

which arise cruelty leading to infliction of injury to animals, and malice, hatred etc. Unless there is a feeling of cruelty behind it, if anybody's action results in the death of his parents even, that deed is not regarded either customarily or spiritually as an act of violence. There are grades of harm. Injuring children or parents and killing an assailant are not the same thing, because no one can do the former unless there is intensely vile cruelty in him. The intensity of vile-ness marks the difference in the degree of cruelty. That is why killing a man and cutting grass are not the same form of cruelty. Again hurting a man with rude words is not the same as killing him so much so that killing a desperado or felling trees etc. are not regarded as cruelty at all by ordinary men, because they are in such a sinful state that these acts do not contaminate them further. This is why Manu has said that there is no harm to ordinary men in taking meat because it is their usual propensity, but to desist from it produces excellent result.

So far for ordinary men. But for yogins observance of Ahimsā is a supreme vow; that is why they try their best to practise harmlessness. They first refrain from doing harm to human beings—even to an attacker—and then to animals by practising as little cruelty as possible even to the extent of only frightening away a snake and not killing it. Next they practise harmlessness to vegetables. This is how yogins by practising only unavoidable harm in the mildest form go on increasing the spirit of harmlessness and ultimately through proficiency in yoga get liberated from embodied existence and thus make themselves free from harm to all creatures. Cleansing of the heart is the aim of yogic practices.

(2) Truthfulness. The effort to make the mind and speech correspond to the thing which has been correctly apprehended is the practice of truth. Truth which might pain another is not to be uttered or thought of, e.g. to cause pain by mentioning one's defects or wishing destruction of followers of untruth or thoughts of a similar nature.

With regard to truth, Upaniṣad has said, "Truth triumphs, not falsehood". For cultivating truth, talkativeness has to be