

# Sewa concept in vishwa dharma and its impact

I am writing this easily at the last moment. So I will keep the whole discussion to the very basic and try to impress upon you my interpretation of just one thing:

The need for “Man (मन) seva”

Let me define sewa and ways to do sawa. (my definitions)

## Definition of Sewa

Sewa: an act of service towards man and nature without attaching my actions with a desire or emotion like greed, fear, reward.

There are 3 ways to do sewa: tan, man and dhan (तन-मन-धन)

Tan - physical or my body i.e. doing physical action of sewa.

Dhan - material or donating money for sewa.

Man - using your mental capabilities /creativity/ brain to do seva or support people doing seva.

Sewa an individual pursuit.

The concept of sewa is ingrained in people following sanatan dharma and indian culture. Taking care of man and nature is something that is taught to us since the very beginning.

It is a very individual practise but is irrespective of where we are and how much wealth we possess.

Traditionally in villages, kids as young as 5 or 6 years start doing seva of cattles.

As soon as one starts working he or she starts donating for charitable and religious causes. As per India giving report 2019, 72% adults donated money for the needy.

You visit any city in India, you will find at least a couple of doctors treating poor patients for free.

This pandemic is a classic example of how Indians view and work in difficult situations. People in many cities formed self help groups to feed and provide necessary materials to people who got stuck and were out of work due to lockdown. Old people were taken care of by neighbours and self help groups. Many people even paid their maids and helpers full salary for months.

Even in Germany, Indians self organized to help other needy Indians.

All these examples show just a few aspects of sewa that comes naturally to Indians.

## **Man (मन) Seva and a unique problem**

So from my perspective, the problem is not with sewa but with Man sewa. Here the challenge is

How do we define Man se sewa and how to adapt it to modern society?

Religious gurus say that forgiveness (क्षमा) and charity/ paropakar (परोपकार) is the best form of sewa.

But this does not say much about man se sewa. I think the problem is that we are too focused on karma and whenever we talk about man we talk about meditation and bhakti.

Here I try to bring in my perspective about man se sewa.

I think in the current society we also need intellectuals to do sewa. Intellectuals who can help us revisit our true history in the way we can understand.

Allow me to elaborate:

The west and the current breed of intellectuals have not fed us with the current form of history. The current history makes us guilt ridden, timid and fearful. We have lost confidence and we are made to question our ancestors. This breeds insecurities and even though we grow financially we lack the feeling of completeness. We are always trying to fit-in and not living a happy life.

Here is where man (मन) sewa fits in.

Only if we/intellectuals doing sewa work to collect, document and present the true history will the Indians be able to live a much more fulfilled life.

So this helps Indian, but what about other communities? How does that help everyone?

Well for one, helping indians means helping approximately 1.5 billion people around the world. Plus as soon as you bring out the indian history, you open the doors to knowledge of vedas for everyone.

One more by product would be other societies will also try to explore their own relation with nature and maybe leave the materialistic pursuits and adopt actions that take them closer to nature.

So if I could summarize, we need people who will take the burden of doing research work and bring us the local history, so that we as a society can unburden ourselves.

Written by - Rahul Narayan