

# Value Education 1 : Group 12

## Summary 4:

Date: 18/09/2024

The topic of today's session was about our interpretations of a feature film called "The Ship of Theseus."

The Ship of Theseus is a popular philosophical concept that goes like this:

"If a ship is slowly being replaced part by part, does it still remain to be the same ship?"

The concept deals with the continuity of identity, that is, if a person undergoes a complete transformation, does his identity remain the same or not. The answer to this question lies in whether the identity of a person is because of his or her actions or is it something abstract like "self" or "soul".

In the movie, we explore the life of a monk, who is deeply against animal violence and is fighting a legal battle against pharmaceutical companies to prevent the ill-treatment of animals that are used in testing of medicines. The monk believes in a deep connection with nature, while maintaining an atheistic stance. He lives a very simple life with almost no material possessions.

The pharmaceutical companies and even some of the monk's associates believe that the legal battle does not hold much ethical grounds, as the animals that are used in these tests are marked for death anyways, therefore the dedication of resources towards their short-lived comfort seems like a wastage as it could be put towards making these medicines faster and better. But the monk maintains an argument that just because these animals are marked for death, does not mean that they have to live in hell until they die, and the fair treatment of these animals must be enforced.

However, the beliefs of the monk are put in test when he develops a fatal liver disease. He refuses to take medication for it, as the medicines are indirectly a product of animal violence and mistreatment. The pleadings of his associates to take the medications fall on deaf ears and the monk sticks steadfast to his ideals. As his condition worsens, his mental state becomes deeply affected and the worries of his associates only grows, but to no avail as he still refuses to deviate from his stance.

But finally, the monk accepts the medications. He realises that a strict adherence to his ideals cannot be practical, and a little flexibility must be present within us.

The above-mentioned change within the monk must not be interpreted as an abandonment of ideals. It is an evolution of ideals, that is, the acknowledgement that a strict adherence to a specific ideal may not always be for the greater good. This change

within the monk marries his ideals with the complexity of the real world, bringing forth more nuanced and practical ideals.

This evolution of the monk is actually a portrayal of the Ship of Theseus concept, as because of this change, the identity of the monk has not deviated a bit. This demonstrates the continuity of one's identity even after a drastic transformation within them, much like the ship which still continues to retain its identity.

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