

Unit I - Introduction To Value Education

Topic: Understanding Value Education

Value means importance and education means knowledge, therefore value education means knowledge of importance. In other words when we get the knowledge of importance of anything, importance of human being, importance of us as human being, then we have value education.

Value education deals with what is universally valuable to us, what is conducive to our individual and collective happiness and prosperity in a sustainable way.

This definition refers to it as the process that gives young people an initiation into values, giving knowledge of the rules needed to function in this mode of relating to other people, and to seek the development in the student a grasp of certain underlying principles, together with the ability to apply these rules intelligently, and to have the settled disposition to do so.

Significance of Value Education

Value education is important to help everyone in improving the value system that he/she holds and puts it to use. Once, one has understood his/ her values in life he/she can examine and control the various choices he/she makes in his/ her life. One has to frequently uphold the various types of values in his/ her life such as cultural values, universal values, personal values and social values.

Thus, value education is always essential to shape one's life and to give one an opportunity of performing on the global stage. The need for value education among the parents, children, teachers etc, is constantly increasing as we continue to witness increasing violent activities, behavioural disorders and lack of unity in the society etc.

Value education enables us to understand our needs and visualize our goals correctly and also indicate the direction for their fulfilment. It also helps remove our confusions and contradictions and enables us to rightly utilize the technological innovations.

The Role of Value Education:

Value education plays a very important role in creating a better society, more ethical organizations and groups, and better human beings. Let us take a look at how it does this:

1. Value education can help to build human beings who possess strength, integrity and fortitude.
2. Value education builds the values of cooperation and peace as well as tolerance.
3. Efficiency can step up if a person possesses the right values. This may include punctuality, keeping one's word, professionalism, lack of bias or prejudice etc.
4. Creating cordial relationships between people by encouraging the values of respect, love and affection.
5. Promoting personality development and social cohesion.
6. Regeneration values of national pride and integration towards nation- building.
7. Building character in the young people who will lead the country in the future.
8. Promoting harmony between nations and creating a peaceful world order.
9. Identifying the core universal values of:
 - a. Truth (Satya)
 - b. Righteous Conduct (Dharma)

- c. Peace (Shanti)
 - d. Love (Prema)
 - e. Non-Violence (Ahimsa)
10. To help create a foundation of the quality of life and strike a balance between external and internal values.

Thus value education can play a significant role in the betterment of individuals, groups and society at large.

Purpose of Value Education

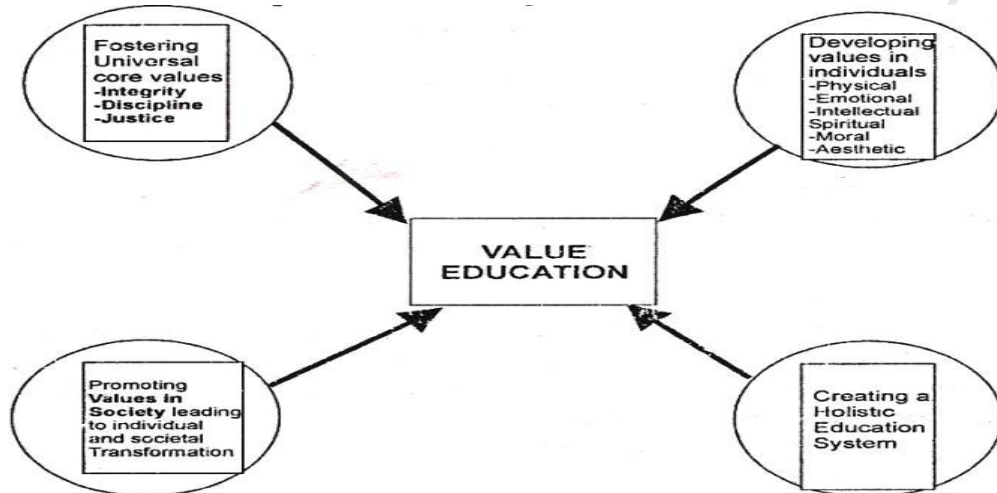


Fig. 1.1. The Purpose Of Value Education

Need for Value Education

- **Correct identification of our aspirations.** The subject which enables us to understand ‘what is valuable’ for human happiness is called ‘value education’ (VE). Thus, VE enables us to understand our needs and visualize our goals correctly and also indicate the direction for their fulfilment. It also helps to remove our confusions and contradictions and bring harmony at all levels.
- **Understanding universal human values to fulfil our aspirations in continuity.** Values form the basis for all our thoughts, behaviours and actions. Once we know what is valuable to us, these values becomes the basis, the anchor for our actions. We also need to understand the universality of various human values, because only then we can have a definite and common program for value education. Then only we can be assured of a happy and harmonious human society.
- **Complimentarity of values and skills.** To fulfil our aspirations both values and skills are necessary. When we identify and set the right goals and produced in right direction. This is known as **value domain**, the domain of wisdom, and when we learn and practices to actualize this goal to develop the techniques to make this happen in real life, in various dimensions of human endeavour (struggle). This is known as **domain of skills**.

Hence, there is an essential complementarity between values and skills for the success of any human endeavour.

For example, I want to lead a healthy life. Only wishing for good health will not help me keep my body fit and healthy and without having understood the meaning of health, I will not be able to choose things correctly to keep my body fit and healthy.

- **Evaluation of our beliefs.** Each one of us believes in certain things and we base our values on these beliefs, be they false or true which may or may not be true in reality. These beliefs come to us from what we read, see, hear, what our parents tell us, our friends talk about, what the magazines talk of, what we see from TV etc. Value Education helps us to evaluate our beliefs and assumed values.
- **Technology and human values.** The present education system has become largely skill-based. The prime emphasis is on science and technology. However, science and technology can only help to provide the means to achieve what is considered valuable. It is not within the scope of science and technology to provide the competence of deciding what really is valuable.
VE is a crucial missing link in the present education system. Because of this deficiency, most of our efforts may prove to be counterproductive and serious crises at the individual, societal and environmental level are manifesting.

Hence, there is a strong need to rectify this situation

Basic Guidelines for Value Education

In order to qualify for any course on value education, the following guidelines for the content of the course are important:

- **Universal:** It needs to be applicable to all the human beings irrespective of cast, creed, nationalities, religion, etc., for all times and regions.
- **Rational:** It has to appeal to human reasoning. It has to be amenable to reasoning and not based on dogmas or blind beliefs.
- **Natural and verifiable:** It has to be naturally acceptable to the human being who goes through the course and when we live on the basis of such values it leads to our happiness. It needs to be experientially verifiable, and not based on dogmas, beliefs or assumptions.
- **All encompassing:** Value education is aimed at transforming our consciousness and living. Hence, it needs to cover all the dimensions (thought, behavior, work and realization) and levels (individual, family, society, nature and existence) of human life and profession.
- **Leading to harmony:** The value education ultimately is targeted to promote harmony within the individual, among human beings and with nature.

Content of value education

The scope of value education includes all dimensions (thoughts, behaviour, work and realization) and all levels (individual, family, society and nature – existence).

Accordingly, the content of value education will be to understand myself, my aspirations, my happiness; understand the goal of human life comprehensively, understand the other entities in nature, the innate inter-connectedness, the co-existence in the nature- existence and finally the role of human being in this nature/existence entirely. Hence, it has to encompass understanding of harmony at various levels and finally, learning to live in accordance with this understanding by being vigilant to one's thoughts, behaviour and work.

Process of Value Education

The process for value education has to be that of self-exploration, and not of giving sermons of telling do's and don'ts. Whatever is found as truth or reality may be stated as a proposal and everyone is to be encouraged to verify it on his/ her own right. Various aspects of reality facilitating the understanding of human values will be presented as proposals. We need to verify these proposals for our self and examine our living in this light.

In other words, the process of value education adopted here is that of self exploration which includes two things: verification at the level of natural acceptance and experiential validation in living.

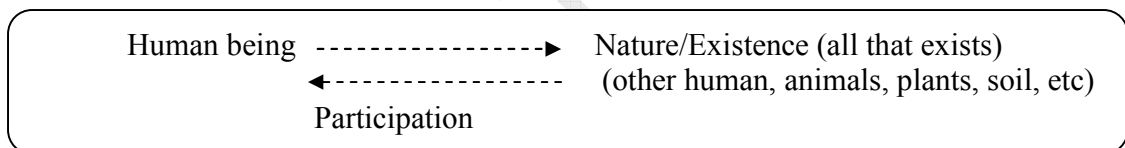
Conclusion

Value education is required to correctly identify our basic aspirations, understand the values that enable us to fulfil our basic aspirations, ensure the complementarity of values and skills, and to properly evaluate our beliefs. It also facilitates the development of appropriate technology and its right utilization for human welfare.

Topic : Self Exploration

Self exploration is the process to find out what is valuable to me by investigating within myself, what is right for me, true for me, has to be judged within myself. Through self exploration we get the value of ourself.

The value of any entity is its participation in the larger order. In the case of human being, to understand what is valuable, we need to study ourselves and the “larger order” around us, which is everything around us.



We live with this entirety (family, friends, air, soil, water, trees, etc.) and we want to understand our relationship with all these. For this I need to start observing inside. What we are doing is we are observing outside, but not inside (“what I feel when I saw this”).

Meaning and Purpose of Self Exploration :-

- 1. It is a process of dialogue between “what you are” and “what you really want to be”:** It is a process of focusing attention on ourself, our present beliefs and aspirations vis-à-vis what we really want to be (that is to say, what is naturally acceptable to us). If these two are the same, then there is no problem. If on investigation we find that these two are not the same, then it means we are living with this contradiction (of not being what we really want to be) and hence, we need to resolve this contradiction this conflict within us. It is a process of discovering that there is something innate, invariant and universal in all human beings. This enables us to look at our confusions and contradictions within and resolve them by becoming aware of our natural acceptance.
- 2. It is a process of self evolution through self investigation:** It successively enables us to evolve by bridging the gap between ‘what we are’ and ‘what to be’. Hence, the self exploration leads to our own improvement, our self evolution – we will become qualitatively better.

3. **It is a process of knowing oneself and through that, knowing the entire existence:** The exploration starts by asking simple questions about ourself, which gives our clarity about our being, and then clarity about everything around us.
4. **It is a process of recognizing one's relationship with every unit in existence and fulfilling it:** It is a process of becoming aware about our right relationship with other entities in existence and through that discovering the interconnectedness, co-existence and other in the entire existence, and living accordingly.
5. **It is a process of knowing human conduct, human character and living accordingly:** It is a process of discovering the definitiveness of human conduct and human character and enabling one to be definite in thought, behavior and work.
6. **It is a process of being in harmony in oneself and in harmony with entire existence:** This process of self exploration helps us to be in harmony with ourself and with everything around.
7. **It is a process of identifying our innateness and moving towards self organization and self expression:** This process of self exploration helps us to identify our swatva and through that acquiring swatantrata and swarajya.

Swatva: Innateness of self – the natural acceptance of harmony

Swatantrata: Being self- organized – being in harmony with oneself

Swarajya: Self-expression, self- extension – living in harmony with others

Swatva —————> Swatantrata —————> Swarajya

The swatva is already there, intact in each one of us. By being in dialogue with it, we attain swatantrata enabling us to work for swarajya.

Content of Self Exploration

1. **The Desire/Goal:** What is my (human) Desire/ Goal?
2. **Program:** What is my (human) program for fulfilling the desire?
The main focus of self-exploration is myself- the human being. Basically, it should dwell on the following two key questions:
 1. What do I really want in life, or what is the goal of human life?
 2. How to fulfill it? What is the program to actualize the above?

In short, the above two questions cover the whole domain of human aspirations and human endeavour. Thus, they form the content of self- exploration.

Process of Self Exploration

Whatever is being presented is a PROPOSAL.

- Don't assume it to be true immediately, nor reject it without proper exploration.
- Verify it in your own right, on the basis of it being naturally acceptable to you,
 - Not just on the basis of scriptures
 - Not on the basis of equipment/instrument data
 - Not on the basis of the assertion by other human beings.

Therefore, it is essential to carefully ponder over these on your own right. Neither accept these as true immediately nor reject them prematurely without proper exploration.

Don't just accept / reject these only on the basis of the following:

- Because something like this/ different from this, has been mentioned in scriptures,
- Or, because it has been preached/ denied by some great men,

- Or, a large number of people possess such a view / a different view,
- Or it is claimed to have been verified through some physical instrument or, claimed that this is beyond the domain of verifiability by physical instruments.

Then what to do

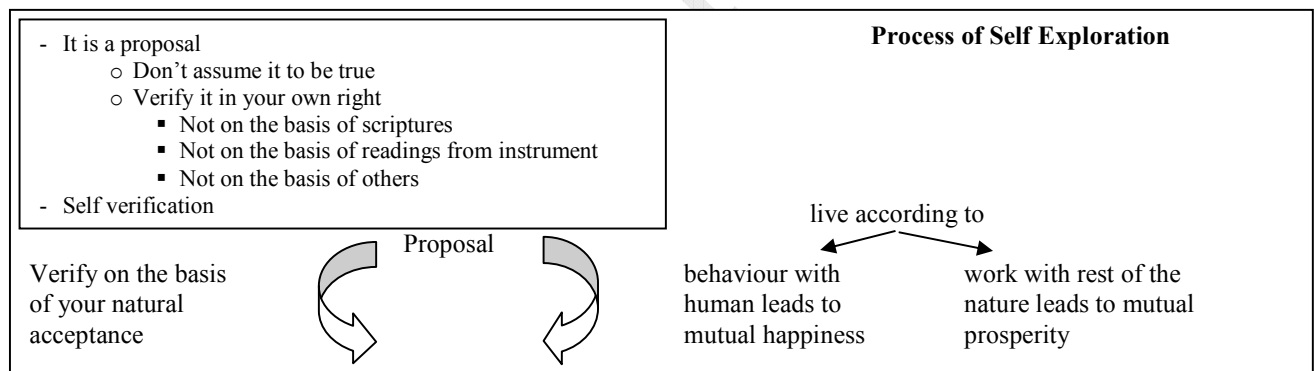
- Verify on the basis of your natural acceptance
- Live accordingly to validate it experientially
 - If the proposal is true in behaviour with human $\xrightarrow{\text{leads to}}$ mutual happiness
 - If the proposal is true in work with rest of the nature $\xrightarrow{\text{leads to}}$ mutual prosperity
- Results in realization and understanding
- On having realization and understanding we get
 - Assurance
 - Satisfaction
 - Universality (Applies to all time space and individual)

Remember, it is a process of self- exploration, therefore, it has to be authenticated by us alone by means of verification at the level of natural acceptance and experiential validation. The process is shown in the diagram below

Take for example: a proposal- ‘respect’ is a value in human relation. When I verify at the level of natural acceptance, I find that it is naturally acceptable to me. Similarly, when I behave with respect, it is mutually fulfilling to me and to the other.

Thus the proposal is ‘True’. If it fails on any of the two tests, it is untrue.

This verification leads to realization of the truthfulness of the proposal and it becomes part and parcel of my understanding. It is reflected in my thoughts and in my behavior.



Mechanism of Value Education

If one can explore and understand the self in such a manner that he/she grasps the essence of the self there may never need to be any reason for psychological help at a large stage. The two mechanisms for self exploration may be identified as;

- Natural Acceptance
- Experiential Validation.

Natural Acceptance:

Natural acceptance implies unconditional and total acceptance of the self, people and environment. It also refers to the absence of any exception from others. Once we fully and truly commit ourselves on the basis of natural acceptance, we feel a holistic sense of inner harmony, tranquility and fulfilment.

Actually natural acceptance is way to accept the good things naturally. Learn everything that is good from others, but bring it in, and in our own way absorb it; do not become others.

In other words natural acceptance is process to understand ourselves first. Try to find out the ego stage. Try to reduce that. Open our eyes and look around. The world is full of good things. We need to accept the right naturally. Once it starts coming naturally, we will feel that we are actually upgraded ourselves and now we are above then the rest of the world. Problems are the part of life and natural acceptance is the answer of that.

Characteristics of Natural Acceptance

- a. Natural acceptance does not change with time
- b. It does not depend on the place
- c. It does not depend on our beliefs or past conditionings
- d. This natural acceptance is 'constantly there', something we can refer to
- e. Natural acceptance is the same for all of us: it is part and parcel of every human being, it is part of humanness

Experiential Validation:

Experiential validation is a process that infuses direct experience with the learning environment and content. It may be regarded as a philosophy and methodology in which the direct experience and focused reflection of the individual helps to increase knowledge, develop skill and clarify values.

We are often told to accept ourselves for who are. Most of what we know about our self is not only through our own opinion of our self but also because of how others view us. When what we already believe to be true of us is validated by some situations, phenomena or outcomes. We may term it as experiential validation.

What is the State Today?

Today, we are not oriented enough to evaluate our beliefs or assumptions and we treat them as our personal life. We generally keep them secure in the name of personal life and freedom. We usually become very sticky about them without really verifying them. When these come in conflict, we try hard to search out justifications and make all efforts to defend our own assumptions. In the process, we cheat us ourselves as well as others.

It shows that today:

- Neither are we verifying our assumptions/ proposals put to us on the basis of our natural acceptance
- Nor we verifying what we think we know, in our living.

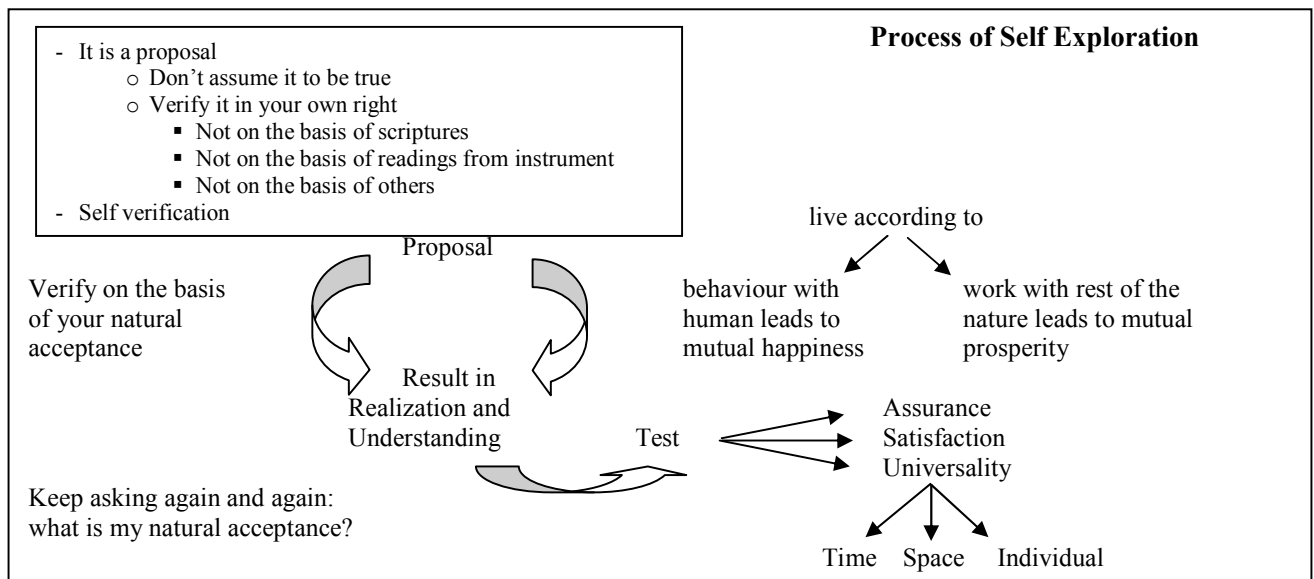
What is the Way Out? What Do We Need To Do?

Realization and Understanding:

As we continue with the process of verification of proposals on the basis of our natural acceptance and test it out in our living, it ultimately results in realization and understanding in us. This means knowing something to be true for sure, within ourselves.

The answers we get on having realization and understanding are assuring, satisfying and universal. Universal means the answer are same for everyone. They are invariant with respect to time, space and individual. If the answers we get do not fulfil any of the criteria it means the

answer is most likely coming from our past beliefs/conditioning and not from our natural acceptance.



Topic : Basic Human Aspirations – Continuous Happiness and Prosperity

Every human being is continuously trying to do things to make him/ her happy and every human being is capable of feeling this happiness in himself/ herself spontaneously. In addition to happiness we aspire for adequate fulfilment of our bodily needs. Nobody wants to be deprived even for a single moment.

Happiness

The state or situation in which I live if there is harmony/ synergy in it, then I like to be in that state or situation.

i.e. to be in the state of liking is happiness.

Happiness is a state of mind or feeling characterized by contentment, love, satisfaction, pleasure or joy. A variety of biological, psychological, religious, and philosophical approaches have striven to define happiness and identify its sources. Happiness may be described as consisting of positive emotions and positive activities. There may be three kinds of happiness: pleasure, engagement, and meaning. In other words, **freedom from want and distress, consciousness of the good order of things, assurance of one's place in the universe or society, inner peace and so forth.** Happiness is the state of mind, where we feel good in most of the walk of life.

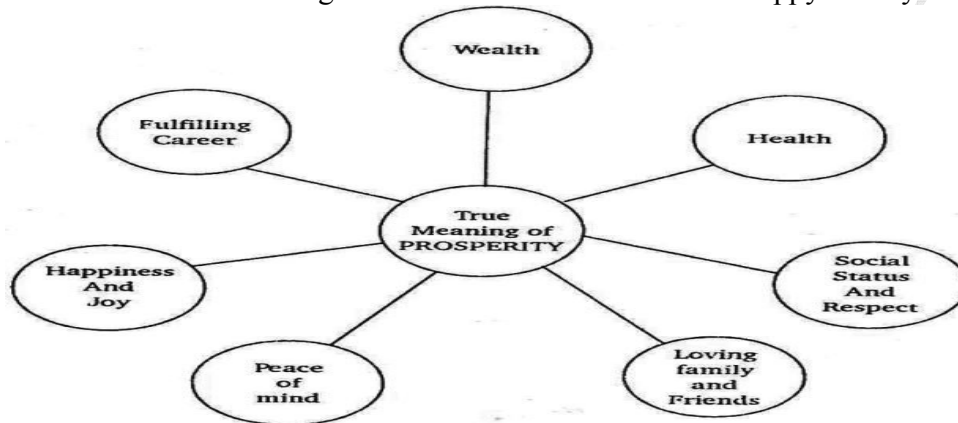
Philosophers and religious thinkers often define happiness in terms of living a good life; or flourishing, rather than simply as an emotion.

Prosperity

Prosperity is the feeling of having or making available more than required physical facilities.

Prosperity is the state of flourishing, thriving, success or good fortune. Prosperity often encompasses wealth but also includes other factors which are independent of wealth to varying degrees, such as wisdom and health.

The word means the sum of three aspects – health, wealth and wisdom. Almost all of us feel that wealth alone means prosperity and try to explain this phenomenon on this non-existent or half fact. This is the state of enlightenment towards better life and happy society.



Difference between Prosperity and Wealth:

Wealth is a physical thing. It means having money or having a lot of physical facilities or both. Prosperity is a feeling of having more than required physical facilities.

Prevailing Notions of Happiness and Prosperity:

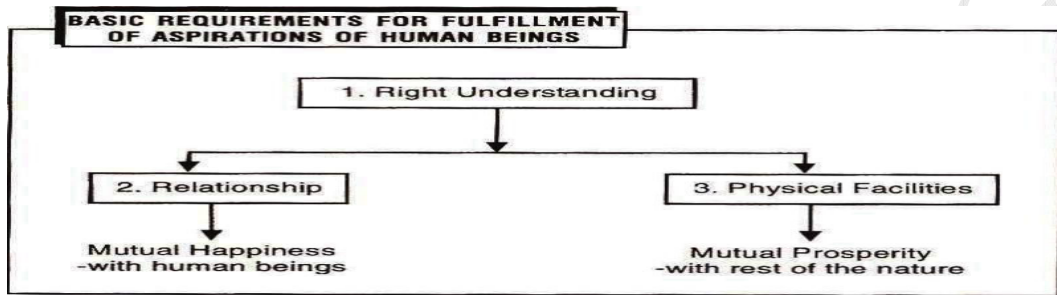
We are trying to achieve happiness and prosperity by maximizing accumulation and consumption of physical facilities. It is becoming anti-ecological and anti-people, and threatening the human survival itself. Some of the consequences of such trend are summarized below:

- At the level of individual – rising problems of depression, psychological disorders, suicides, stress, insecurity, etc.
- At the level of family – breaking of joint families, mistrust, conflict between older and younger generations, insecurity in relationships, divorce, dowry tortures, etc.
- At the level of society – growing incidence of terrorism and naxalism, rising communalism, spreading casteism, racial and ethnic struggle, wars between nations, etc.
- At the level of nature – global warming, water, air, soil, noise etc. pollution, resource depletion of minerals and mineral oils, etc.

Topic : The Programs to Fulfil Basic Human Aspirations

Our basic aspirations are happiness and prosperity. To achieve them we continuously involves in various activities and accumulating various things. But unfortunately we are not able to fulfil our aspirations. The reason is that we don't know what we really need to fulfil our requirements and there correct priority.

Basic Requirements for Fulfilling the Aspirations



The basic requirements for fulfilling the aspirations of every human being are:

- ⇒ **Right Understanding:** This refers to higher order human skills – the need to learn and utilize our intelligence most effectively.
- ⇒ **Good Relationships:** This refers to the interpersonal relationships that a person builds in his or her life – at home, at the workplace and in society.
- ⇒ **Physical Facilities:** This includes the physiological needs of individuals and indicates the necessities as well as the comforts of life.

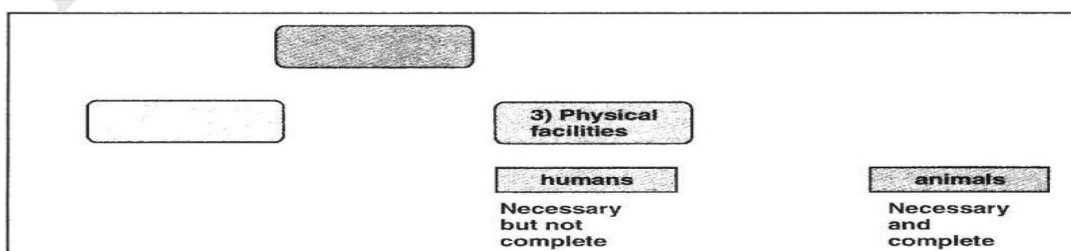
We can say that these requirements are patterned on the lines of the hierarchy of needs. Abraham Maslow has given the concept of the hierarchy of needs. According to him there are five needs which can be placed in a hierarchy depending on which needs a person initially strives to fulfill. The lowest needs are the physiological needs. Once these are fulfilled, they are followed by safety and security needs. These are followed by social needs. The next level of needs relates to the person's need for self-esteem. The highest order need relates to the need of self-actualization and will only become important if all the other needs are fulfilled.

We can verify this by a set of proposals.

“Physical facilities are necessary for human beings.”

“Physical facilities are necessary for human beings and they are necessary for animals.”

“Physical facilities are necessary and complete for animals, while they are necessary but not complete for humans.”

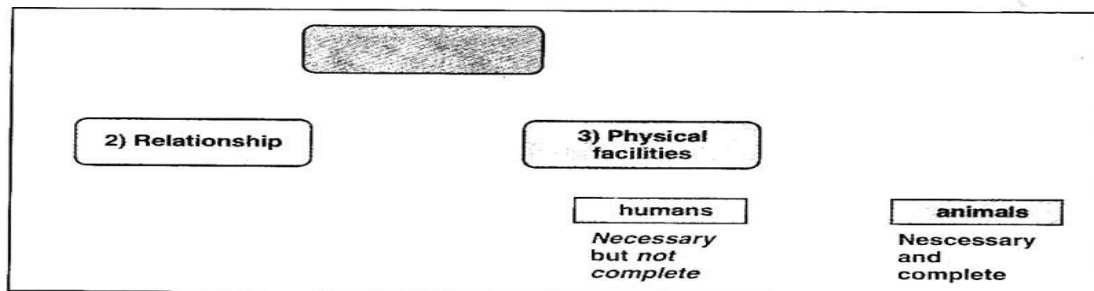


For Animals : Animals need physical things to survive, mainly to take care of their body.

For Humans : While physical facilities are necessary for human beings, they are not complete by themselves to fulfil our needs. Our needs are more than just physical facilities;

Besides physical facilities, we want **relationship**.

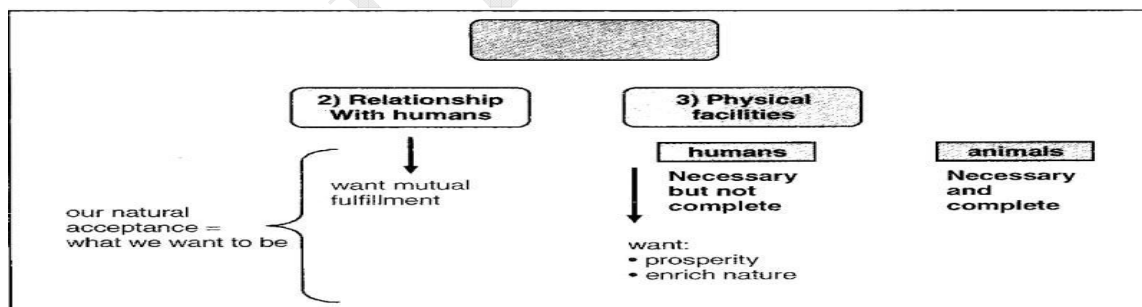
By relationship, we mean the relationship we have with other people, or human beings; father, mother, brother and sisters, our friends, our teachers; we desire good relationships with all of them.



We Want:

In Relationship: Mutual Fulfilment: If there is a problem in relationship, we feel uneasy, it bothers us. Even if we are interacting with someone, and something we said or did offends them, it makes us uneasy; i.e. we want mutual fulfilment in relationship.

In Physical Facilities: Prosperity in Us, Enrichment in Nature: Prosperity means the feeling of having or being able to have more physical facilities than is needed. If we don't have the feeling of prosperity we will exploit others. Similarly as we interact with nature for our various physical needs, either exploit nature or enrich it. But our natural acceptance is that we want to live in harmony with nature.



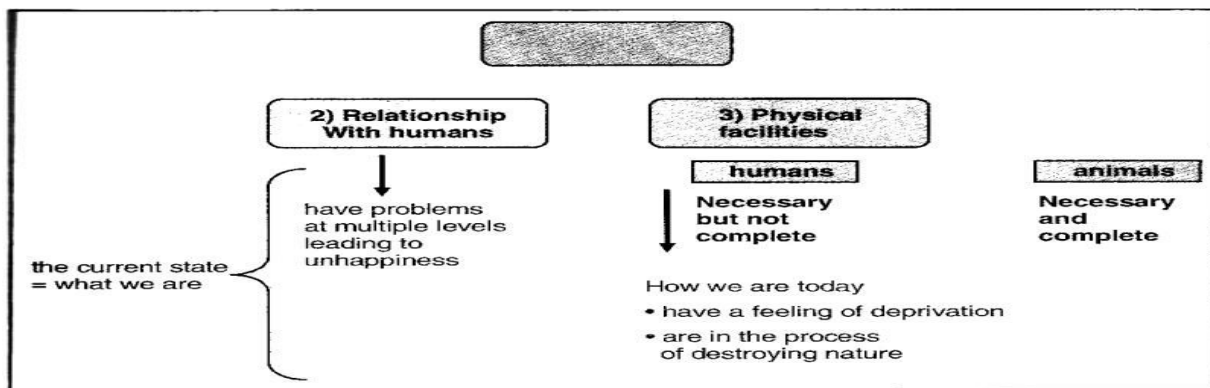
What is Our State Today

In Relationship

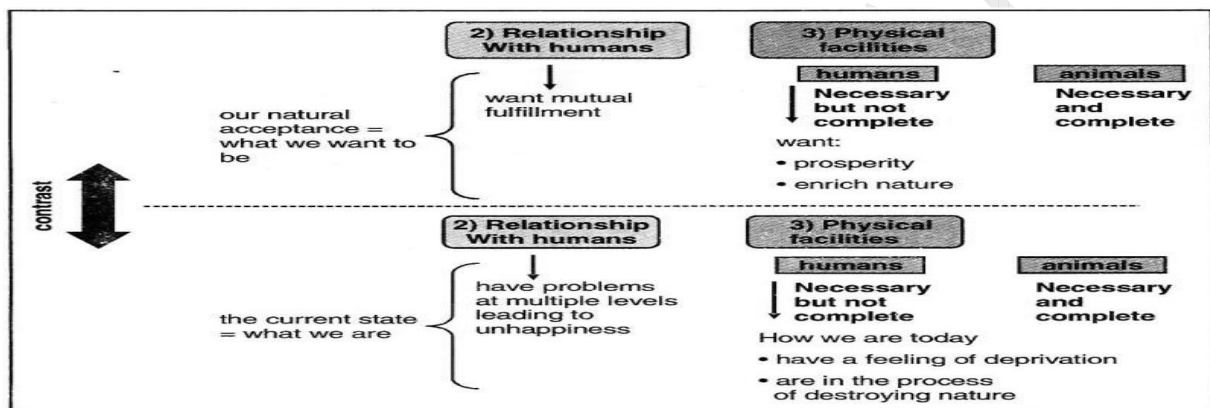
We are unable to have fulfilling relationships all the time: in family, outside family, and as a society – in the world at large.

In Physical Facilities

We want to feel prosperous, but end up working only for accumulation of wealth. We want to enrich nature, but are exploiting it, destroying it.



Why we are in This State? – Living with Wrong Assumptions



We seem to be interacting with lots of people, we keep getting ourselves into troubles in our relationships. This issue is basically because we *assume* something about relationships, and then we go on to live them on the basis of this assumption. But if our assumption is false, then we end up in problems.

Similarly we have assumed that accumulation of wealth is the only thing we need and the rest shall be taken care of. We have also made numerous assumptions about our interaction with nature, that we can exploit nature, that nature is present solely for our consumption and so on and so forth. These are incorrect assumptions.

What is the Outcome of the Misconception?

- **At the level of individual**– Rising problems of depression, anxiety, suicides, stress, insecurity, increasing health problems, lack of confidence and conviction etc.
- **At the level of family**– Breaking up of joint families, mistrust and disharmony in relationships, divorce, generation gap, dowry deaths, neglect of older people etc.
- **At the level of society**– Growing incidences of terrorism, violence, communalism, racial and ethnic struggle, corruption, adulteration, sex-crimes exploitation, wars between nations, proliferation of lethal weapons etc.
- **At the level of nature**– Global warming, weather imbalances, depletion of mineral and energy resources, deforestation, soil degradation etc.

All the problems are a direct outcome of an incorrect understanding, our wrong notion about happiness and prosperity and their continuity – this is an issue for serious exploration.

What is the Solution? – The Need for Right Understanding

In order to resolve the issues in human relationships, we need to *understand* them first, and this would come from '*right understanding of relationship*'.

Similarly in order to be prosperous and to enrich nature, we need to have the '*right understanding*'. The '*right understanding*' will enable us to work out our requirements for physical facilities and hence correctly distinguish the difference between wealth and prosperity. With nature as well, we need to understand the harmony in nature, and how we can complement this harmony.

Two Categories of Persons

Presently, as we look around, we find most of the people in the following two categories:

1. Those who do not have physical facilities/ wealth and feel unhappy and deprived.
SVDD – Sadhan Viheen Dukhi Daridra – Materially deficient Unhappy and deprived.
2. Those that have physical facilities / wealth and feel unhappy and deprived/.
SSDD – Sadhan Sampann Dukhi Daridra – Materially affluent - Unhappy and still deprived (not so prosperous)

While the natural acceptance of all human beings is to be:

3. Having physical facilities and feeling happy and prosperous
SSSS – Sadhan Sampann Sukhi Samriddha – Materially adequate – Happy and prosperous.

Our Program: Understanding and live in harmony at all levels of living

1. Right understanding
2. Relationships
3. Physical facilities

Our state of happiness or unhappiness depends on the above three aspects. If we have right understanding, then we can be happy in ourselves and we do not have the right understanding, then we have problems. Thus, our happiness depends on the fulfillment of these three basic requirements.

Our State Today:

There is conflict/contradiction in our thoughts or living at most of these levels of existence, we are unable to naturally accept our own thoughts and living. These problems are basically because of lack of right understanding. We do not even understand ourselves properly. What we need how much of it do we need, what we value – we have not understood this properly.

Human Consciousness and Animal Consciousness

Giving all priorities to physical facilities only or to live solely on the basis of physical facilities, may be termed as 'Animal consciousness'

- For animal, physical facility is necessary as well as complete – whereas for human beings it is necessary but not complete.
- Working only for physical facilities is living with **Animal Consciousness**.
- Working for right understanding as the first priority followed by relationship and physical facilities implies living with **Human Consciousness**.
- There is a need for transformation from **Animal Consciousness** to **Human Consciousness**. It can be accomplished only by working for right understanding as the first priority.

- This transformation from **Animal Consciousness** to **Human Consciousness** forms the basis for human values and values based living. This is the prime objective of the present course.

