

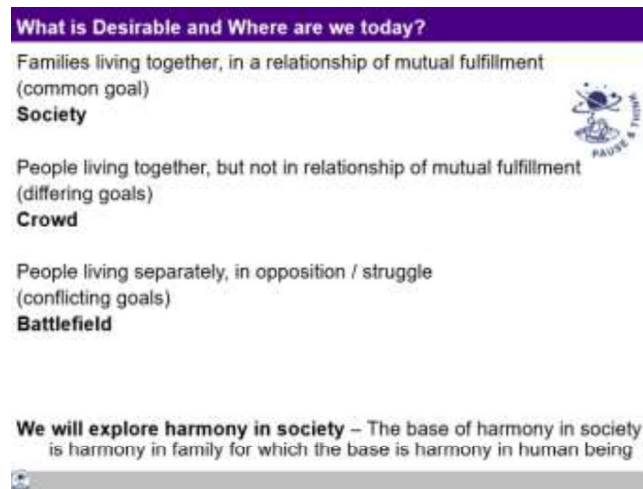


Universal Human Values Handout 4 of 5

Understanding Harmony in the Society



So far, we have explored harmony in the human being and harmony in the family. In the sequence, the next level of living for a human being is society. We can see very much see that we can conceive of a society only if it has families living together in a relationship of mutual fulfillment otherwise it is just like a crowd or battlefield.



Understanding Human Goal

The goals of human being living in a society can be articulated as shown below:



We can explore and see what is naturally acceptable?

- Right understanding in every human being or only a few to have right understanding and others to follow them?
- Prosperity in every family or few families to have accumulation, and others to be deprived and dependent on the few?
- Fearlessness, based on trust and affection, in the society or a state of fear, based on mistrust and jealousy in the society?
- Co-existence (mutual fulfillment) in nature or exploitation and domination of nature?

Appraisal of the Current Status

As shown in the figure, due to the prevailing false assumptions of happiness (like money is everything), happiness is sought through accumulation of physical facility (money) by any means, and using it for getting sensations from the body or feelings from others. The second goal of prosperity is similarly seen as accumulating more and more. With these as the driving assumptions in the society, it has led to people living with three kinds of obsessions:

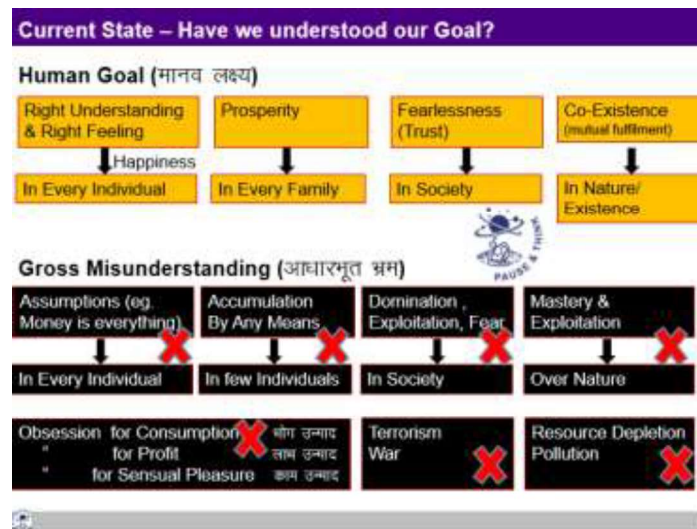
1. Obsession for consumption
2. Obsession for profit
3. Obsession for sensual pleasure

Similarly, instead of the third goal of fearlessness (trust), we have domination, exploitation and fear in the society. Finally, instead of mutual fulfillment, we are mostly trying to exploit and be the master over nature.



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The Way Ahead

There is a need for understanding the harmony in society and living accordingly. The correct sequence in which these four goals can be fulfilled is shown in the figure below:



Dimensions (Systems) of Human Order

With the clarity of human goals, we can discuss five interconnected, complementary dimensions of human order required for the fulfilment of the human goal. The five basic systems of a human society are:

1. Education-Sanskar
2. Health-Self regulation
3. Production-Work
4. Justice-Preservation
5. Exchange-Storage

Though all are interconnected, we can see a primary link of the systems with the goals as:

Education-Sanskar → (leads to) → Right understanding and right feeling (happiness)
 Health-self-regulation → (leads to) → Prosperity
 Production-Work → (leads to) → Prosperity
 Justice-Preservation → (leads to) → Fearlessness and Co-existence (respectively)
 Exchange-storage → (leads to) → Prosperity and Fearlessness

Education-Sanskar

Looking at the first dimension of Education-Sanskar, as we discussed earlier, we can see that



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Education is to develop right understanding of the harmony at all levels of being – from self to the entire existence (individual, family, society, and nature/existence).

and

Sanskar is to develop the basic acceptances of the harmony at various levels.

Education provides the commitment, preparation and practice of living in harmony at all levels. Preparation includes learning the skills and technology for living in harmony. Our living is an expression of our sanskar.

Education-Sanskar

Education = Developing Right Understanding

Sanskar = Commitment/ Preparation/ Practice for Right Living

Preparation includes Learning Right Skills & Technology

Development of the competence to live with Definite Human Conduct
Discipline to Self Discipline

1. Right **understanding**, i.e. wisdom or clarity about what to do as a human being – in oneself, family, society, nature...
2. Right **feeling** – the capacity to live in relationship with the other human beings – in family, society...
3. Right **skills** for prosperity, i.e.
 - The capacity to identify the need of physical facility
 - The skills & practice for sustainable production of more than what is required (by way of labour, using cyclic, mutually enriching process)
 - The feeling of prosperity



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Health and Self-regulation

We had discussed this at length earlier.

Self-regulation is the feeling of responsibility towards the Body, for nurturing, protection and right utilization of the Body.

Health of the Body is indicated by the fact that it is able to act according to the instruction of the Self and the different parts of the Body are in harmony.

Production-Work

Work is the effort a human being does on the rest of nature and Production is the physical facility obtained from work.

There are two important issues related to production-work:

1. What to produce?
2. How to produce?

Regarding what to produce, we have already discussed while exploring the proposals about prosperity, health and self-regulation – we have to produce physical facility required for nurturing, protection and right utilisation of the Body.

Regarding how to produce there are two criteria:

1. The process needs to be cyclic and mutually enriching – it has to be eco-friendly
2. Justice needs to be ensured in relationship with human being – it has to be people-friendly



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Understanding Harmony in the Society



A production process is cyclic when the resources utilised in the process return to their original state in due course of their lifecycle. In the absence of being in tune with the natural processes, what we see ultimately is resource depletion and pollution.

Resource depletion is the symptom of using a natural resource at a rate which is greater than the rate at which it is produced in nature. For example, if we use forest at a rate greater than the rate at which it is produced in nature, there will be a shortage/ depletion of forest.

Similarly, **pollution** indicates that we are producing something which does not return to the cycle in nature or it is produced at a rate that is faster than the rate at which it can return to the cycle in nature. Plastic, for example, does not degrade, it does not return to the cycle of nature for many years.

Justice-Preservation

We had discussed about justice.

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

We had discussed earlier that in human-human relationship, the feeling is the core issue. In order to ensure justice in the society, we need to develop the competence to understand and ensure justice in every individual. In case someone is not able to develop this competence and ends up doing injustice then:

- a) Stop the him from doing further injustice, as well as
- b) Help him/her to develop the competence for ensuring justice.

In the present system, mostly we seem to be restricting ourselves at (a) and not doing (b).

Preservation has to do with relationship of human being with the rest of nature.

Preservation is the recognition of relationship of human being with the rest of nature, its fulfilment and evaluation leading to mutual fulfilment.

Precisely, preservation would mean enrichment, protection and right utilization of the rest of the nature.

Preservation ensures

1. Prosperity in human being
2. Enrichment, protection and right utilisation of the rest of the nature

Justice ensures fearlessness (trust) in the society and preservation ensures the mutual fulfilment (co-existence) with rest of the nature.

Exchange-Storage

Exchange means sharing or exchanging physical facility with a view of mutual fulfilment and not with the obsession for profit.

The sharing is within the family, or to the extent one has been able to accept relationship. Beyond that is exchange. Through sharing and exchange of physical facility, each family can have all that it needs, i.e. there is mutual fulfilment.

Storage is preserving physical facility after the fulfilment of needs, so that it is available, when required. This is done with a view of mutual fulfilment and not with the obsession for accumulation or exploitation.



Scope: Harmony from Family Order to World Family Order – Universal Human Order

The scope of the society is from family order to world family order. Every human being has a role in one or more of the social systems, starting from the family order, then the family cluster order and so on to the nation family order and ultimately, the world family order, leading to universal human order.

Family order refers to the system in a family of responsible people living together for the common human goal. The family cluster order is the next larger unit. It is the system that a group of families evolve in order to fulfil those goals of individual families which require the participation of more people than the family has. The scope of the system from the family order to the world family order is indicated below. It is ensured through successively larger and larger complementary units,

Family Order \Rightarrow Family Cluster Order \Rightarrow Village Order \Rightarrow Village Cluster Order \Rightarrow ... \Rightarrow Nation Order... \Rightarrow World Family Order

Natural Outcome of Right Understanding

Now if you look at the basic human aspiration and its fulfilment:

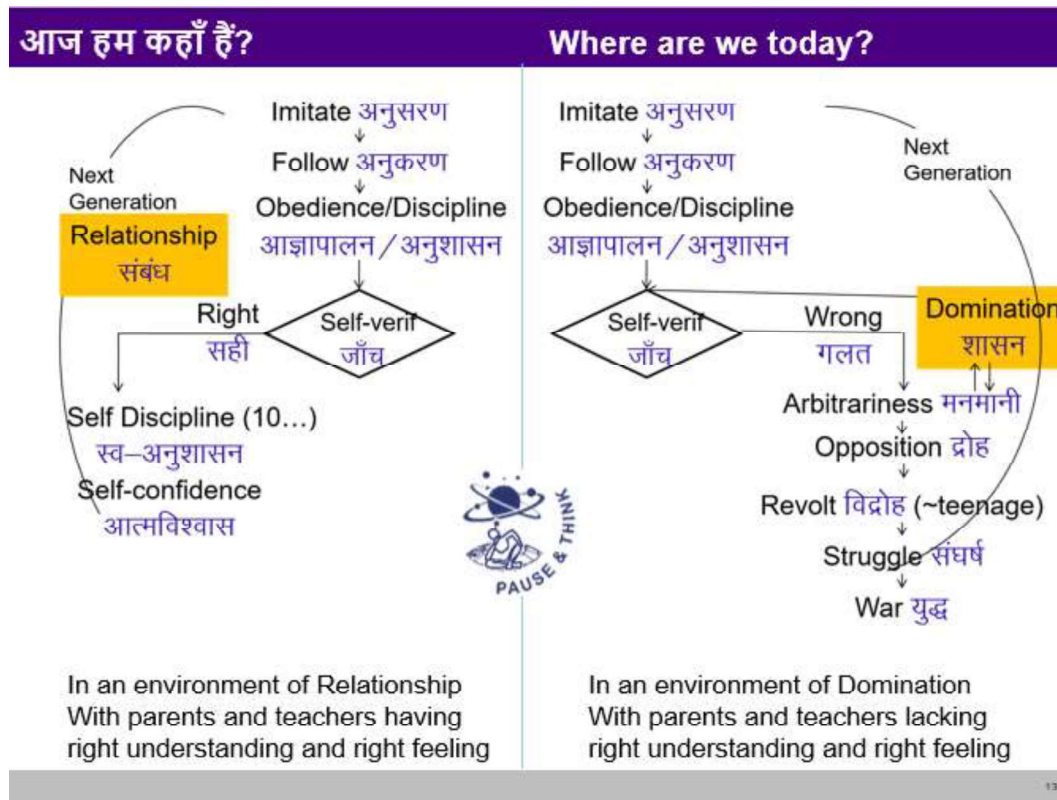
1. The happiness is ensured by having the right understanding and right feeling in the Self.
2. The prosperity is a feeling of the availability of more than required physical facility. To ensure it, Right understanding is required at the base, along with physical facility.
3. The tradition of living with happiness and prosperity starts from the family order and ultimately, continuity can be ensured by the universal human order.

In this way, the society with happiness in every individual, prosperity in every family, fearlessness (trust) in the society and co-existence (mutual fulfilment) in nature/existence is realized. This is one's participation (value) vis-à-vis society.

Process of Development of a Child – In an environment of Relationship

A child intrinsically has a desire to understand what is right, to learn right skills and to do what is right. This desire to understand is innate in every Self. This is the guidance that is expected by the child. The child wants to know about everything, so asks lots of questions, wants to relate to people around, picks up the language, the accent, the mannerisms... The thoughts and actions that lead to contradiction, thus unhappiness, are not satisfying for her/him, and hence the child makes a lot of effort in this direction from a very early age. It expects others to help him/her in learning and in understanding with a feeling of affection. In this process, the child starts with imitating, and then following. In time, progressing to obedience and discipline, all the time assuming the elders to be right. If (s)he is able to find answers and is able to validate them to be right, it leads to self-discipline and self-confidence in the child. The child's conduct is definite and it is human.

On the other hand, if the child finds that the inputs are not right, it starts to have doubts on elders, teachers and hence tries out something on his/her own. If yet the knowing does not take place, the child's conduct remains indefinite and inhuman. The people around the child then try to restrain the child by more instructions, more domination. Many of the bad habits form during this stage. It is basically that the child is trying ways and means of happiness or escaping from unhappiness. This further aggravates the state making way for dissatisfaction, lack of confidence, opposition, revolt, struggle and war. So, one has to find out where do we stand today? And what is the naturally acceptable way?



Key Takeaways

At the level of society, the human goal is right understanding and right feeling (happiness) in every individual, prosperity in every family, fearlessness (trust) in society and co-existence (mutual fulfilment) in nature/existence. This goal is fulfilled by human order, i.e. systems for education-sanskar, health-self regulation, production-work, justice-preservation and exchange-storage. These systems start with the family order, and are interconnected right up to world family order, leading to universal human order. The natural process of development of a child in an environment of relationship needs to be understood and fulfilled so that the child grows into a human being who can have the competence to participate in the universal human order.

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