy. What do you now think? What is the natural acceptance of the other – To be happy and make others happy or to be happy and make others unhappy?

Observation 4a – As far as the intention is concerned, as far as the natural acceptance is concerned, the other wants to be happy and make others happy. That would be the observation.

This is interesting. Any and every person wants to be happy and make others happy, as far as their natural acceptance is concerned. This natural acceptance is what we have been referring to as intention. When it comes to competence, the other may or may not have the competence to make herself or himself happy and to make others happy. The other has the intention but may be lacking in competence – we need to have this clarity in ourselves.

In order to have this clarity about the natural acceptance of the other, what you really need to explore, investigate and find out what exactly your own natural acceptance is. This is written in statements 1a and 2a. You can investigate within yourself and find out whether you want to be happy yourself and whether you want to make others happy. You can find out what your natural acceptance is. You will see that you do want to be happy and you do want to make others happy – that is your natural acceptance. So 1a and 2a are both true.

With the clarity that the other person is like us, now, we can conclude that he also wants to be happy and make others happy. We can directly verify this from the other as well. However, from our observation about our own natural acceptance, we can conclude about the natural acceptance of the other and, in fact, for every other human being. Basically, 3a is a reflection of 1a when I am looking from the other side and 4a is a reflection of 2a. Therefore, I can see if 2a is correct, so is 4a. It will also be correct. The natural acceptance of the other is the same as my natural acceptance – to be happy and to make the other happy.

This is the crux. If I can evaluate myself on the basis of my natural acceptance (intention) and I can evaluate the other on the basis of his natural acceptance (intention), I will have trust on intention of every human being. Because, deep down everyone wants to be happy and make others happy. Trust on intention is founded on the understanding of human being and the natural acceptance of the human being; it would be definite, unconditional and continuous for every human being.

Find out if you are able to see this and have trust on intention of everyone.

With the trust on intention of the other, we can evaluate our intention as well as the intention of the other; our competence as well as the competence of the other. Then the interpretation of the same incident will change significantly. Now we will be able to say that the glass broke by accident – for ourselves as well as for the other. We can see that we did not have the intention nor did the other has the intention; but because of lack of competence or by some accident the glass has broken.

Now I can see that when I make a mistake even once I am clear about my intention; I know the mistake is due to lack of competence, not a lack of intention and therefore, I make effort to improve upon my competence. I am willing to understand and learn. When I see the same instance happening with the other, even if the other makes the same mistake hundred times, I am clear about his intention. I know the mistake is due to lack of competence, not a lack of intention and I make effort to help improve his competence with a feeling of relationship.

This is important that I am trying to improve upon his competence, trying to help to improve upon his competence with a feeling of relationship. When I am doing this with a

feeling of trust, I can see that he may have difficulty in understanding and also, I may have difficulty in explaining. When I am trying to explain and he is not able to understand, I do not doubt his intention to understand. I can see that he is finding it difficult to understand because of lack of his competence and it might also happen that I am not able to explain properly because of lack of my own competence. If I can see that, I will try to improve upon my competence and I will try to improve upon the competence of the other. And if I am unable to do that, at least I will not have a feeling of opposition, irritation or anger.

With this background, now we can see that trust is the foundation of relationship. If I have trust on intention of the other, I feel related to the other. As long as the acceptance of relationship is concerned; it will be continuous, it will be unconditional and it will be definite. If I have trust on intention of the other, I will feel related to the other; therefore, I will treat the other as my relative.

When it comes to making a programme with the other, I will have trust on intention. With that, I will evaluate my own competence, I will evaluate his competence and on the basis of our mutual competence, I will make a programme with him.

> *For example, when we are conducting a class on human values, we have trust on intention of everyone. We have the clarity that everyone sitting here wants to know what is right and wants to do what is right, and that they have the capacity to understand what is right. We have this trust at the base. With this trust at the base, now we are making programme with you. For that, we are evaluating our competence as well as your competence. On the basis of our evaluation of our mutual competence, we are making the programme of conducting this class. We are conducting the class in English as we found that it is a language that both of us can speak and understand. If either one of us did not know English, and we both knew Hindi, we would have conducted the class in Hindi.*
>
> *Further, we are repeating the important points so many times, even at cost of being interpreted as boring. But we are doing it because of our evaluation of your competence. We know that you take off many times during the class. By the time, we are making some point, your attention is gone somewhere outside, you are thinking of your home, your friends and so on, and you come back after 15 minutes; so, whatever was said during these 15 minutes, is not registered at all. When you come back, you start searching for what is going on in the class. We repeat the important points many times, so that at least once you will be able to hear. Find out for yourself, how many times do you take off during the class of 1 hour – 20, 50, 100?*

When we assume trust (rather than understand trust), we may assume the other has the intention and also has the competence. That means we do not evaluate the competence while making the programme. If we make the programme without evaluating our own competence and without evaluating the competence of the other, the programme is likely to fail; and we may conclude not to trust anybody!

When we understand trust, it makes all the difference – we accept the other as he is. He is just like me. He has the intention to be happy and make me happy. His competence may or may not be matching his intention.

This trust on intention gives a direction for our effort. While making a programme, we base it on our evaluation of mutual competence. The programme may succeed or it may fail, but we are not perturbed. We make effort to assure the other. We are able to re-evaluate our mutual competence for future programs. We are committed to help the other to improve his competence, without becoming irritated, angry and all that. We are, at the same time, making effort to learn, to improve our own competence.

Making effort to assure the other is important. The acceptance of the other is essential before he will even be willing to listen. Before trying to help him to improve his competence it is necessary to assure him. To take an example, after going through this content, a student was excited to share it with his father and he did try to share it. The father did not show much interest. Disappointed, the student discussed his problem with his teacher. She only asked, "whom would you like to listen to – someone who is responsible or someone who is not very responsible"? It struck the student that his parents take most of the responsibility at home and he usually has to be reminded what needs to be done many times before he does anything to help at home. Over the next few weeks, he made effort to take some responsibility at home, like getting things from the market proactively. His father noticed the change and appreciated it. Over time, the student was able to share with his father. It is important to assure the other in the relationship, particularly before trying to communicate something important that you want them to pay attention to.

Trust on intention is the starting point for mutual development. That is where the relationship begins. It is, in that sense, we are saying that trust on intention is the foundation of relationship.

Salient Points regarding Trust

- *Trust is to be assured that the other intends (has a natural acceptance) to make me happy and prosperous. When I can clearly see that my intention (natural acceptance) is to make myself happy and to make the other also happy and prosperous, I can conclude that the other, who is like me at the level of Self, also has the same intention (natural acceptance).*
- *I am able to accept the other. (S)he is like me – we have the same intention and, like me, (s)he may also be lacking in competence.*
- *With trust on intention, I feel related to the other, and with that at the base, I make a programme based on our current mutual competence. I make effort to assure the other. Trust is the starting point of relationship, of mutual development.*
- *Relationship is founded on trust. In the absence of it, we do not feel related to the other and the relationship keeps shaking. A common mistake in relationship is to evaluate myself based on intention and evaluate the other based on competence. If we go by this, we assume ourselves to be good and the other to be the problem.*

Test Your Understanding regarding Trust

Part 1: Questions for Self-evaluation

(Have we grasped the basic proposals made in this chapter?)

1. What is the proposal for the definition of trust? Illustrate the feeling of trust with one example, preferably from your own experience.
2. Distinguish between intention and competence. What is the outcome when we confuse between the two and we doubt the intention of the other? What is the outcome when we are able to see them separately and we trust the intention of the other?
3. 'If I trust the intention of everyone, people would take undue advantage of me'. Is this statement true or false? Explain.
4. How is trust the foundation value of relationship?
5. Distinguish between reaction and response with the clarity of feeling of trust. Give one example of each for a particular case of relationship.
6. Distinguish between intention and desire. Take at least one example.

Part 2: Practice Exercises for Self-exploration

(To help connect the content to one's life, at least at the level of thought, these exercises may be done individually or in a group, particularly with friends and family members)

1. Take the eight questions regarding evaluation of trust. Evaluate them for each person in your family (later you can extend it to your friends also). How many people are there with whom you have an unconditional feeling of trust on intention (which is continuous)? How many people are there with whom you never get irritated, angry and you never have a feeling of opposition? How many people are there with whom you are making effort for mutual development?
2. Do you like people to accept you? i.e.
   a. To accept you with all your possibilities as a human being (your natural acceptance)
   b. To accept you with your strengths and weaknesses (your current level of competence)
   c. To help you to overcome your weaknesses (to help you develop your competence)

   Are there people in the family from whom you do not have this expectation? Is there anyone in the family who is unlikely to have this expectation from you? Do you always accept the others in your family in this manner?
3. Reflect on few instances where you got irritated or angry with someone. What was the result of it? Can you recollect that you had a doubt on their intention?

Contd...

Try to call and share your reflections with one or more of them. What is your observation from this exercise?

4. For you, is it essential to understand relationship, at least to understand the feeling of trust and to have the feeling of trust? Exactly what effort is required to understand trust? Are you making this effort?
5. Watch the short film "Right Here Right Now", directed by Anand Gandhi.

   The film may be downloaded from:

   Part 1: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OVAokeqQuFM

   Part 2: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gIYJePEnvUY

   Observe the interactions the characters are having with each other. List ten of these interactions, along with your observations – is it a reaction or a response and why. Write down the indicators of responsive behaviour and reactive behaviour. Try to connect it to the activity of the Self.
6. List out ten or more of your interactions with other people in your family in the last one week. What percentage of these interactions were response from your side? Take one instance of reaction and one instance of response and share it in detail. Comment on whether you were comfortable within or uncomfortable for both instances.

   If responsive behaviour is desirable for you, outline the effort required.

Respect as Right Evaluation

With the feeling of trust in us, we can explore into the feeling of respect. Let us see, when do we feel respected? How do I respect others?

The proposal is: **Respect is right evaluation.**

Respect means right evaluation. It is as simple as that. When we are rightly evaluated, we feel respected. When we are not rightly evaluated, we feel disrespected.

You might find that this is quite different from what is generally considered respect, isn't it? It is true that we are engaged in many activities to get attention, to appear to be different or special. To be in the newspaper or magazine, to win awards, to be in a book of records we are climbing up mountains, diving into the ocean depths, jumping from aeroplanes, wearing all sorts of clothes, getting special hairdos, growing our hair, shaving of our heads, tattooing our bodies and so on. The list is almost endless. Even on an everyday basis, we do so many things to be in the good books of parents, teachers, friends and work colleagues. What is your state when you are involved in such activities – are you comfortable within or uncomfortable within? Also, what do you think all this brings – some temporary attention or anything more than that? Does it ensure acceptance for you in the other? Think about it. Respect is simply the right evaluation.

Over Evaluation, Under Evaluation and Otherwise Evaluation Leading to Disrespect

However, when we look at what we are doing today in the name of respect, it is mostly:

Over evaluation – evaluating for more than what it is

Under evaluation – evaluating for less than what it is

Otherwise evaluation – evaluating for other than what it is

> *For example, when you are happy with a child, you start saying that he is great, he can do anything. Is it a right evaluation or over evaluation? Yes, it is an over evaluation. If you are angry with him for some reason, you say, he's good for nothing, he cannot do anything. Is it a right evaluation or under evaluation? Yes, it is an under evaluation. If you are really very angry with him, you say he is a donkey. You are not even willing to consider him as a human being. He is a human being and you are evaluating him for donkey, for an animal. This is otherwise evaluation.*

If we look at our day-to-day interaction, day-to-day behaviour, we generally tend to do one of these three – over evaluation, under evaluation or otherwise evaluation. If any of these three is done, the other person feels uncomfortable, disrespected. Check for yourself in every interaction with others whether it is respect or disrespect, i.e. is it right evaluation or one of the three (over, under or otherwise evaluation)?

> *This is exemplified by an incident related by one of our colleagues: I went to one of my friends' house. Somehow the wife was unhappy with the daughter. She started saying look at this girl, she does not do anything. She said that two or three times. I said, she must be doing something at least. How can someone do nothing? But she was insisting that her daughter does not do anything. After sometime, the daughter got very angry and she reacted. She said, 'what I am not doing. I am cooking food for everyone in the morning before going to the college. I go to college, come back in the evening and cook dinner for everyone; what else do you want me to do'? At that time, she was studying in an engineering college in 3rd year. The mother was still saying, 'she does not do anything'! This is not something rare. If you are unhappy with someone, angry with someone, you say she's good for nothing, useless. But she's not useless. I mean she is doing some things and she is not doing other things. If you are happy it's the other way around. You could start saying this girl is great, she is doing so much, she's taking care of the house and she's studying and also doing well in studies!*

We can see so many examples around us. Most of the time, do we do right evaluation or under, over or otherwise evaluation? If it is your child, you look at it one way; if it is someone else's child you look at it differently. This is what we end up doing. But why do we do this? It is because our very basic understanding or basic assumption about human being has gone wrong.

Refer to fig. 8-4. As long as I don't have my own right evaluation (based on right understanding of human being), I can't do right evaluation of the other. Over and above that, this over-evaluation tends to ego, and under-evaluation or otherwise evaluation

to depression; whether I am the one doing my own over/under/otherwise evaluation or someone else is doing it. When I am in ego, my behaviour with the other is likely to be reactive and not mutually fulfilling. Similarly, when I am in depression, I am unhappy and tend to make others also unhappy.

Right Evaluation	Over Evaluation	Under/Otherwise Evaluation
Self Confidence I am self referential (self organized) Definite Conduct	Ego The other is my reference (enslaved) Indefinite Conduct	Depression The other is my reference (enslaved) Indefinite Conduct
Ego (over evaluation) ↑ Self-confidence (right evaluation) ↓ Depression (under/otherwise evaluation)		Assumptions… ↓ Disharmony within ↓ Tension ↓ Frustration ↓ Depression ↓ Suicide etc.

Fig. 8-4 Self-confidence, Ego and Depression

One of the many examples of this is the case of an ordinary family consisting of the parents and three children; an elder daughter, a middle daughter and a youngest son. The middle daughter had recently joined B. Pharma – she was the first female child to join a professional course in their extended family or community. This made the parents very proud. When a guest would come home, they would introduce the middle daughter with big words – "she is our pride, the shining star of our family", etc. At the same time, they would generally ignore even to introduce the elder daughter. They would ask her to make tea for the guests. And the youngest son was introduced as a donkey doing very poorly in school – he was in class seven at that time. Now what do you think – are the three children being rightly evaluated or not? Are they being respected or dis-respected? Like this, the middle daughter goes into ego, bosses on her own sister and brother; and at her college also she is unable to make friends. The elder sister and younger brother complain to the parents. The parents notice the haughty behaviour of the middle daughter and reprimand her "this joining B. Pharma has gone to your head – you better behave properly otherwise…". Now the girl is down, in depression. In the family of five, she feels that she is on one side, while the other four are on the other side. She feels lonely and is unable to focus on her studies. This ego-depression cycle keeps going on for this girl. Who is responsible? (It is in such situations that people take to alcohol, drugs and even suicide).

These sorts of incidents are happening all around in the families. Now what is the solution? One needs to do right evaluation. Right evaluation of oneself will lead to being self-referential, rather than being dependent on others for evaluation. Right evaluation will lead to self-confidence that is not shaken up by others. This sort of self-confidence is absolute. When the other over/under/otherwise evaluates me, I will not be affected; rather I will be able to affectionately contribute to helping the other to set right their evaluation of me.

Minimum Content of Respect – The Other is Similar to Me

If we want to do right evaluation, how do we go about? Let's look at this.

The first question is when we are trying to do the right evaluation; will it be on the basis of Self or on the basis of Body? Based on what has been discussed so far, try to explore the differences and similarities at the level of the Body and also at the level of the Self.

To do the right evaluation, we have to do it on the basis of Self. However, when we are presuming that human being is equal to Body and we have no clarity about the Self, there is no possibility of evaluating on the basis of Self. The very basis of right evaluation is not there. If we don't understand the Self, the right evaluation is not possible. That has been the trouble.

Now that we have clarity that human being is co-existence of Self and Body, we can think in terms of evaluating the human being on the basis of Self, and ensuring the right evaluation. If we go about doing this, let's see these three things:

1. ***Our purpose is the same:*** I have a natural acceptance to live with continuous happiness and prosperity. That is my purpose. The other also has a natural acceptance to live with continuous happiness and prosperity. That is the purpose of the other. So, on the basis of our natural acceptance, we have the same purpose.
2. ***Our program is same:*** My program to achieve continuous happiness and prosperity is to understand the harmony and live in harmony at all levels of my being (from human being to the entire existence). The program for achieving his purpose, the program of the other is also to understand the harmony and live in harmony at all levels of being. In that sense, our program to fulfil our purpose is also same.
3. ***Our potential is same:*** I am endowed with natural acceptance and the activities of desire, thought and expectation are going on continuously in me. This is my basic potential (to understand, think and do). The other is also endowed with natural acceptance; and the activities of desire, thought and expectation are going on continuously in the other. So, our potential is also same.

When we are able to see the human being is the co-existence of Self and Body, we can see that the other (Self) is similar to me because our purpose is same, programme is same and potential is same. This is the minimum content of respect for a human being.

Are we able to see this similarity? Just try to find out, are we focusing on establishing that the other is similar to me or on showing that the other is not similar to me, and that I am

special? What are we focusing on? When we are unable to see the human being as it is, most of the time we are trying to prove that I am special, I am different.

Disrespect Arising out of Differentiation

Instead of trying to see both the similarity as well as the differences, are we primarily trying to focus on the differences? When we focus on the differences, we try to discriminate on the basis of these differences; and when we are discriminating, it is disrespect.

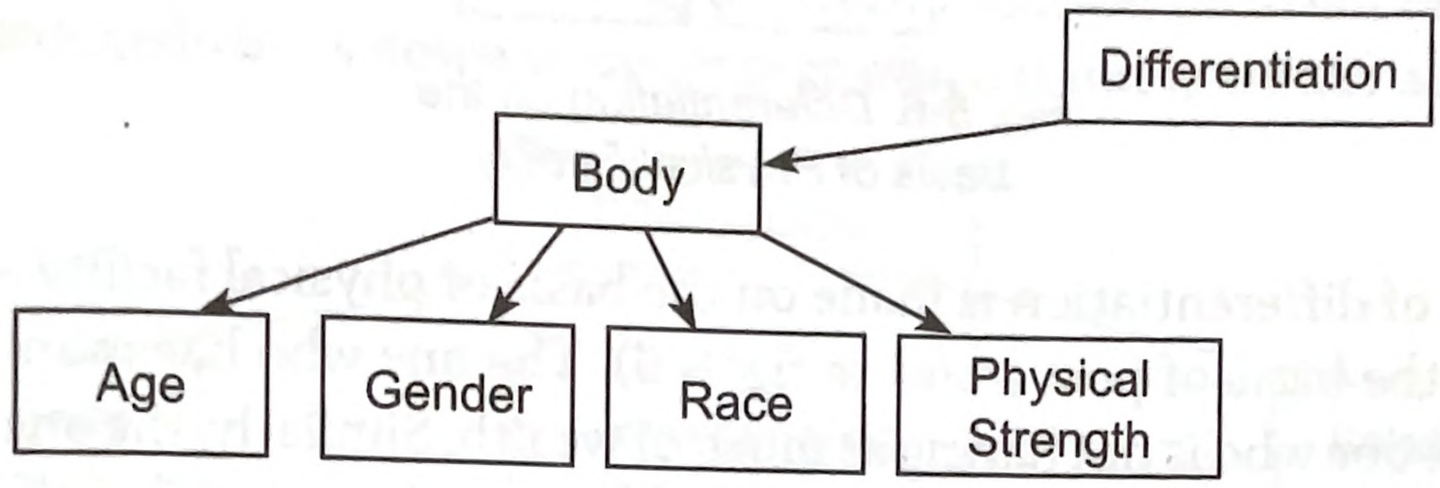


Fig. 8-5 Differentiation on the Basis of Body

In general, what we are doing in the name of respect today is differentiating and discriminating.

One criterion for the differentiation is on the basis of body (fig. 8-5). One set of our basic criteria for giving respect is related to body – on the basis of age, gender, race and physical strength. We keep saying – respect elders. What about younger people? What about the children? Do they deserve respect or not? Since we are not able to see this similarity generally, we are not able to see that children also need respect, just as older people do. Like this, we are differentiating on the basis of age, we are differentiating on the basis of gender. Many societies give higher priority to the male as compared to females or vice-versa; or giving priority to white as compared to brown and black. Similarly, we have been giving respect to those having more physical strength.

If you observe all these bases of respect, is it really giving respect or is it discriminating? And when you are discriminating, will it lead to respect or disrespect? Of course, it will give rise to disrespect and that is the problem today. If you see around, all these bases of giving respect are generally discriminating which is leading to disrespect and therefore a lot of dissatisfaction, lot of opposition, lot of movements and revolts. You can see, there is movement against generation gap, movement against gender inequality, feminine movement, anti-racial movement and so on. All this is the basis of differentiation and it is causing disrespect in the name of respect. Interestingly all this is done in the name of respect.

Of course, this differentiation is based on the gross misunderstanding or implicit assumption that the human being is equal to the Body; while the reality is that the human being is co-existence of Self and the Body. If we can realize this, we can evaluate the human being on the basis of Self and if we do that, we can see the similarity.

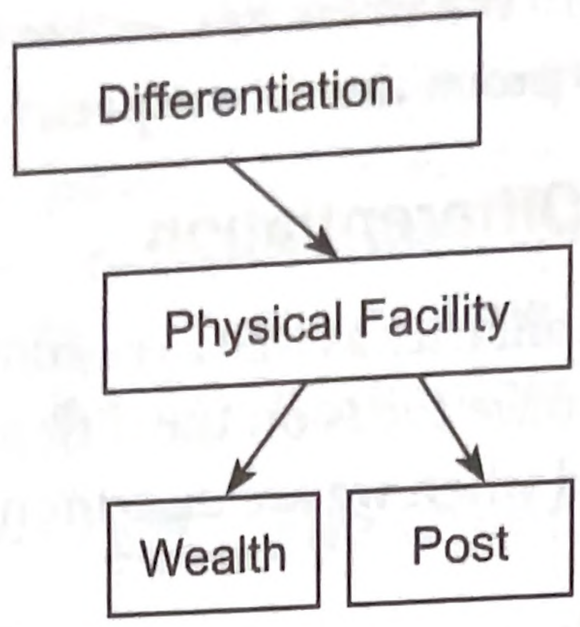


Fig. 8-6. Differentiation on the Basis of Physical Facility

The second set of differentiation is made on the basis of physical facility – on the basis of wealth and on the basis of post (refer to fig. 8-6). The one who has more wealth is given respect over the one who is not having as much of wealth. Similarly, the one with the higher post is given respect over the one who does not have higher post. But these things again lead to discrimination and therefore, there are many movements against this. There is a fight going on between the rich and the poor, people in the higher post and people who are not having post or having a lower post. The gross misunderstanding here is that physical facility is equal to happiness. The fact is that happiness is to be in a state of harmony, in the state of relationship, in the state of co-existence.

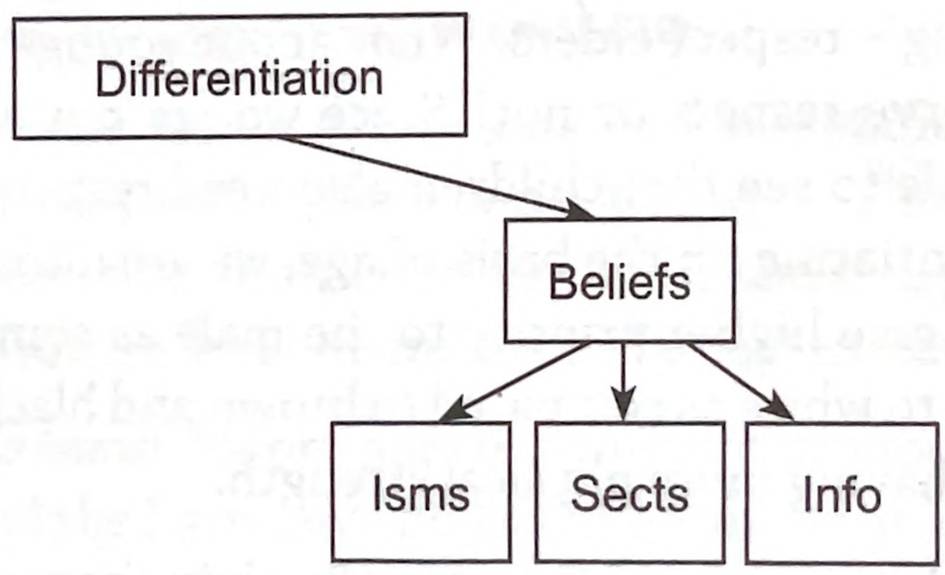


Fig. 8-7. Differentiation on the Basis of Beliefs

The third set of bases of differentiation is what we can call beliefs (fig. 8-7). There are different isms (thought systems like socialism, capitalism, etc.), different sects, and different set of information available. Depending upon which particular set of beliefs you have, you are given respect or not given respect. For example, if you belong to communism then you will respect people who belong to communism and not respect people who belong to capitalism and so on. Similarly, if you belong to one sect, you will respect people who belong to the same sect and not respect the people who do not belong to the same sect and so on. Regarding the information – if you have one set of information, say, as an engineer, you will be respecting engineers and not, for example, doctors and vice-versa. Respect is given on the basis of the beliefs, on the basis of isms that you follow, on the basis of the sect that you belong to, on the basis of information you have. But this all leads to discrimination, therefore, leads to disrespect. This third basis of differentiation is founded on the main misunderstanding that if the pre-conditioning of the other matches

with mine then the other is like me, otherwise he is not like me, while the reality is that every human being is similar to me.

All put together, this is the way we generally give respect and these are the bases of giving respect – the Body, physical facility and beliefs (refer to fig. 8-8). You can see all this is differentiation and it is ultimately leading to disrespect because this is something which is not naturally acceptable. When it is not naturally acceptable, it leads to opposition and ultimately it leads to movement, revolt or to war. Can you see this? Are we able to see that the other is similar to me or we are trying to discriminate on the basis of all these three things which ultimately boils down to disrespect which is not naturally acceptable?

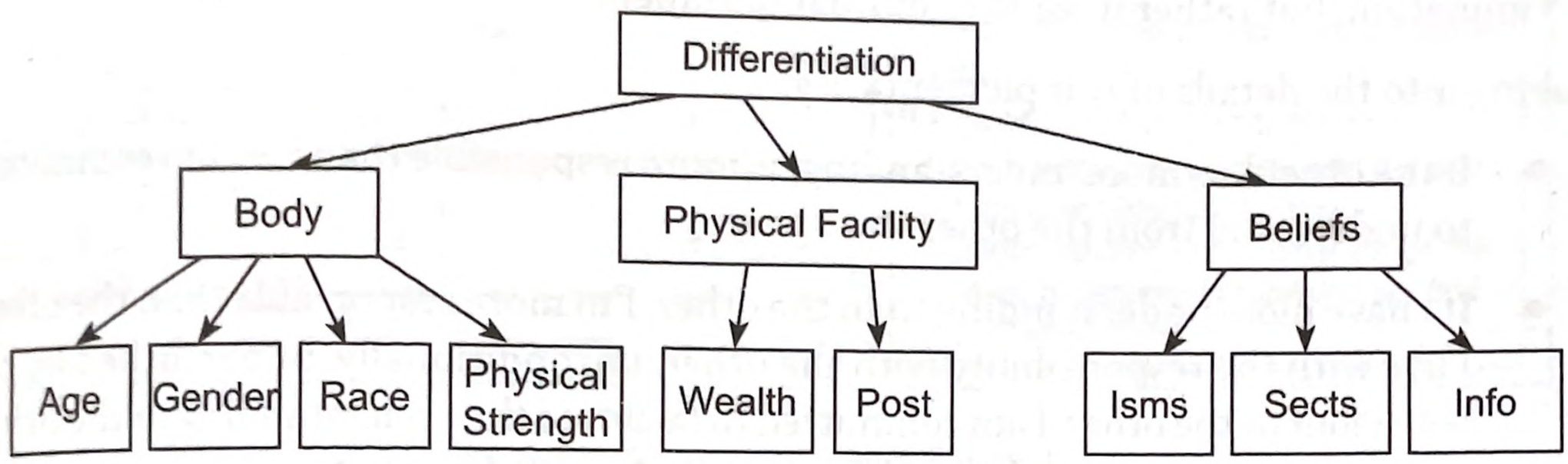


Fig. 8-8. Differentiation = Disrespect

In fact, a majority of the problems that we are facing in the society today have to do with the issue of respect and disrespect or the issue of disrespect in the name of respect. The majority of the movements, revolts that you see in the society today have to do with the issue of respect. One simple feeling of respect or disrespect may lead to so many problems in the society. For instance, discrimination on the basis of the race has created so much of problem in the society all around. If you are discriminating between white and black, and it is just an issue of respect or disrespect; the white will disrespect the black on the basis of this criterion, the blacks will not accept it. They will keep complaining about it and then at some point of time it may lead to some movement, it may lead to some opposition and it might even lead to war. So, the simple issue of over-evaluation of one and under-evaluation of the other can lead to all this!

If we look at our day-to-day living, simple incidents of discrimination (in the name of respect) cause so much of fight, so much of disagreement, so much of ongoing trouble. Now, if we are able to do the right evaluation on the basis of the Self and see that the other is similar to me, many of these issues can be resolved.

Complete Content of Respect – We are Complementary to Each Other

In addition to the purpose, programme and potential of the Self, there is the competence. The competence means how much of the potential has been realised. One Self may have realised more of its potential, while another may have realised less of its potential. So, in terms of competence we are not the same, we are different.

Having understood that our purpose is same and our potential is also same, we use the difference in competence to help each other in further developing our competence. So, we are complementary to each other. So, being able to see that '**the other is similar to me and we are complementary**' is the complet content of respect.

We define our complementarity by developing a joint program for mutual development and fulfil that complementarity. If I have not understood something and the other person has understood it, I can take help of the other to understand it. Similarly, I can be of help to the other by helping him to understand something that I have understood, which the other has not yet understood. In this way, the difference in competence does not lead to discrimination, but rather it leads to mutual fulfilment.

Looking into the details of complementarity:

- If the other has more understanding, is more responsible than me, I'm committed to understand from the other
- If I have more understanding than the other, I'm more responsible than the other, I live with the responsibility with the other, unconditionally, unperturbed by the behaviour of the other. I am committed to facilitate the understanding in the other, once the other is assured in relationship and not before that

It is easy to see that we are willing to share and discuss with those people with whom we have a feeling of assurance. Also, we are willing to understand from those whom we consider responsible and having more understanding than us.

If I have more understanding than the other, then I live with responsibility with the other – without getting perturbed by the behaviour of the other. If the other does not have the right understanding, (s)he will not be able to behave properly all the time. If I have done the right evaluation of the other, I will not get disturbed by the behaviour of the other, rather I will continue to behave with responsibility. In due course of time the other will feel assured of me; (s)he will feel related to me. Only when (s)he is assured, (s)he is willing to share and discuss. It is only then, that I need to facilitate understanding in the other.

If we look at respect in that sense, it will mean the acceptance of the other as being similar to me at the level of purpose, programme and potential and then defining the complementarity at the level of competence. If I do this, it is respect. If I violate any of these conditions, it is disrespect.

Are we doing this today? Or we are just trying to discriminate in the name of respect on the basis of body, on the basis of physical facility and on the basis of beliefs? That ultimately boils down to disrespect.

The complete content of respect is

- The other is similar to me in terms of purpose, programme and potential and
- We are complementary to each other in terms of competence

With this background, let's make a comparison between differentiation and respect on the basis of Self. Refer to fig. 8-9.

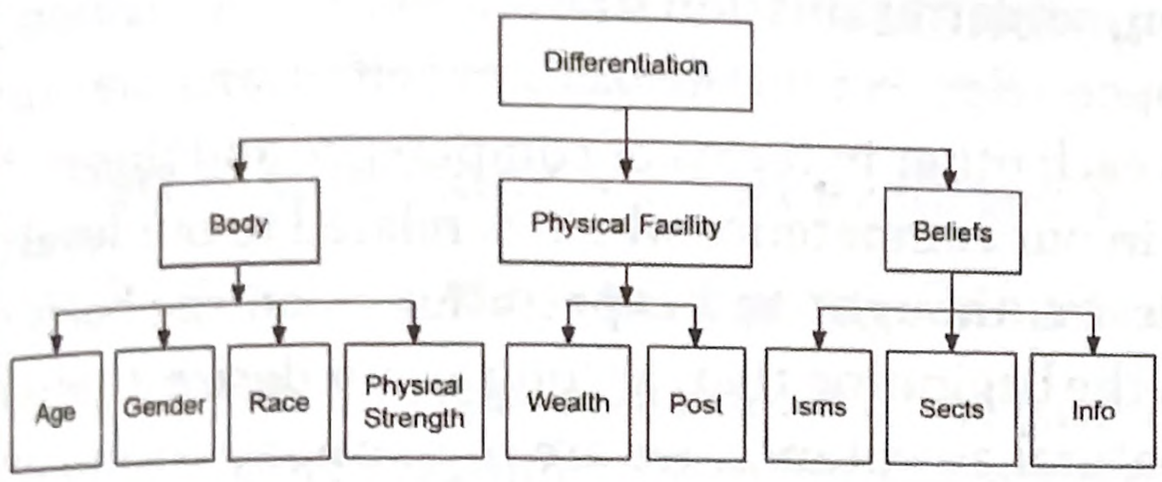
Differentiation	Respect – on the basis of Self (I)
I evaluate on the basis of body, physical facility or belief (pre conditioning). I compare, compete, differentiate… **I am different from the other** We are competitors I make effort to accentuate the difference, to manipulate, exploit the other  	1. Our purpose (Natural Acceptance) is same 2. Our program is same 3. Our potential is same **The other is similar to me** **We are complementary to each other** If the other has more understanding than me - I am committed to understand from the other If I have more understanding 1. I live with responsibility with the other 2. I am committed to facilitate understanding in the other (once the other is assured in relationship, and not before that)

Fig. 8-9. Differentiation and Respect

When we are differentiating in the name of respect, I evaluate on the basis of body, physical facility or belief (i.e. preconditioning); I compare, compete and differentiate and I try to prove that I am different from the other. If you look at it in the right sense, respect would mean: our purpose (natural acceptance) is same, the programme is same, potential is same-therefore, the other is similar to me. What we are doing today is mostly differentiation. When we're looking at the difference in competence on the basis of differentiation, we see each other as opponents. If we are looking at the right evaluation of differences in competence based on the Self, we are complementary to each other.

Ultimately, what we are generally trying to do in the name of respect is that we make effort to accentuate the differences, to manipulate, to exploit the other. But, if we are rightly evaluating on the basis of the Self, we define our complementarity, in terms of helping the other to understand. The fulfilment of this complementarity leads to mutual development, mutual happiness.

Revisit fig. 8-9 and find out what we are generally doing. Are we differentiating or ensuring respect on the basis of the Self?

When we look at the society today, much of the effort is to differentiate, to highlight the differences and to accentuate the differences. We plan to make a bigger house because we desire to show that we are superior to our neighbour. We desire to buy an exclusive, latest model car because we want to accentuate the difference. And we think that we will get the respect out of it. Instead of sharing the feeling of respect, we're creating differentiation which is causing disrespect which is causing jealousy in the other or opposition in the other.

Look at marriages, for example. Earlier, people were satisfied to perform marriages in their house, then many went to guest houses, started doing it in cruise liner ships, chartered

planes and such exclusive locale. Now people are performing marriages in a foreign country. Mostly, it is to show off, to accentuate the differences. And in order to accentuate the difference, we may also manipulate and exploit. We spend hundred crores for the marriage and very little of it is really necessary. Whether there will be mutual happiness in the married life after this pomp and show is also not assured. It is just to show that I am special and superior to the other.

With this, let us sum up the feeling of respect. What we have said is that respect is right evaluation. And of course, it is possible only with a feeling of trust on intention. Otherwise you can't even respect the others, can't even think of respecting unless you have this trust on intention. The over evaluation, under evaluation and otherwise evaluation is disrespect. Differentiation is also disrespect. Respect on the basis of Self means the other is like me and we are complementary to each other in terms of competence and this is the right evaluation. The only difference is in our competence which is related to our level of understanding, i.e. how much of our desire, thought and expectation is on the basis of our natural acceptance. We discussed in the beginning that, as long as our desire, thought and expectations are in line with our natural acceptance, we are in harmony within and therefore, we are in a state of happiness, therefore, we have the competence to fulfil our intention, our natural acceptance. That is what essentially counts as competence.

Fulfilling the relationship from my side leads to harmony within me. If I can understand the relationship, accept the relationship and fulfil the relationship; it leads to happiness within me. Because I'm in harmony within, I am thinking of relationship which is naturally acceptable to me. In the process, if the other has more understanding than me, if he is more responsible than me, I'm committed to understand from the other. That is the complementarity. If I have more understanding than the other, I need to be more responsible than the other – that is the indicator that I have more understanding than the other. I live with responsibility with the other, unconditionally, unperturbed by the behaviour of the other. Further, I am committed to facilitate understanding in the other, once the other is assured in the relationship.

Salient Points regarding Respect

- *Respect is right evaluation (of intention and competence on the basis of Self). We are similar at the level of purpose, programme and potential and we are complementary at the level of competence. I express this complementarity as follows:*
  - *If the other has more understanding, is more responsible than me, I am committed to understand from the other. I make effort for it from my side.*
  - *If I have more understanding, I am more responsible than the other,*
- *I live with responsibility with the other, unconditionally, unperturbed by the behaviour of the other. This makes the other comfortable with me in relationship and then he has a willingness to understand from me. This may take a lot of time.*
- *I am committed to facilitate understanding in the other (once the other is assured in relationship and not before that). The communication is feasible only when the other person is assured in relationship and is ready to listen from me.*

- *Disrespect arises out of over-evaluation, under-evaluation or otherwise-evaluation; and also, out of differentiation or discrimination on the basis of body (age, gender, race, physical strength), physical facility (post, wealth) or beliefs (ism, sect, information). Small incidents of disrespect can have long-lasting consequences – from not speaking to each other, to opposition, struggle, break in relationship, divorce, fights and even war.*
- *When I can see the central role of the Self, I evaluate myself as well as the other on the basis of the Self, rather than merely at the level of Body, physical facility, etc.*

Test Your Understanding regarding Respect

Part 1: Questions for Self-evaluation

(Have we grasped the basic proposals made in this chapter?)

1. Respect is right evaluation (on the basis of the Self). List some of the prevailing notions regarding the feeling of respect. Examine these notions as well as the proposal for the feeling of respect.
2. The minimum content of respect is to be able to see the other person as being similar to you. On what basis is the other similar? What is the complete content of respect?
3. Give one example each of over evaluation, under evaluation and otherwise evaluation. Why are these evaluations leading to disrespect? What problems do we face because of these wrong evaluations?
4. How do we differentiate in relationships on the basis of body, physical facility or beliefs? What problems do we face because of such differentiation?
5. Why is understanding of the 'Self' important to ensure respect? Explain.
6. How does the feeling of respect help us in defining our complementary with other human beings? What is the expression of the feeling of respect?

Part 2: Practice Exercises for Self-exploration

(To help connect the content to one's life, at least at the level of thought, these exercises may be done individually or in a group, particularly with friends and family members)

1. List out ten or more of your interactions with other people in your family and friends in the last one week. Now analyse these interactions:
   a. From your side, was it over evaluation, under/otherwise evaluation or right evaluation of the other? In each interaction, were you comfortable within, uncomfortable within or unaware of your state?

Contd...

b. Did they evaluate you rightly or they over evaluated or under/otherwise evaluated you? In each interaction, were you comfortable within, uncomfortable within or unaware of your state?

2. Study fig. 8-9 (the chart regarding differentiation and respect – on the basis of the Self). Where has most of your effort been? Where would you like to put in your effort now? What effort, if any, is required from your side now?

Affection

Affection is the feeling of being related to the other.

When I can see that the other has a natural acceptance to make me happy and prosperous, regardless of my competence, I am assured of the other. With this feeling of assurance (trust on intention), when I am able to rightly evaluate our competence (respect), I am able to define my complementarity with the other. In this way, I am able to accept the other as my relative.

Affection is the feeling of acceptance for the other as one's relative. Parents generally have a feeling of affection for their children. The parents are very naturally able to relate to their children, feel concerned for them. Similarly, children feel related to their parents. This feeling can also be seen between friends, siblings, between teacher and student, between husband and wife, or any other relationship. It is a naturally acceptable feeling, and hence desired in every relationship. The feeling of affection is essential for the fulfilment of any relationship. Particularly, for children, it is a necessity for their development. The child feels secure in the early stages of development when it enjoys the affection of its parents. The parents, though having a hectic schedule, take care of the child, and feel happy and fulfilled in the process. But one important thing to note is that the feeling of affection can be there in continuity only if it is based on the feelings of trust and respect. If the first two feelings are not present in the Self, then the feeling of affection cannot be not continuous.

Lack of affection is seen in the form of opposition or jealousy. Such things too are observed in relationships. If the feeling of affection is missing or lacking, then we feel opposed to the other and tend to have a feeling of jealousy. This can be seen even in very young siblings. For example, if a brother is not able to accept his younger sister, then he would not have a feeling of affection for her and he may keep vying for the parents' full attention. The very feeling of trust is missing, so respect is also violated. Like this, the boy is jealous of his sister and considers her to be his competitor.

The understanding of trust, the feeling of trust as well as the feeling of respect, based on understanding of respect, are essential to have the feeling of affection. If we assume these feelings (rather than understand them), then these feelings keep getting violated sometime or the other and the relationship keeps shaking.

So, the feeling of affection comes naturally, out of the feeling of trust and respect. It is followed by the responsibility and commitment for mutual fulfilment. Can you see that?

The acceptance of the relationship and the feelings in the relationship are based on understanding. They are not based on expectations from the other. So, parents with right understanding will have the feeling of affection for the child in continuity. Similarly, affection between any two human beings (between a husband and wife, between a father and son, a mother and daughter, a brother and sister, a teacher and student and so on), will be continuous and unconditional; it will not be affected by the lack of competence of the other only if it is based on right understanding. In general, there is always the expectation that the other would reciprocate the feelings.

Now you can see that the other would be able to do that only if they have the feeling in them, not otherwise; and they would have the feeling within only if they have the right understanding, not otherwise.

As we go on, you will see that we are primarily talking about naturally acceptable feelings and rarely talking about the feelings that are not naturally acceptable. So, when you look at these negative emotions, they are the absence of these right (naturally acceptable) feelings. Opposition and jealousy are indications of the absence of affection. When we understand naturally acceptable feelings, we have the right feelings within, so the negative emotions naturally subside.

So, the feeling of acceptance of the other as one as a relative is called affection. With the feeling of affection, one naturally takes the responsibility for mutual development – both at the level of Self as well as at the level of body.

Care and Guidance

We can see that when we have a feeling of affection then the responsibility and commitment comes naturally. This starts reflecting in terms of the feeling of care and guidance. They are the natural outcomes of the feeling of affection. It can be seen in terms of

1. The feeling of responsibility towards the Body of my relative, and
2. The feeling of responsibility towards the Self of my relative.

If I have this feeling of responsibility, what will I do? I would think in terms of nurturing the Body and protecting the Body. We already discussed what nurturing and protection of body entails. Let us continue with the example of the parents having the feeling of affection for the child and therefore, the responsibility of taking care of the child – both in terms of body as well as the Self. To care for the child, they nurture and protect the Body of the child. This can be seen in most parents. Mothers are willing to do it even if it may cause inconvenience to them. They are seen skipping their own food for feeding the child on time, or change their complete routine of the day for the sake of the child. When the child is small, it many a times wets the bed, or even wets the clothes of the parents. However, the parents take such things as a part of their responsibility to continue taking care without getting irritated or angry. They nurture the child regardless of whether the child is able to reciprocate or not, that is to say their feeling and fulfilment is, in some sense, unconditional. This is something which is quite common. Mothers particularly can be seen taking care of the child in terms of nurturing its body, protecting it and so on.

Care is not only expressed to the child. It is also important for elderly, infirm and sick family members who need assistance to take care of their bodies, who need help to eat, who need help to keep their body clean and so on.

In general, the feeling of care plays an important role in human relationship today, because the Body is considered to be most important. When guests come to your house, the food and drink is of great significance. They remember what was served the last time they came to your place, even more than what was discussed!

You can see that in order to fulfil the feeling of care (commitment towards the Body), physical facility is required. Food, water and other physio-chemical things are required for nurturing the Body. Similarly, clothes and shelter are required for the protection of the Body. It may be useful to recall that for the fulfilment of the other feelings, physical facility has no significant role; at most, it plays a symbolic role.

The feeling of care also makes a difference during the production, protection and right utilisation of physical facility. These actions are done with happiness, as a part of our responsibility, when we have the feeling of care; otherwise, they are treated as drudgery. When the mother is cooking food, with a feeling of care, the work is joyous. However, when a hotel employee is cooking the food, perhaps with a focus of the pay check, the work may not be joyous.

Can you see that:

Care is the feeling of responsibility and commitment for nurturing and protection of the Body of my relative.

Now, looking at the feeling of guidance, it has to do with the responsibility towards the Self of someone we have accepted as a relative. What can be the responsibility towards the Self? Naturally, to help ensure right understanding and right feeling in the Self of the other. Once we can see that the other also is co-existence of Self and Body, we become responsible towards the Self too. This is also something that we naturally accept. Are you able to see that:

Guidance is the feeling of responsibility and commitment for ensuring the right understanding and right feeling in the Self of my relative.

In families, we do try to guide the children to the best of our ability. We can observe how parents' guide the child to walk, to speak, to take care of the Body, to do household chores, etc. Similarly, as the child grows, the domain of guidance also widens. Sending the child for education, providing advices for betterment of the life, counselling for a successful life, etc. can be seen in most homes.

Parents and other family members pass on what they know or assume to the children. If they have the understanding of harmony, and they are living in harmony, they are able to provide guidance to the children in the true sense. Through it, the children also understand harmony and live in harmony.

On the other hand, if the parents themselves are not very clear about harmony, about the co-existence of Self and Body, about right understanding and right feeling, about difference

between physical facility and happiness, etc. Then in place of providing guidance, the parents' preconditioning gets passed on to the children. Through that, the children may develop a mix of right and wrong pre-conditionings.

Guidance is the need of every human being, not just the children in the family.

Now if you can see this difference between the feeling of care and the feeling of guidance, we can look back and ask ourselves that when we are taking care of the child, are we taking care of both, care as well as guidance? Or we are largely focusing on the Body alone?

You will see that our focus is mostly on care. We are focused largely on care because we have come to assume that human being is Body. We are not even aware of the Self. Therefore, we are not aware that we have to take care of the Self as well.

One common example we can see all around is that of the person feeding a child. Many times, we tend to over-feed the child or even force-feed it. Does this make the Self of the child happy or unhappy? It is easy to see that in such a process; the Self is becoming unhappy. The child may cry, complain and do so many things but we have devised so many ways of feeding the child. We may even frighten the child or give lucrative incentives to it. We may keep saying, if you don't eat a crow will eat up your food or a policeman will take you away or after you eat, you will get a chocolate and so many other things. In one of the workshops, a mother was sharing that she bought a plastic lizard. When the child is given food, she tells it that the lizard will bite you if you don't finish your food. While doing all that, are we creating a conducive condition for the Self or violating the Self? We are focusing on the Body at the cost of the Self. If we are over-feeding the child, we are not even taking care of the Body.

There can be harmonious ways to feed the child. If we can see that the child too has a natural acceptance to nurture its body, we can have a conversation. If we can see that the Self of the child is just like ourselves – we will be able to see it wants to be treated at par with us; it wants to have proposals in place of prescriptions; and given all that, it wants to decide on its own.

Every human child has a natural acceptance to understand what is right and do what is right; it can understand, it is ready to take help to understand and it makes effort for it on its own. A parent or a teacher can help to fulfil that need with the feelings of trust, respect, affection, care and guidance for the child.

Reverence

Reverence is the feeling of acceptance for excellence.

What we are proposing is that excellence is to be in a state of continuous happiness (see fig. 8-10). This calls for understanding harmony and living in harmony – at all levels of our being. Once we achieve excellence, it continues. Excellence is something definite, something absolute.

If someone has achieved this state of excellence, we naturally have an acceptance for such a person. This feeling of acceptance for excellence is called reverence.

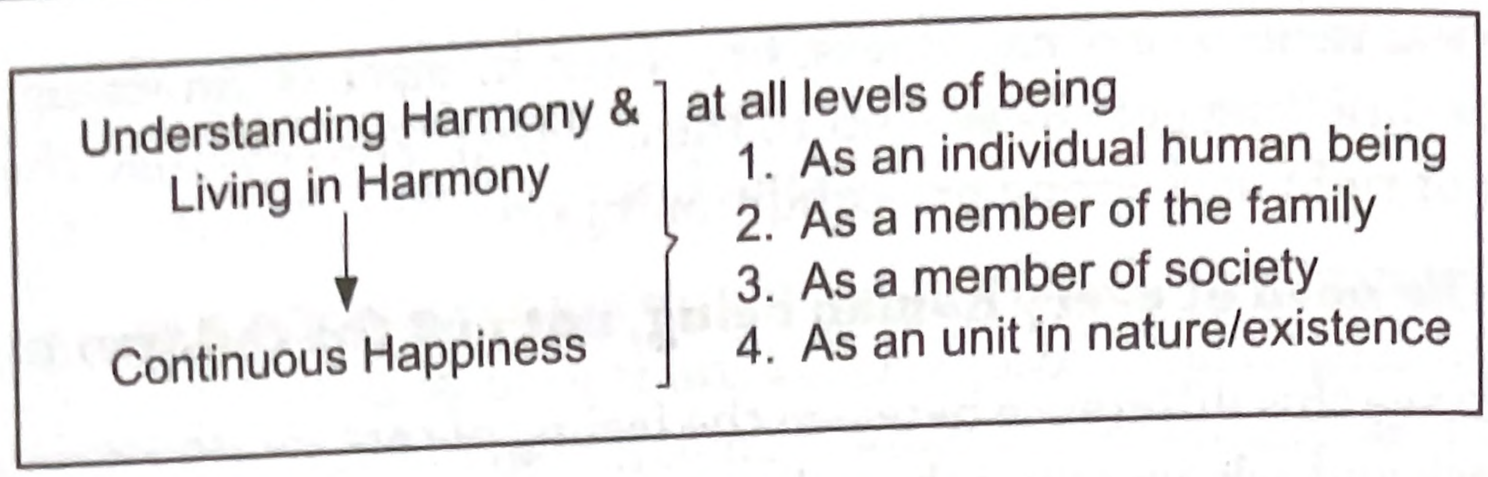


Fig. 8-10. Excellence

We all aspire for continuous happiness. In that sense, we all aspire for excellence. Since the revered person has achieved excellence, we would naturally like to take inspiration from such a person and make effort to become like her/him. We are not talking about imitating someone's appearance, mannerisms, achievements and such. We are pointing to their realisation of harmony within and harmony with the world outside. Our effort for excellence is called worship. We keep using this word quite often, but the sense of worship is essentially to make effort for excellence.

There may be a confusion between the feeling of reverence and the feeling of respect. We say, "how can we respect someone when...", and we have many reasons. We will not have a feeling of reverence for someone who has not achieved excellence. However, we will rightly evaluate everyone (i.e. respect everyone), so that we can determine our complementarity with every person.

We can also try to see the basic difference between excellence and competition. If you have achieved excellence, what would you like to do for the other? To differentiate and dominate over them or to make effort to help them to come to your level? A little exploration will show that you naturally like to help the other. In a state of continuous happiness, there is nothing more that you need to do for yourself. Therefore, you would naturally make effort for helping others to achieve excellence. On the other hand, in competition, we not only do not help rather we hinder the other to reach to our level. Remember, we had asked you to explore how many children can come first in the class and how many children can understand all that is being taught in the class? Now you can see that every child has the desire for and potential for excellence. If we are making effort for excellence or helping others to achieve excellence, it is a joyous effort for all concerned. When we are competing, say for that first position in class or to be someone special, it is an unhappy effort for all concerned, including you! Can you see that?

You can find out if this definition of excellence and reverence is naturally acceptable to you or not. Also find out if worship means making effort for excellence by taking inspiration from the revered person, or it means just handing over your responsibility to the revered!

Glory and Gratitude

With this clarity about excellence, we can now define the feeling of glory as well as the feeling of gratitude, because only in the light of understanding excellence, it is possible for us to understand both the feelings.

Glory is the feeling of acceptance for those who have made effort for excellence.

We have a feeling of glory for people who have made effort or are making effort for excellence. So, for all those people whom we call great people, we accept them as great people because they invested themselves to achieve excellence. When we can accept the effort made by them, to whatever extent they are able to achieve it, we naturally have a feeling of glory for them.

We want to have this feeling for our family elders and teachers too. We have a natural expectation from them that they would make sincere efforts for right understanding and right living.

Gratitude is the feeling of acceptance for those who have made the effort for my excellence.

It is the feeling for all those who have helped me, in any way, in my own effort to achieve excellence. In our life, there may be so many people who have been of help to us in the process of understanding harmony and living in harmony. So, we have this feeling of gratitude for them. Particularly in the family, we can see such people. We can see that the parents and others have affectionately brought us up, provided us with necessary physical facility to nurture and protect our body.

You may be remembering your parents and elders – they have cared for you and arranged to send you to school and college, provided the necessary physical facility and helped you to utilize it in your effort for excellence. We can also see what the other has done in terms of fulfilling the need of the Self, i.e. to help us in developing right understanding and right feeling. For that our feeling of gratitude continues for a very long time. You must be remembering the guidance received from your mother, father and some of your teachers. Like that, there may be so many people outside the family too who are involved in the process of your development. You may have a feeling of gratitude for them too.

If you think in terms of continuity of the feeling of gratitude, it has to do more with the efforts made by the other for your understanding and feeling. When you look at the continuity, it is only possible at the level of Self. What the other can do for the Self is to help in facilitating the development of right understanding and right feeling. This has the continuity. Therefore, the possibility of continuity of the feeling of gratitude is there for effort made at the level of the Self.

On the other hand, what is being done at the level of body, in terms of physical facility, may not have continuity. Of course, there will be feeling of gratitude for this too, but it may not have the continuity. So, if we are only participating at the level of physical facility, then the other will have this feeling only for a limited time. The continuity of gratitude for the physical facility, or on the basis of what has been done at the level of body, is possible only when one has developed right understanding.

Gratitude is a significant feeling in the development of relationship. When the child can see that the parents and the other relatives in the family are taking care of his health, they are taking care of his happiness, they are helping him in the process of education, so, with all that he has this feeling of gratitude. It extends to people outside the family, like

the immediate neighbours, the community around, the society, the nation and ultimately the whole world family. Because when we try to understand, explore and find out the people who are involved in the process of helping us in achieving excellence in the Self or taking care of our body, we find that a whole lot of people are involved, the whole system is involved. This feeling of gratitude is significant in the development of a human being.

You can do this homework: Try to find out about all those people who are involved in the process of ensuring excellence in you. For any small thing that you use, say food, find out where is it coming from, who are the people involved in the process. If you are getting milk in a packet, where does it come from, who are the people collecting and distributing it, who are the people producing it. People who are producing milk are using fodder, grains, etc. Where is that coming from? You may try to investigate and find out the entire chain of it and then you will see, even for the small things that you use – so many people are involved and they're all together facilitating your nurturing and protection of the Body.

One indication of the feeling of gratitude is that we know what the other did for us. We also know what the other could not do for us, in spite of having the intention. So, we do not have remorse for what they could not do. In fact, this gives us a good starting list of what the next generation needs or expects from us. So, with gratitude, we make effort for developing our competence for it.

When parents and family elders have the right understanding and right feeling, the family has a conducive environment for the development of the child. It is a model of living in relationship. In it, children will accept the relationship naturally, through all that is being done for them. When the family is already living in relationship, then the feeling of gratitude in the child is the entry point for the appreciation of relationship, followed by the understanding of relationship. However, if we are trying to understand relationship afresh, then we have to start from developing clarity about trust. That is another reason that trust has been called the foundation value.

A Relook at Respect, Reverence, Gratitude and Glory

Since these feelings are quite similar, let's make a little comparison for clarity. If you look at the human goal, it is to achieve excellence. Excellence is understanding harmony and living in harmony at all levels of being, leading to continuous happiness. It is in terms of this excellence, that we can understand these four feelings – the feeling of respect, reverence, glory and gratitude.

Respect is there for all on the basis of right evaluation of the Self. When we do the right evaluation on the basis of Self, we find that the purpose of every human being is the same – to achieve excellence. Not only is our purpose the same, our programme is same and our potential is also same. In that sense, every human being is similar. The only difference is in the competence, i.e. how much of the potential has been realised. Since we all have the same goal, we can be of help to each other in achieving it – that is how we are complementary to each other. We can identify our complementarity only with the right evaluation – that right evaluation is respect. Respect is for each and every human being.

When it comes to reverence, of course the respect is there at the base. In addition to that we have this feeling of reverence for those who have achieved excellence. From them, we would like to take inspiration and make effort for our excellence. That is the difference between the respect and reverence.

When it comes to glory, of course respect is there at the base, but glory is for those who have made effort to achieve excellence. To whatever extent they might have achieved it, but they have made effort for it. For them, we have a feeling of glory. If they have achieved excellence, we have this feeling of glory as well as reverence.

We can see that we have respect, we have glory and then we have reverence. Since respect is for all, so it is also there for the person who is revered. Then glory is for those who have made effort for achieving excellence, thus, the feeling of glory is also there for the person who is revered. Of course, the feeling of reverence is for those who have achieved excellence.

When it comes to reverence, the feelings of glory and respect are included in it. When it comes to glory, the feeling of respect is included in it, but reverence is not necessarily included in glory. When it comes to respect, it is for all; there is no additional qualification required.

The feeling of gratitude is for those who have made effort for my excellence, who have helped me to achieve excellence or who are helping me to achieve excellence. Of course, respect is at the background here also, but the additional qualification is that (s)he has made effort for me to achieve excellence.

Initially you are able to appreciate something which is directly of help for you, but when you go on analysing and relating to it, you'll be able to see those who have been of help indirectly also, this will include a very large number of people as we saw.

Now, if you look at the difference between all these four feelings: respect is for all on the basis of right evaluation of the Self, reverence is for those who have achieved excellence, glory is for those who have made effort for excellence, and gratitude is for those who have made effort for my excellence.

In other words, we are saying that for the one we have the feeling of reverence, we also have the feelings of glory and respect. For the one we have a feeling of glory, we also have respect anyway, but not necessarily reverence. Of course, gratitude will also include respect and we may also have the feeling of glory here too, but it is not necessary; it depends on whether he is making effort for excellence or not. This is the difference between these four feelings.

Love as the Complete Value

Having talked about the first eight values, now we can talk about a value that encompasses all, and can be termed as the complete value.

Verify on the basis of your natural acceptance, if you want to be related to none, to one, to many or to everyone? What is naturally acceptable to you? We can see that it is not acceptable naturally to be related to none (or to be unrelated). We can also see that it is naturally acceptable to be related to one, and to many and ultimately, to all. The feeling of being related to one or to many is what we are calling affection. But if you look at the full possibility of the feeling of being related to everyone – that is called love.

Love is the feeling of being related to everyone, to all. It starts from affection, which we have already explored. If this feeling expands and includes all, it is the feeling of love. We begin with the feeling of affection, and we complete it with the feeling of love. That is why it is called complete value.

Love is the feeling of being related to all.

Ultimately all of us want to reach here. It starts with a feeling of being related to the other human being. It starts with accepting the other human being, with his complete possibility (natural acceptance, intention) and present competence. It slowly expands to the feeling of being related to all human beings and then to all, each and every unit in nature – human being as well as all other units in nature. This is how it progresses. That is the meaning of love: the feeling of being related to all – human being as well as all other units in nature.

The feeling of love is expressed in the form of kindness, beneficence and compassion.

- Kindness is to provide a resource that the other needs but for which he does not have the competence – the other could be in need of some physical facility or fulfilment in relationship or right understanding.
- Beneficence is to provide something that the other requires, but has not felt the need for it. For example, he may require right understanding, but may not have felt the need for it. With the base of the feeling of love and out of the feeling of beneficience, one may help him to develop right understanding.
- Compassion means that one is willing to extend help to the other unconditionally, whether the other has felt the need or not, has the resources or not – without any conditions put on her/him. One is willing to help the other and do whatever is required in order to fulfil the relationship in an unconditional manner. That is the meaning of compassion.

The feeling of love is for all but it is expressed for those who come in contact. This is interesting. When you talk about the feeling of love, it is not just within the family, within the friends' circle, rather it is for all – those with whom you are in immediate contact as well as those with whom you are not in contact. So that feeling is there but the expression of the feeling will take place as and when you come in contact with the other person. Ultimately, we all want to reach this state, to have the feeling of love, to feel related to every human being and every unit in nature. That is the complete value.

We can see that when we are able to realize this feeling of love within us, we are able to express and share it with others. It is the feeling of love which paves the way for an undivided society.

Till then we have a divided society; because if I feel related only to people within my own family, there are two parts of the society, those who are in my family and those who are outside my family. Similarly, if I have feeling of affection for those in the community and not outside the community, I divide this society into parts, my community and outside of my community.

Love is the complete value because this is ultimately where we want to reach and this is the feeling which includes all the other feelings that we have talked about – the feeling of trust, respect, affection and so on.

When we are talking about the feeling of love, of course this is not something which is based on sensation. It is based on understanding – understanding oneself, understanding the other, understanding the whole nature and ultimately understanding the whole existence, where I can see that I'm related to every unit, every human being as well as the rest of the units in nature. It is a feeling born out of the understanding of the existence as co-existence which we will discuss in detail in chapter 11. It is born out of understanding of the nature and the harmony in it, and it is born out of the relationship of one unit with another unit in a mutually fulfilling manner which we will discuss in chapter 10. Thus, the feeling of love is born out of understanding and not out of the sensation.

With this clarity of love as a feeling of being related to all which is based on the understanding of the whole existence, we can see that love is the complete value and that is where we all want to reach. Even if we may not be able to ensure fulfilment in relationship with even one, our aspiration is to be related to all and ensure fulfilment in relationship for all.

Distinguishing between Love and Infatuation

When we are talking about the feeling of love, of course this is not something which is based on sensation. If you're talking about some feeling on the basis of sensation, this is the case of infatuation. In this case, the sensual pleasure that is valuable for you; it is the central issue for you. Infatuation is conditional – it may last only as long as you are able to get the sensation. Infatuation is very temporary; it does not last for long. And once the effect wears off, then the long-term issues of feelings become prominent.

> *There is a story of a teacher who went to visit an asylum. Escorted by a doctor, the teacher was taken to the first room. There was a boy shouting and tearing his hair apart. The teacher asked naively, "what happened to the boy". The doctor told him that he had fallen in love with a girl (that is to say he was infatuated with her) and wanted to marry her but was unable to. This broke his heart completely and that made him land up in the asylum. The teacher felt very sorry for him. Then he was taken to the next room. There was another young man shouting and tearing his hair apart. "What happened to him", asked the teacher. "Well, he got married to that girl", the doctor replied.*

If the basis for our relationship is how one looks, beauty and sensation, and the feeling of relationship from Self to Self is missing, sooner or later this is where we may end up. Not always in an asylum, of course, but the house may become like one!

Most of the cases of adultery and divorce are attributable to lack of fulfilment at the level of feeling, rather than any other reason. When you have the feeling of love on the basis of understanding, you are standing (rising) in love! You are no longer falling in love. You will have the feeling of acceptance, regardless of the behaviour of the other and will be living with responsibility in the relationship from your side, unconditionally; primarily

with the responsibility for mutual development. Over a period of time, the other will also evolve and the feelings will start flowing from the other as well – starting with trust. It is like there is no "best spouse", "best friend" and so on. Rather it is what one makes out of the relationship. With the right feeling, if one works on mutual development, almost any relationship can blossom.

Now you can ask yourself what will be naturally acceptable to you: love (to stand (rise) in love) or infatuation (to fall in love)? Reflect on what is generally happening now and its impact in the family and in the society.

Right Feeling – within Myself or from the Other?

With this background, we can ask ourselves what can have continuity:

- Right feeling in myself or
- Getting right feeling from the other

Of course, when we ask like this, the answer is quite obvious that there can be continuity of right feeling if it is from within. Only then it is a part and parcel of me. If we are expecting right feeling from the other, we may get it sometime and not get it at other times. There is no definiteness in the feeling from others. Also, the feeling from the other is a source of temporary excitement – it can never ensure harmony within us.

That is what we have been alluding to from the beginning. The need of the Self is continuous happiness. This is the complete feeling we are all aspiring for. We had given a name to the complete feeling – the feeling of love. All the other feelings we have discussed in this chapter are different levels of reaching to this complete feeling within.

Also, we have been pointing out that the base for right feeling is right understanding. Feeling based on right understanding can have continuity. Feeling based on experience of events are actually only temporary emotions. The foundation feeling of trust is based on understanding that every Self is endowed with a natural acceptance for relationship, i.e. every Self wants every other Self to be happy. The emotion based on the competence of the other to make you happy will keep fluctuating, because the competence of the other is not always upto your expectation. You can see this very clearly even now for yourself – you want to make yourself happy all the time, but due to lack of your own competence, you are unable to do so in all cases.

Is it clear that there can be continuity of right feeling in you, only on the basis of right understanding within you?

Role of Physical Facility in Fulfilment of Relationship

You can now see that physical facility has a limited role to play in the fulfilment of the feeling in human-human relationship. To fulfil the feeling of care, physical facility is certainly required. It is required in a limited quantity for nurturing the Body, protection and right utilisation of the Body – your body or the Body of your family members.

Other than the feeling of care, physical facility only has a symbolic role. For example, you may offer a chocolate to someone to express the feeling of affection for him. The chocolate is not affection – it is a symbol of your feeling of affection for the other. Like that you can check the role of physical facility in the fulfilment of every other feeling.

Response and Reaction in Behaviour

An important implication of understanding relationship, particularly trust on intention, is the clarity about living in reaction and the possibility of living with response. To understand response, a contrast between reaction and response is shown in the table below.

Reaction	Response
You decide how to behave based on the behaviour of the other	You decide how to behave on your own right
It depends on whether you like or dislike the (taste of the) behaviour of the other - If the other behaves properly, you also behave properly - If the other misbehaves, you also may misbehave	It is based on right understanding and right feeling in yourself which are definite. Your behaviour is always for mutual happiness
Your behaviour is decided by other ("remote control" is with others) You are enslaved	You decide your own behaviour You are self-organised
- You have doubt on the intention of the other - You get excited or hurt by their behaviour - You don't consider mutual happiness and mutual development as a part of your responsibility in the relationship	- You are clear about the intention of the other - You are neither hurt nor excited by the behaviour of the other (their behaviour is an input to rightly evaluate their competence) - You take responsibility for mutual happiness and mutual development
Your conduct is indefinite	**Your conduct is definite**

Understanding Justice

With this background, we can now talk about justice in relationship. Each one of us aspires for justice in every relationship and at every moment. Isn't it? Now we will sum up the discussion above with a brief discussion on the proposal for justice:

Justice is the recognition, fulfilment and evaluation of human-human relationship, leading to mutual happiness.

To expand it a bit:

- Recognition of relationship means unconditionally accepting the relationship. Accepting the other with their full possibility (potential) and with their current level of competence.

- Fulfilment of relationship means
  - Ensuring the naturally acceptable feeling in oneself and sharing it with the other.
  - Living with responsibility with the other unconditionally. This makes the other comfortable and assured.
  - Making effort for mutual development, i.e. development of one's own competence and being of help to the other in developing their competence.
- Evaluation means verifying that the right feeling has reached to the other and that the other is able to make out that it is the right feeling.

One has to gain competence to live with justice in the relationships in continuity. When the recognition, fulfilment and evaluation is right from my side, I feel happy. When the other is able to evaluate the expression of my feeling rightly, then (s)he also feels happy. Developing this competence may take time.

Thus, mutual happiness may sometimes result instantly, and sometimes may take some time when one of the persons is yet to gain competence. But if neither of the two is competent, justice will not take place. If one is preconditioned or is trying to draw happiness through sensation, neither will he be able to ensure happiness for himself in continuity nor will the other. When you are able to look at justice with so much preciseness, you will be able to see why there is so much problem in relationships today. Many times, we start by the wrong recognition of the feelings and the very possibility of justice is forsaken.

To take an example, if we have assumed that there is struggle for survival, we will start with a feeling of opposition (jealousy). With this wrong feeling, howsoever hard we try for fulfilment in relationship, ultimately it will land us up into competition, opposition, fights and even war. There could be many such wrong assumptions leading to wrong feelings in us that retard the possibility of justice.

But the good thing is that once we develop the competence for justice, then establishing and maintaining relationship will become a smooth process; and this is a big achievement in itself, isn't it?

In this way, it leads to mutual happiness. This, in a nutshell, is the meaning of justice. Is this definition of justice naturally acceptable to you? Is justice desirable? Find it out.

Here is an interesting example of a lawyer who found this definition made sense. He happened to come for one of our workshops at a well-known institute. Touched by the discussion on justice, he decided to experiment with it in his practice. At that time, he was dealing with the divorce proceedings of a young couple, one of whom was a PhD student at the same institute. He called them up and requested, rather suggested to them to attend this workshop, saying "we will proceed after you go through what they have to say. Pay attention to it". They came for the workshop. The girl could get a feel of her responsibility towards relationship and wanted to withdraw her divorce paper, "he has made mistakes, but I have also made some, so let me try again, sincerely". The boy was adamant and asked for the divorce to go through. "You did not pay attention.

Go and listen again", the lawyer advised. "I am paying you. Please go ahead or I will go to some other lawyer", the boy argued. The lawyer told him to go ahead, but he would have to get the papers signed again by the girl. Since she had realised her part, and decided to try again, the lawyer said, "I won't give her signed papers to you". Frustrated, the boy went for the workshop a second time. This time he also saw both sides, her mistakes as well as his mistakes. These two are still married, have become good friends by now, happy to help each other develop. Of course, they realised that they had a long way to go, but now they are working out how to solve the problems, rather than to just complain about them. What do you think happened to the lawyer? Not surprisingly, he has developed a great reputation of being helpful – nobody wants broken relationships. His practice is gaining acceptance.

Find out whether you have natural acceptance for justice within the family? Check in how many relationships within your family you are able to ensure justice from your side. Remember, the mark of justice is mutual happiness.

When we reflect on it, we can easily see that we have an expectation for justice well beyond the family. We expect that everyone will behave properly with us and we also tend to behave well with everyone in general. Deep within, our natural acceptance is for justice from family to world family – justice in the family as well as justice with every human being. That is how we want to live!

We have a natural acceptance for an undivided human family, i.e. an undivided society. That is the meaning of harmony in the family.

My Participation (Value) in My Family

(To Make Effort for Harmony in the Family)

The important issue in the family is that of the feelings. These feelings are in one Self for the other Self.

My participation (value) vis-à-vis my family is to ensure harmony in the family, ensure mutual happiness, ensure justice in the family by way of:

- Ensuring the right feelings (trust, respect, affection, care, guidance, reverence, glory, gratitude and love) in myself – this leads to my happiness.
- Expressing (sharing) these feelings with the other – when the other is able to make the right evaluation of these feelings, it leads to hi(s)her happiness, thus leading to mutual happiness. My participation is to be of help to the other in their self-evolution, self-development.

With this preparation in the family, I have the ability to participate meaningfully in the larger society – in the neighbourhood, in the community and so on. When I am able to recognise and accept relationship in its fulness, I find that all human beings are part of the family. This feeling of acceptance is called love; and it is expressed in the form of compassion. This is my participation (value) vis-à-vis my family.

Salient Points

- *Harmony in the family has to do with acceptance of the other human being and ensuring the fulfilment of the naturally acceptable feelings in relationship. To live with fulfilment in relationship, it is essential to understand relationship. Assuming relationship without understanding does not work.*
- *Relationship is – it already exists between one Self (I_1) and the other Self (I_2).*
- *The base of relationship is feelings – in one Self (I_1) for other Self (I_2). Feelings are fundamental to harmony in the family, i.e. in human-human relationship.*
- *Except for the feeling of care, physical facility has a symbolic role in expressing the feelings (majority of complaints in relationship are due to lack of fulfilment of these feelings and no amount of physical facility can compensate for it).*
- *These feelings are definite, so they can be understood. There are nine naturally acceptable feelings in relationship – trust, respect, affection, care, guidance, reverence, glory, gratitude and love. Having these feelings in me ensures my happiness. Since they are naturally acceptable to the other also, sharing these feelings with the other leads to their happiness, thus to mutual happiness.*
- *Feelings born out of the understanding of relationship are unconditional and continuous. Feelings or emotions based on incidents / happenings are conditional and temporary. Negative emotions are basically the absence of right (naturally acceptable) feelings.*
- *Justice in relationship is understanding relationship, acceptance of relationship, having the right feelings, fulfilling these feelings followed by the right evaluation of these feelings, leading to mutual happiness:*
  - *Having the right feeling in myself leads to my happiness*
  - *Expressing (sharing) these feelings to the other and its right evaluation leads to his/her happiness*
- *Expecting to get these feelings from the other (instead of ensuring these feelings in oneself) cannot be ensured in continuity.*
- *Trust = to be assured = to be assured that the other intends (has a natural acceptance) to make me happy and prosperous. It is the foundational feeling (value) in relationship. In the absence of it, we do not feel related to the other and the relationship keeps shaking.*
- *Trust (on intention) means that:*
  - *I am able to see that as far as the intention (natural acceptance) is concerned, it is to make the other happy and prosperous. This is true for me and true for the other. We are similar, we are related to each other and we have a common intention.*
  - *I am able to see that as far as competence is concerned, I am lacking in some areas and that is true for the other also. I make a programme based on my evaluation of our mutual competence (I do not assume that our competence is perfect, same as the intention).*

- ❑ *In case the other is lacking in competence, I assure the other, without getting irritated, angry or having a feeling of opposition and once the other is assured, I make effort to help the other to improve his competence, to the extent I can.*
- ❑ *I am always making effort to improve my own competence.*

- *A common mistake in relationship is to evaluate myself based on intention and evaluate the other based on competence. If we go by this, we assume ourselves to be good and the other to be the problem.*
- *Respect = right evaluation (of intention and competence). Respect, on the basis of Self means the other is like me in terms of purpose, programme and potential of the Self and we are complementary to each other in terms of competence. If the other has more understanding, is more responsible than me; then I am committed to understand from the other. If I have more understanding, I am more responsible than the other; then*
- *I live with responsibility with the other, unconditionally, unperturbed by the behaviour of the other. This makes the other comfortable with me in relationship and then he has a willingness to understand from me.*
- *I am committed to facilitate understanding in the other (once the other is assured in relationship and not before that). The communication is feasible only when the other person is assured in relationship and is ready to listen from me.*
- *Disrespect arises out of over-evaluation, under-evaluation or otherwise-evaluation; and also, out of differentiation or discrimination by making comparison of body (in terms of age, gender, race, and physical strength), physical facility (in terms of post, wealth) or beliefs (in terms of ism, sect, information).*
- *Affection is the feeling of being related to the other. One naturally feels related to the other only when there is feeling of Trust and Respect in oneself for the other. Feeling of jealousy or opposition is basically the absence of affection. Responsibility and commitment for mutual fulfilment in the relationship emerges from affection. Thus, I take the responsibility for the Self as well as the Body of my relative.*
- *Care is the feeling of responsibility and commitment for nurturing and protection of the Body of my relative. Physical facility, in a limited quantity, is needed to fulfil the feeling of care.*
- *Guidance is the feeling of responsibility and commitment for ensuring Right Understanding and Right Feeling in the Self of my relative.*
- *Assuming human being to be the Body results in being largely focused on care of the Body and lack of guidance toward the Self.*
- *Reverence is the feeling of acceptance for Excellence. Excellence means understanding harmony and living in harmony at all levels of being (individual, family, society, nature/existence), thereby, living with continuous happiness.*
- *Glory is the feeling for those who have made effort for excellence. They may or may not have attained excellence in completeness.*

- *Gratitude is the feeling for those who have made effort for my excellence. In the process, they may have shared proposals for right understanding, communicated right feeling or made available the necessary physical facility.*
- *If you make a list of people involved in providing you right understanding, right feeling and physical facility, it will be a long list ultimately including almost all the people on the Earth. Thus, you will be able to see the interconnectedness, relatedness with all other human beings and it slowly develops a feeling of gratitude for the society as a whole.*
- *Love is the feeling of being related to all. It all starts with identifying that one is related to the other human being and it slowly expands to the feeling of being related to all human beings and then to all, each and every unit in nature (human being as well as other units). The feeling of love is there for all and it is expressed to those who are in contact, in the form of compassion. It is unconditional and continuous. Love is the final or completion point of feeling where every human being aspires to reach and continue. In that sense, love is the complete value.*
- *A common misunderstanding about love is that it is based on sensation (sensory pleasure). In fact, it is merely infatuation.*
- *The feeling of love is the foundation of undivided society. With the feeling of love, there is justice in the family and it extends from family to world family resulting into undivided society.*

Test Your Understanding

Part 1: Questions for Self-evaluation

(Have we grasped the basic proposals made in this chapter?)

1. Define affection. How does affection lead to harmony in the family?
2. Explain the feelings of care and guidance.
3. What is excellence? Is working for competition the same as working for excellence? Explain with the help of examples.
4. Distinguish between respect, glory and reverence.
5. If someone is helpful in fulfilling your needs, what feeling do you have for him? Explain in terms of needs of the Self as well as needs of the Body.
6. Define love. How is love the complete value?
7. How does one develop right feeling – is it on the basis of right understanding or on the basis of experience of events? Explain in detail.
8. What is the role of physical facility in the fulfilment of relationship?
9. What is justice? Is it a continuous or a temporary need?

Contd...

10. What is the basis of an undivided society – the world family?

Part 2: Practice Exercises for Self-exploration

(To help connect the content to one's life, at least at the level of thought, these exercises may be done individually or in a group, particularly with friends and family members)

1. Make a list of people you are closely related to or friends with (in your family, extended family, community, village, town, city, etc.). What is the relationship name that you call them by (like mother, father, brother, sister, in-laws, co-brother, uncle, teacher, etc). Also find out the feelings expected in that relationship (like you may expect your father to have the feeling of trust and guidance). What are your feelings for them? Now find out if these feelings are being fulfilled. Find out what effort you need to make to develop yourself.

Relationship Name (Name of person)	Feelings I expect from them	Feelings I have for them
E.g. Ma (Usha Devi)	Trust, affection, care, reverence, etc.	Trust, respect, gratitude, glory, etc.

2. In your life, there must be people who have helped you in your effort for excellence (harmony). For each such person, write down what they have done for you.

Person	Contribution – What they did for you	Primarily this contribution is related to Right Understanding or Feeling or Physical Facility?

Find out:

a. What are the feelings you have for such people? How do you express these feelings to them?

b. Categorise the contributions as being primarily related to right understanding, feeling in relationship or physical facility. Which category of contributions do you value most?

Now add to the list, what you expected from them, but they could not do it for you. This is a rough list of what you value.

What they did for you + what you expected, but they could not do for you	Do you have the competence to do this for others in the family?	Primarily this contribution is related to Right Understanding or Feeling or Physical Facility?

Contd...

Find out if you have the competence to do this for others in the family.

3. Who are your role models? What qualities do you like about them? What feelings do you have towards them? Do you want to be like them in all aspects (how they are as an individual, as a member of the family, as a member of the society and as a part of nature)? What effort are you making or you need to make to be like them?

4. Recall the scene from "Right here Right Now" where the young boy says "I love you" to Chand, after he gives her the drawing he had made. Do you think that scene shows love or infatuation? Distinguish between love (rising in love) and infatuation (falling in love). Discuss how some young people confuse between the two? What are the outcomes of this? Do you feel it is essential to have clarity between love and infatuation? If yes, suggest ways in which this can be done.

5. What could you understand about the meaning of excellence? Contrast excellence with competition. What is the effort that you are comfortable with making – effort for competition or making effort for excellence?

6. What could you understand about the meaning of justice? Find out the state of justice in your family. Are any steps required to ensure justice in the family? How would you extend that feeling with your neighbors, in the community?

7. In the daily family routine, what activities are there or that need to be added, to promote harmony in the family? In these collective activities, what are the topics that are being discussed or need to be discussed for harmony in the family? Revise your daily routine, if you feel it is useful for harmony in your family.

   [e.g. taking food together, sharing common facilities, helping each other in household chores, sharing how the day went, sharing feelings and ideas, jointly planning the next day, etc.]

8. Update your future resume (which you started in chapter 2 and updated in chapter 5) to update the section on family – write down the goal of your family, your responsibility in the family (regarding parents, other elders, siblings, children, etc.) and what skills you will need to fulfil your responsibility toward your family.

Part 3: Projects and Modelling Exercises

You may like to revisit this part of Test Your Understanding after reading through the complete book once and self-exploring all the key proposals. With that, you may have some (or many) aha! moments in which something clicks for you, you understand a proposal. What you have understood may be expressed in various creative ways which appeal to different people. This part is for you to give a creative expression to your understanding. Of course, you can do this in a group also. Creative expressions

Contd...

may be in the form of sketches, drawings, paintings, clay models, sculptures, songs, poems, music, dance, audios, videos, games, puzzles, stories, skits, plays, dramas, charts, diagrams, plans, survey questionnaires, blogs, something on social media and so on. It is the story of your own life – and it matters. While some hints are given above, please feel free to share your real aha's in your own way!

"Is it possible to live in relationship only with the understanding of relationship"?

"Trust on intention is the foundation of relationship".

"Respect (right evaluation) is essential to define one's complementarity with the other human being".

"Ultimately, we all aspire for love (complete value), justice and an undivided society".

"Family is the practice ground for living harmoniously in relationship".

Part 4: Your Questions

Write down your questions or doubts in your note-book. If any of the previous questions have been clarified by your self-exploration of the proposals so far, please mark them as answered. We would like to discuss the questions remaining unanswered in your self-exploration.