

Steya (3) means illegally taking things belonging to another. Asteya is abstention from such feeling even in desire.

Brahmacharya—suppressing the sense of the sexual organ and of the activities of other sense-organs leading to it (4).

To desist from taking or coveting things, seeing that to get them and keep them involve trouble, that they decay, that their association causes mischief and that they beget malice, is Aparigraha or abstention from avariciousness. These constitute Yama or Restraint.

(1) The commentator has given a lucid exposition of harmlessness. Śruti says, "Do not injure any creature". Harmlessness is not only refraining from injury to animals, but developing and entertaining feelings of amity towards all beings. Unless selfishness is given up in respect of all external objects it is not possible to practise harmlessness. To nourish one's own body with the flesh of another is the chief form of harm. Besides, in seeking one's own comfort, it becomes inevitable to cause pain to others. To frighten another, to break the heart with rudeness—these all are injury. Because truth and other forms of restraints and observances weaken the selfish tendencies of greed and envy, their practice purifies harmlessness.

Some doubt how it can be possible to practise harmlessness when in maintaining one's own life, killing of animals is unavoidable. This doubt arises out of not knowing the principle of the practice of harmlessness. The commentator has said that it is not possible to enjoy without hurting others (vide II. 15). Therefore to live, cruelty to animals is inevitable. Knowing that, the Yogins practise Yoga to avoid being born again. This is the first practice of harmlessness. To refrain, as far as possible, from inflicting injury on trees and animals is the second practice. The third is to avoid, as far as possible, infliction of pain on the higher animals. Briefly, harmlessness is abandonment of the evil tendency from