

L-7: Harmony with Oneself



Contributors

Dr. Shashi Kant Gupta

(Professor of Assessment and Evaluation)

Dr. S.S.Kedar

(Associate Professor, Department of Electronic Media)

Editor: Dr. Joshua Earnest, Professor of Electrical Engineering



National Institute of Technical Teachers' Training and Research
Shamla Hills, Bhopal M.P. - INDIA 462002

Lesson – 7

Harmony with Oneself

Learning Outcome: At the end of this lesson, you as a professional will be able to take necessary steps to live in harmony with oneself and also benefit the students.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

As discussed in previous lessons, professionals often have to take high-stake decisions, and work in complex uncertain environment. The professionals' mind should be free from worries for taking good decisions to tackle complex problems. This requires that they should be free from mental tensions and conflicts and have peace of mind. If they are facing some tensions or worries due to any issue in their personal or professional life, it will affect their performance. In other words, peace of mind is more important for professionals as compared to other occupations such as administrators, businessman/women or workers. Nevertheless, professionals are also human beings and they also have aspirations as they also have families, live in the society and with nature. If they are not able to adjust with family, society and nature, they will be stressed which may hamper their professional growth and their right decision taking capabilities, even in routine works. Some professionals are not able to withstand pressures from their family and society to satisfy the ever increasing desire for material things which they think will maintain status, comforts and luxuries. Under such pressure or influence, they may start indulging in unethical practices to earn more money as quickly as possible. It is therefore essential for professionals to learn to live in harmony with oneself, family, society and nature, without getting unduly influenced from them. Essentially, for peace of mind, they are required to be conflict-free from within and this lesson discussed how it can be done.

2.0 HARMONY WITH ONESELF REQUIRED IN A PROFESSIONAL

Harmony with oneself is most basic and essential part for peaceful and meaningful living. The most common reason for lack of harmony within oneself is that your focus often remains only on the needs of the body. Animals also have needs of body such as food and shelter (see figure 1). However, contrary to animals, human beings are complex entities having needs of both the body and the mind.

Dalai Lama said “*People* were created to be *loved*. *Things* were created to be *used*. The reason why the world is in chaos, is because *things* are being *loved* and *people* are being *used*”. Needs of human body are physical things like food, clothes, shelter, transportation, energy and others. Needs of mind are different from needs of body and they are psychological in nature such as respect, love, recognition, companionship, friendship and others. “To develop from ***animal consciousness*** to ***human consciousness*** is a distinct transformation. It is a qualitative improvement in consciousness. ***Value education*** is about enabling this transformation in the human beings” [Gaur, 2016].

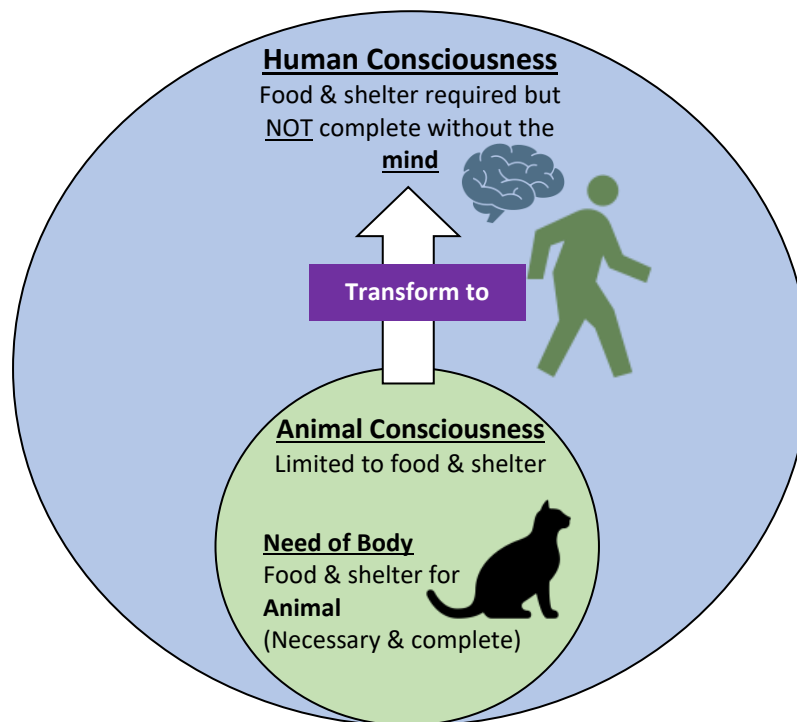


Figure 1 Transformation Required in a Professional

3.0 NEEDS OF THE MIND AND BODY

Mind resides in the body and hence for mind it is necessary that needs of the body are satisfied. At the same time, the body acts on the instructions of the mind. Thus body and mind are separate but at the same time highly dependent on each other and can have synergic relationship if in harmony with each other. The real needs of mind do exist and a time will come when lack of fulfillment of the real needs of the mind create the stress and disharmony in the human beings. It is therefore necessary to understand the real needs of the body and that of the mind. You should try to achieve both kinds of needs in a balanced manner. If this balance is not maintained, then the harmony is disturbed. So for harmonious living with oneself, you have to try to keep both the body and the mind satisfied.

Table 1 indicates that the basic needs of body are materialistic/physical facilities such as (food, shelter, clothing and such others). These needs are concrete in nature and hence can be measured or quantified. It differentiates well between needs of the body and mind and nature of those needs. Moreover, there is a limit to which a person can enjoy these physical facilities such as food, house, car or clothes. There is a difference in possessing the physical things and enjoying them. There could be no limit to possess these things, but there is a limit to enjoy them. The happiness that the physical things provide you is temporary, because after a period of time, you again feel the need for a change.

Table -1
Needs of the Body and Mind for Human Consciousness

Particulars	Body	Mind
Needs are: ⇒	Food, Clothing and such others	Trust, Respect
	Physical Facilities (suvridha)	Happiness
	Temporary	In time, needs are Continuous
Needs are in Quantity: ⇒	Qualitative (limited in quantity)	Qualitative (no quantity)
	Food, clothing and such others	Needs are fulfilled by right understanding and right thinking
Activities are: ⇒	Breathing, Heart beats and such others	Desiring, thinking, and such others
	Recognizing, Fulfilling	Knowing, Assuming, Recognizing, Fulfilling
It is a type of: ⇒	Physio-Chemical/ physiological (material)	Conscious/Psychological (non-material)

As far as qualities of these things/facilities are concerned, there are two components of quality - one needed by body and the other for the mind. An example will highlight this.

Example 1

If you wish to visit a high altitude hill station during winter season, then you will need warm clothes, say a woolen coat. The amount of warmth this will provide depends on the quality of the material it is made of and the quality of warmth required by the body. However, the style of stitching the coat, and some embroidery work over it are only embellishments so that this coat looks more attractive and this is the quality needed by the mind, and not the body.

4.0 SUPERIMPOSING NEEDS

Over a period of time, humans have mixed the needs of body with needs of mind. For example, clothes are a need of the body, but clothes with embellishments are need of mind super-imposed over needs of the body. Nutritious food is need of the body, but tasty food is need of the mind super-imposed over need of the body. Desire of having a vehicle to travel may be considered as need of body. But desire of having a luxurious and fancy car is definitely need of the mind super-imposed over the need of the body. In this way, human needs of the body have been made so complex, that often people exhaust most of their time, energy and resources in fulfilling the needs of the body, at the cost of the real needs of the mind which are i.e. respect, love, friendship, peace and such others.

The most important is in being harmony with oneself. Harmony with oneself is normally at two levels, first at individual level and other at professional level. At individual level you have to understand that for human beings the needs of body as well as needs of the mind, both are equally important. Needs of the body such as food, clothing and shelter are limited and it is possible to satisfy them with reasonable efforts. However, you will face problems when you wish to satisfy the needs of the mind by superimposing them on the needs of the body.

5.0 PROBLEM OF SUPER-IMPOSING NEEDS

The problem with some professionals is that they try to satisfy the needs of the mind by additionally attaching the quality features to the physical things, with the hope that real needs of the mind such as *respect, love, recognition* will be achieved through this. It is true that when some people see you living in a big bungalow, moving around in a luxurious car, wearing designer clothes, they may look at you with awe and liking. *But this liking is not for you*, it is for your house, your clothes or your car. These things are not able to generate love or respect for you. Love or respect comes only when you give some things to people without expecting anything in return. It should be understood that professionals can gain respect only by providing good and quality services. You as a teaching professional, gain the respect of the students by your effective teaching and devotion. If a teacher wears trendy and branded clothes and uses a luxury SUV car, but is not able to teach well, then s/he will NOT get love and respect of the students.

Table 1 shows that needs of the mind such as respect and love are different from the needs of the body. They are abstract and qualitative things and cannot be quantified. Since they cannot be quantified, there is no limit to these things. A person can get unlimited respect. For example, the respect, love and reverence offered to Mahatma Gandhi can be termed as infinite. Moreover, these abstract things are not temporary or periodic. Respect, name, fame can be forever. Thus, the needs of the mind are associated with feelings, while that of body is associated with physiological aspect of the body. In other words, body is mainly a physiological entity and mind is mainly a psychological entity or consciousness.

The needs of mind are more diverse and complex. If needs of mind are not clearly understood, then these needs may create more stress as compared to the needs of the body. Suppose, you desire to buy a house, car, mobile phone, clothes and such others for your requirements, then these things can be acquired with reasonable efforts by which you can live a stress-free life. However, if you go beyond this necessary requirement, and buy designer clothes, expensive mobile phones, luxurious expensive cars, palatial houses and such others to *enhance your status*, then you will fall in the vicious trap of purchasing the latest and the most luxurious things every time they are introduced in the market and in this process you will forget the most basic needs of your body i.e. health, and when you develop the health problems your life will become problematic and stressful. Moreover, this **wrong intention of maintaining the status** will divert the attention from your professional duties and real needs of the mind.

This discussion can be summarised by saying that one of the main causes of lack of harmony with oneself is the wrong amalgamation of the needs of the body with needs of the mind. It is totally a misplaced expectation to derive *respect, love, recognition* and such others by possession of large amount of expensive, beautiful and glamorous things such as big house, luxury car, fancy mobile phones and others. It should be well understood that the real need

of the body is quite limited, and it is not expensive items, and therefore, you should dissociate these needs of the body from need of the mind, for maintaining the wrong notion of 'status'.

ACTIVITY 1

List out some of the physical things that you have acquired beyond your required necessity with an intention to maintain your status for introspection and self-correction.

6.0 REAL NEEDS OF THE MIND

There are a wide range of jobs/occupations/professions available in this world and a person has to choose one of his/her liking if s/he wants to enjoy and excel in that profession. The basic need of the mind is to have a job/livelihood of one's own liking, since human beings spend most part of their life in their job or occupation. If a person is forced to take up an occupation, which is not of his/her liking, then even if s/he is earning considerable amount of money, s/he may not enjoy the work and this will lead to stress and disharmony.

Sometimes, people are forced to do a job which is not of their choice, because of some compulsions, but often, when opportunities to choose jobs of their liking are available, even then, people take wrong decisions as their criteria of choosing jobs is something else, rather than the job of their liking. The other reason is that there is such a wide range and variety of jobs, that a student between the age of 16 to 18 years get confused to choose a proper programme of study leading to a job, which can satisfy his/her mental needs. After a student has chosen a particular UG programme of study then it becomes difficult for him/her to change at a later stage. For better understanding and choice of jobs it is important that students are informed about the basic features of every job/occupation. Based on the basic features of the jobs/occupations, all the jobs can be clubbed in four major categories:

- a) Knowledge based jobs
- b) Power/position based jobs
- c) Capital or money based jobs
- d) Skill based jobs.

It is true that for all the jobs is required some basic related knowledge, some capital (money), electric power and some related skills. But out of these four categories (see figure 2), any one category would be the most basic and dominant in that particular type of job. In fact, the requirement of any one out of four attributes/strengths i.e. 'knowledge', 'power', 'capital' and 'skill' is very central to a job and a person needs to acquire that strength to undertake that job for the livelihood and respect. Moreover, when the person does a job using that strength, s/he further enhances it with experience and time. This increases his/her ability to earn more. This further increases his/her earnings/reputation in the society till s/he retires. For example, knowledge of a Doctor/Professor/Engineer increases with experience. Similarly, power of a Politician/Administrator grows with seniority. Business persons also increase their capital with time if they have not suffered losses. Skills of craftsman also improve with time and practice.

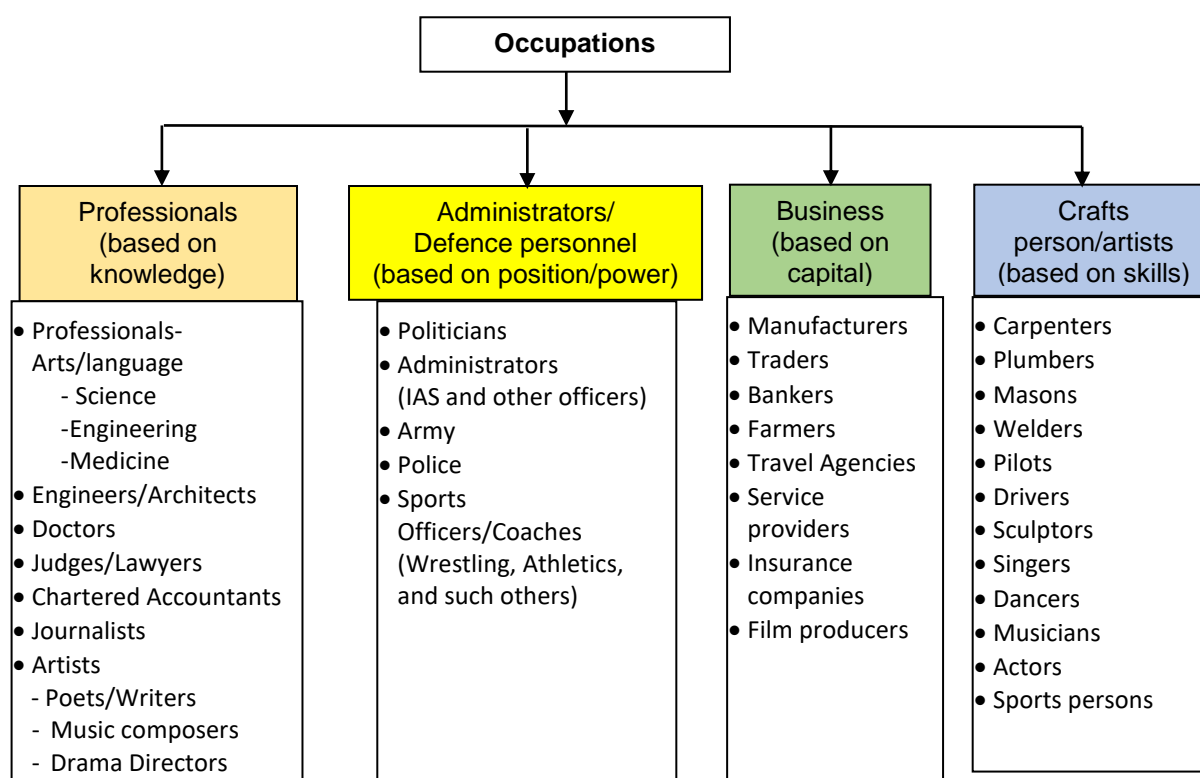


Figure 2. Occupations Categories

Now it is required to inform the students about the basic features/nature of these jobs and ask them liking - knowledge-based, power-based, capital (money)-based or skill-based jobs. However, it is to be informed that through every type of job, they can earn their livelihood, reputation, name and fame depending upon the level at which they work. There are plenty of examples of persons in each category who have earned enough money/reputation/fame. However, there are also uncountable persons in each category of jobs, who could earn enough only to sustain. So earning money/reputation/fame alone should not be the criteria of choosing the job, the criterion for choosing the job should be liking of the job.

It is obvious to students that no job is superior or inferior. All jobs are equally important for the society and all jobs can give enough money/dignity/reputation to live a respectable life in the society. Further, the knowledge/money/power/skills required for living as a good citizen is sufficient in all types of jobs. The only difference is that more knowledge is used for earning livelihood and mental satisfaction by professionals/knowledge workers, as they feel that they are doing something for the common good. Similarly, more power is used for earning livelihood and mental satisfaction by politicians/administrators. Same is true for business persons in capital (money) related jobs. Thus, money is a means for businesspersons for doing business and not the end outcome of business. Similarly, knowledge is a means for professional workers, as power is for politicians to serve the society. A performer like actor/singer/sculpture serves the society by using his/her skills. So, knowledge/power/capital (money)/skills are not to be enjoyed just by possessing them, rather they have to be enjoyed by using them for serving the society. Students have to choose only what they like most out

of these four and choose their job accordingly. Livelihood/satisfaction/fame will come automatically if you do the job of your liking.

7.0 CHOICE OF PROFESSION

The **choice** of a profession should be based on **two basic criteria**; first based on the **liking** (interests) and secondly, based on your **capability**. If choice of profession is not based on these two criteria, a professional will always have a conflict within oneself and it will with great difficulty to remain in harmony with oneself. Further, it will lead to ineffective services being provided by that professional to the clients, which will be harmful to the society. Therefore, it is unethical to work in a profession, if it is not based on these two criteria. The following example will help to understand it better

Example 2

If you want to become a famous actor in Bollywood and you are very much like it, then you should also have talent to learn it and also act well. If you do not have the acting talent or aptitude, you may not become a good actor, despite your extreme liking for this occupation. If you are still adamant about staying on in this occupation and somehow manage to be famous actor, it may make your life miserable.

Every profession and each of its specialties are important. In each specialisation (see figure 1) there is sub-specialisation. For example, Civil engineers can have sub-specialisation in structures or water resources or public health engineering or transportation and so on. Such large variety creates the problem for selection. All these varieties and variations create confusion in the minds of students and they are not able to fix their mind on one profession and this creates problem in development of professional excellence. This has been a big cause of stress and disharmony in many professionals. The solution is that professionals should choose the profession and the specialties mainly based on their own liking.

Different specialisations have their merits and limitations. Similarly, different professions have their own privileges and protocols. The employability and earning opportunities are cyclic in nature and in every person's life time every profession sees the ups and down in earning. At different points of time, different specialisation provides different prospects for employment or earning money. The following example throws more light.

Example 3

About two decades ago, a professional Radiologist (specialisation in medicine) used to earn relatively less as compared to other specialties. But after advent of ultra-sonography, CAT and MRI, radiologists earn more money as compared to other specialties.

Hence, earning money should not only be the criterion for choosing a profession, if you want to be at harmony with oneself.

8.0 CONCEPT OF 'NATURAL ACCEPTANCE' FOR PROFESSIONALS

Gaur et al. (2016) defines '**Realization**' as the ability to see *the reality 'as it is'*. The term '**Understanding**' means to understand the '*self-organization*' in all entities of nature/existence and their '*inter-connected*' organization '*as it is*'. If you can appreciate the *inter-connectedness* of different entities such as oneself, family, society and nature, then it will be possible for you to be at peace, content and harmony with every entity including yourself. Gaur et al. [2016] suggests that to overcome this problem, you should identify your own **natural acceptance** i.e. you should continue to observe yourselves and keep asking yourselves the question, "Whether this is naturally acceptable to me"? If you keep asking this question to yourselves, you will be able to access your *natural acceptance* and this will lead you to the right *realization* and *understanding*. If you are able to appreciate your *natural acceptance*, then it will lead to the right realisation (ability to see the reality or the world *as it is*) and understanding i.e. your interconnectedness, with the reality.

Since people are not aware of their own 'natural acceptances' and they take decisions based on pre-conditioned views (created by society/media and others) or based on sensations (pleasures associated with jobs) leading to desires which are incompatible to 'natural acceptances'. Most of the times, you do not look within and never try to appreciate your 'natural acceptance'. Often, people plan (think and analyse) their actions based on those desires which are incompatible to their *natural acceptance*. Most of the times those desires do not get achieved (since they were incompatible to 'natural acceptance') and therefore, it creates stress and disharmony.

Thus, for harmony you have to activate your thinking for *realisation* (appreciation of reality) and *understanding* (appreciation your role/responsibility in that reality based on our natural acceptance). If you do not do it, your desires arise from external environment and since external environment keeps changing, your desires will also keep changing or shifting and this indefiniteness will get reflected in your thoughts, your choices and finally in your behaviour and work.

Example 4

You talk about *protecting the environment*, but your actions are such that they consume more energy/material and also create more pollution. However, if you had identified your **natural acceptance** and kept your mind active for 'Realisation' and 'Understanding', then there will be a 'certainty' in your behaviour and conduct. This will lead to a kind of *definiteness* or *stability* in your professional life. There will be stability in your direction and purpose new techniques which are more effective and efficient are continually adopted to achieve the desired purposes. When you are certain about your purposes and direction, then your desires will be according to your interests and capabilities in place of short term trends in the society/economy/profession and such others. Once your desires are compatible with your *natural acceptance*, your thinking for *protecting the environment* will be in harmony with core

values of your mind and this will result into proper actions which in turn will lead to success and more peace and harmony within yourself.

8.1. Natural Acceptance and Disharmony

The modern world presents so many opportunities, so many varieties in every aspect of life and that too in such a way that a considerable number of people start following a fashion trend and this creates an attraction about that particular fashion trend in others also. Hence more young people go for this fashion trend and the people start thinking that 'How to do it?', without thinking 'why to do?'. Before following a new trend (whether it is fashion, cars, mobiles or some professional practice), you ask yourself that whether it is *naturally acceptable* to you, then you may save yourself from falling in unnecessary traps. Such traps reduce your efficiency and effectiveness, leading to deteriorations in your professional practice and disharmony within yourself. Once you are certain and definite in your aim, you will not be distracted by irrelevant changes or trends in the society/market/professional practices. This will create a harmony within you, and this will make your professional practice more effective and which are more ethical.

9.0 SUMMARY

It is essential for professionals to have peace of mind for working efficiently and effectively. This peace of mind is possible only when professionals are in harmony with oneself. To face the life, you have to choose one virtue out of four virtues (i.e. based on knowledge, power, capital (money) and skills) which matches with your *natural* acceptance as discussed in this lesson. This will help you not only, to earn enough to satisfy the ***needs of the body***, but also, earn respect and reputation that satisfies the ***needs of the mind*** as well, as you will be providing the best products/services to the society through your chosen occupation. A professional who mainly uses the virtue of 'knowledge' for his/her profession, it is essential that you choose an occupation of your liking (based on your *natural acceptance*) and then you remain firm to that choice over a period of time. As a professional, if you get tempted by the fluctuations in financial returns due to market conditions and frequently change your specialization then you would not be able to grow and would not be able to remain in harmony with yourself. So, as a professional, ***you need to remain firm on your choice of your profession for professional excellence and growth as well as harmony within yourself.***

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L-7 DISCUSSION FORUM

Start a discussion on the ***social media*** on any one or more four virtues (i.e. knowledge, power, capital (money) and skills).