

Notes of 5th Unit

Universal Human Values and Professional Ethics (UHVPE)

Providing the Basis for Universal Human Values and Ethical Human Conduct

Values in Different Dimensions of Human Living

We studied the harmony at the four levels of human living in section-II. Based on this understanding of harmony, when we participate in the larger order, this participation at different level is our value. The identification of values starts from the participation of the activities of the Self ('I') in the form of definite conduct of the human being based on realization and understanding. Further, the participation of the human being is seen in two forms: behaviour and work. We studied about the values pertaining to behaviour as the nine values in relationship, - viz., trust, respect, affection, care, guidance, reverence, glory and love.

Likewise, working with material things, we have two values:

Utility-value: The participation of a human being in ensuring the role of physical facility in nurture, protection and providing means for the body.

Artistic-value: The participation of a human being in ensuring the role of physical facility to help and preserve its utility.

For example, the utility value of a pen is that it aids in writing. This provides a means to the body. Providing a cap to the pen so that the ink does not spill, a proper design for holding of the pen while writing, etc. preserve the utility of the pen. A shirt has the utility that it protects the body. This is its utility value. Designing the shirt so that it can be easily put on is the artistic value. Thus we provide buttons in the front, the size of the shirt is as per the size of the body and so on. Similarly, with food, we find that the utility of the food is that it helps nurture the body. But cooking the food in such a way, that it can be easily chewed and swallowed, served in the dish, etc. is the artistic value. Taking the example of a book, when we are printing a book, it adds utility to the paper. The content that is printed helps us store it for a longer time so that we could refer to it from time to time. If you have to memorise everything, it is going to be a huge engagement for you. But printing it on paper saves our energy and time. This is utility value. Now keeping the font size so that the book is legible, designing its size so that it is easy to carry it, etc. is adding artistic value to the book.

Definitiveness of Ethical Human Conduct

What is innateness of human beings? What is our humaneness in reality? As we identify a neem tree or a mango tree by its well defined specific characteristics which always remain the same; as we identify water or air or iron or a cow by their respective characteristics - their innateness, similarly let us also try to identify the innateness of a human being. So as a mango tree has a definite 'mango-ness', iron has a definite 'iron-ness', cow has a definite 'cow-ness'; similarly let us understand our humaneness.

The right understanding gained through self-exploration also enables us to identify the definitiveness of human conduct which may also be called the ethical human conduct. It is the same for all human beings. So we are also able to understand the universality of ethical human conduct which is in consonance with the universal human values. Accordingly, all debates and confusions about what is ethical for one may not be ethical for others etc. also lose their base. Let us now understand the salient features of this definite human conduct i.e. the ethical human conduct. As we have already explored in this book, each one of us wants to have a definite conduct but presently we may not be able to ensure that. This is because we are presently living on the basis of our pre-conditionings or assumptions which are not in consonance with the truth or the right understanding. But, this situation neither gives satisfaction to us nor to others. We do see the human beings struggling to find out what the right conduct is and in the process, exhibiting a wide variety of attributes. We also see people debating endlessly about what they consider to be ethical. But unless we have the right understanding, we are not able to identify the definitiveness of ethical human conduct.

Ethical Human Conduct

In accordance with the understanding based on Natural Acceptance, the ethical human conduct can be characterized by *Mulya - Neeti – Charitra*

Values (*Mulya*) –

Values are a part of our ethical conduct. They are the outcome of realization and understanding, which are always definite. As already mentioned, when I understand the reality correctly, and the underlying harmony at all levels of existence and my participation in it, I am able to perceive the universal human values as a part and parcel of this reality. My imaginations are now always in terms of the definite•

Policy (*Neeti*) –

Having been convinced about the values and about the inherent harmony in the existence, I am able to develop an ethical sense in all my pursuits. I always think, behave and work towards nurturing this harmony. It leads us to adopt policies conducive to human welfare – conducive to enrichment, protection and right utilization of mind, body and wealth. This is an outcome of the definiteness of my desire, thought and expectation (selection) as guided by right understanding.

Character (*Charitra*) –

The definiteness of my desire, thought and selection gives definiteness to my living. Definiteness of character is the outcome of the definiteness of my behaviour and work. This can be mainly characterised in terms of the following:

- ❖ Chastity in conjugal relationship i.e. chastity in husband-wife relationship- (svanarī, & sva - purusa)
 - ❖ Rightful production acquisition and utilization of wealth (sva-dhana).
 - ❖ Humane behaviour and work with kindness (dayāpūrṇa kārya-vyavahāra)
- This definitiveness of human conduct in terms of values, policies and character is termed as Ethics.

Basis for Humanistic Education, Humanistic Constitution and Humanistic Universal Order (to ensure Holistic Development)

To facilitate the process of right understanding in the society, to create a favorable ambience for this and to ensure a continuity of this process among human beings from generation to generation, it is crucial to visualize and to work towards the following key elements of *Manaviya Vyavastha*.

Vision for *Manaviya Vyavastha* (Human Order)

These are the key elements of '*Vyavastha*' which will need to be actualized, and, therefore, it is important to gain some clarity about these:

- a) humanistic education (*Manaviya Shiksha*)
- b) humanistic constitution (*Manaviya Samvidhan*)
- c) humanistic order (*Manaviya Vyavastha*)

Competence in Professional Ethics

1. Clarity about comprehensive human goal: Samadhan Samriddhi- Abhay- Sah-astitva, and its fulfillment through universal human order.
2. Confidence in oneself based on above clarity.
3. Mutually Fulfilling Behavior: clarity and confidence in ethical human conduct and its correlation with sustainable personal as well as collective happiness and prosperity.
4. Mutually Enriching Interaction with Nature: self-sufficiency in fulfillment of physical needs: ability to assess the needs for physical facilities for the family and their fulfillment through production systems ensuring harmony in the nature.

Ability to identify and develop appropriate (people friendly and eco-friendly) production systems, technologies and management models.

By now it must have become clear that understanding of harmony at various levels along with the appreciation of comprehensive Human goal enables us to characterize the criteria of appropriateness (people-friendliness and eco-friendliness) of production system technologies and management models.

For example the following criteria will acquire importance

- Renewability
- Preservation of natural balance
- Utilizing local resources and expertise
- Decentralized and conducive to mass employment
- Catering to real needs
- Matching of production, distribution and consumption etc.

Salient Unethical Practices in the Profession at present

Before visualizing typical models of holistic technologies and production systems, let us first have a critical look at the contradictions and dilemmas because of the prevailing world view in profession today.

- a. Corruption at various levels and in different forms

- b. Tax-evasion and misappropriation of funds
- c. Unethical nature of advertisements and sales promotion
- d. 'Cut-throat' competition
- e. Adulteration and spurious production
- f. Exploitation at various levels
- g. Negligence and disregard for environment
- h. Promotion of unsustainable technologies.

Basis for the Holistic Alternative towards Universal Human Order

Identification of Comprehensive Human Goal:

So, an important implication of the right understanding is the visualization of comprehensive human goal which is conducive to human welfare in a holistic and sustainable manner. Presently, human welfare is primarily perceived in economic terms only. We have already seen how such a narrow objective leads to problems in various spheres of life and is not sustainable. Further, in the light of the right understanding, it is possible to visualize the pattern of 'Holistic Alternative' to cater to the comprehensive human goal, a model of human living which is people friendly and eco-friendly and therefore mutually fulfilling as well as sustainable. In this process, it will be possible to visualize an alternative set of criteria to evaluate the education, healthcare systems, technologies, production systems and the models for commercial activity and management. As we have seen in chapter nine, the comprehensive human goal consists of the following:

1. Right Understanding and freedom from contradictions at the individual level (Samādhāna)- In every individual
2. Prosperity and its continuity at the level of family (Samriddhi)- In every family
3. Fearlessness and mutual trust (Abhaya)- In the society
4. Co-existence (Sah-astitva) - In the nature

Such a comprehensive objective will be conducive to the welfare of all (abhyudaya) for all times. This will apply to all the human beings on earth. We can also understand that facilitating and empowering human beings towards the fulfilment of the above mentioned comprehensive human goal is real human welfare.

Now, on this basis, we can identify the goals of any organization, system or society, either working for production, justice, exchange... etc. We can evaluate whether the goals set by the system are humane or not, whether these are comprehensive or having a limited vision. Once we are able to identify the comprehensive human goal, it becomes clear to us that in all our programs, this is going to be the primary motivation. And if any program is not subservient to these, it is not going to be fit for the society and human welfare. In terms of these goals, we can evaluate the inadequacies in the prevalent education system, judiciary system, administration and governance, market policies and other such systems. Are we working to achieve the human goal which is naturally acceptable to us, or moving away from it? We had a brief review of our present systems in chapter nine. It revealed how our society and societal systems have deviated from human welfare. But there is no need to blame an existing system or trend. We only need to focus on the development of right understanding. We have seen that nobody accepts naturally to do wrong, we just have to provide the right direction to facilitate this.

Vision for the Holistic Alternative

A correct appraisal of the comprehensive human goal and human welfare and the realization of co-existence at all levels enable us to visualize and gradually evolve a viable alternative to the prevailing pattern of human living. Thus the right understanding prepares us for moving towards the 'holistic alternative' (universal human order, svarājya) which will be sustainable as well as conducive to fulfil the basic human aspirations for all human beings. It will be a mode of living which is self satisfying, people-friendly and eco-friendly. Then, all human ingenuity and creativity, all the knowledge and skills available can be harnessed to actualize such a model of living. There is an urgent need to initiate research and development in this direction as our present model of living is proving to be more and more problematic and unsustainable.

Basis for Humanistic Education and Humanistic Constitution

The primary step to move towards the holistic alternative is to develop the right understanding among human beings and the commitment to live accordingly and then to develop the requisite skills and know-how to implement the right understanding in real life. In the first place, it calls for a change in the education system towards humanistic education. The right understanding provides us with the vision of such a humanistic education. As we discussed earlier, education means to imbibe the understanding of harmony at all the levels of living. It is not just reading, writing and arithmetic, but rather a process to enable the human being to live in accordance to the natural acceptance. It calls for a major shift in vision and emphasis as comparison to the existing system.

Humanistic Education

Inculcation of the right understanding at all 4 levels (from self to entire existence) and development of the competence to live in accordance with it forms the core of humanistic education. One should be able to evaluate all the endeavours in the light of right understanding. Humanistic education will incorporate appropriate integration of values and skills so that human beings are able to understand their physical needs correctly and adopt suitable techniques and production systems to cater to these needs in an eco-friendly and people friendly manner.

The humanistic education will facilitate the process of self exploration which will lead to continuous self evolution of human beings. It will also enable the realization of one's innateness (svatva) as well as the universality and definitiveness of ethical human conduct. It will also develop the conviction that only value based living can be conducive to continuous happiness and prosperity for one and all. Adequate research effort is needed to evolve and implement the models of such an education. To begin with, the education of a child starts at home. The child learns and understands things living in close relations at home. So every model will entail the right kind of environment at home for the child to develop. When the child needs more exposure to skills and knowledge, he/she will need a formal system, in the form of some collective effort in the society. To start with it is necessary to introduce the required inputs of value education. But in the longer run, the whole education system will need to be re-designed

in the light of right understanding. It is a useful exercise for us to learn how a child can be facilitated to have the right understanding since childhood, how it will learn languages, reading, writing and arithmetic skills, and skills that form a part of higher education.

Humanistic Constitution

In addition, the right understanding also provides us the basis for a humanistic constitution which is essential to provide clear guidelines and policy framework conducive to the development of an un-fragmented human society and a universal human order. Working towards the comprehensive human goal and developing the competence for ethical human conduct will be among the salient directive principles of a humanistic constitution. It will safeguard the social justice in true sense.

Presently, the human society is divided into various castes, creeds, religions and nationalities whose objectives and interests are proving contrary to those of others. Accordingly, a major part of human endeavour is used in handling these conflicts and contradictions. Paradoxically, the human beings are spending a substantial part of their energies and resources in preparing themselves for war, only to ensure peace! As we can now understand, when the parameters of human welfare are universal, i.e. commonly applicable to all human beings, why should the human endeavour in pursuit of these common objectives be conflicting to the interests of each other? This can only be there because of our ignorance, because of our incorrect assumptions/beliefs about happiness and about reality. Presently, our effort is directed towards trying to stop a wrong behaviour by means of an equally or more wrong behaviour - a crime by executing a bigger crime, a violence by greater violence. This can never be successful in the long run and only gives rise to a vicious circle to perpetuate the wrong doings. Things can only be set right by developing human consciousness, by developing right understanding and living among people and in no other way. Thus, the right understanding also offers a satisfactory and spontaneous resolution of the prevailing human conflicts ranging from the family level and going up to the global level.

Here again, it may be an educative exercise for the reader to visualize a model of humanistic constitution. In the light of the right understanding, what will the fundamental rights and duties be, what will the way be to ensure justice and protection in the society, what will the format be of working for a universal human order, how will people connect to the world family, how will the representation of people be ensured in maintaining order in the society, these all issues are to be addressed. To begin with, the family will be smallest unit of order in the society. Moving from family to the world family, the humanistic constitution will provide the basis of harmonious living. These are relevant issues in terms of visualizing the holistic alternative to the present scenario.

Universal Human Order and its Implications

So finally, it may be concluded that it is possible to move towards a universal human order with the help of suitable systems and policies evolved in the light of right understanding. Such a development will be naturally acceptable to all human beings. The whole existence except the human beings is already operating in harmony. It is for us, the human beings, to understand, to appreciate this harmony and to play our role in this total order.

On the basis of the understanding of harmony, we get the notion of an undivided society and universal human order. The universal human order will comprise of:

1. The five dimensions of human endeavour (education, health etc.) towards a fragmented society.
2. The steps of organization from family to world family, each anchored in right understanding will integrate in the following way:

Family ➡ Family cluster ➡ Village/Community ➡ Village Cluster ➡ world family

We had listed the five dimensions in chapter nine. In each of the five dimensions, we can visualise a humane system, be it education, health, production, exchange or justice and conceptualize a harmoniously functioning society. The social organization can proceed from family to world family with representative bodies of persons endowed with the right understanding at each level.

Professional Ethics in the Light of Right Understanding

Profession - In the Light of Comprehensive Human Goal

As mentioned earlier, any profession is a channel for participation by human beings in the larger order in pursuance of comprehensive human goal. In the process, one is able to contribute towards the livelihood of one's family and also participate in the larger order constituting the society and the nature around. All these activities do require a certain degree of skill and are expected to be performed in consonance with the comprehensive human goal. Then only, these will be conducive to the sustained welfare of the individual as well as the society. The excellence or the success of any professional activity is to be judged from this comprehensive point of view only and not in terms of just wealth generation. Accordingly, the profession is not only a means of earning one's livelihood but a means of one's evolution by appropriate participation in the larger order. It is an important activity to authenticate one's understanding, whereby we interact with other human beings and with rest of nature in a mutually fulfilling manner. Thus, profession is a 'service'.

Having understood the above notion of profession, let us pause a while to investigate how we are presently looking at the profession. What is in our mind when we try to choose a professional career? What do we consider as a good profession? What is the general view of the parents in regard to an appropriate profession for their children? In what way do the people in society give value to various professions? This is very important for us to find out. The general perception in which the professions are presently looked at, is in terms of being able to earn more and more money, getting more power, getting more perks or comforts etc. Isn't it? Verify this yourself.

Such a view which is widely prevailing inherently comes in conflict with the expectations of professional ethics to ensure the sustained welfare of all. These aspects will be discussed subsequently when we will have a look at the current scenario in detail. Here, it may suffice to sum up that the real way to ensure ethical conduct of profession is to have a correct understanding of profession, a correct understanding of happiness and prosperity and then to develop the competence to fulfil this notion. The whole purpose of value education is to enable the development of this understanding and competence which is essential to ensure professional ethics.

Ensuring Competence in Professional Ethics

Having understood the profession in right perspective, let us clearly demarcate what we mean by developing ethical competence or the value competence of an individual which is the only effective way to ensure professional ethics. In absence of such a competence, administering oaths and prescribing codes of conduct etc. become mere formalities. Before proceeding further, let us also try to visualize as to why a person acts unethically. It is primarily because of lack of correct understanding about happiness and prosperity. If a person views happiness in terms of maximization of sensory enjoyment and prosperity in terms of accumulation of physical facilities, then the motivation naturally becomes that of

wealth maximization. In this pursuit, all other considerations become secondary. Therefore, it leads to more and more unethical practices as these seem to cater well to the above misconceived notion of happiness. Immediate attractiveness of the outcome of such pursuits tends to make people adhere to this wrong notion firmly. As many other people seem to be following the same path and apparently ‘gaining’ from it, this is believed to be the only pragmatic way of living. In this context, the ethical considerations are considered to be too idealistic to follow in real life.

As already mentioned, the development of ethical competence is a long-term process to be achieved through appropriate value education. As profession is only a subset of the life activities, the competence in profession will only be the manifestation of one’s right understanding.

Competence in Professional Ethics

1. Clarity about the comprehensive human goal: Samādhāna-Samriddhi- Abhaya- Sahastitva and its fulfilment through universal human order from family to world family.
2. Confidence in oneself as well as confidence in the harmony, co-existence and selfregulation prevailing in entire existence based on the right understanding of oneself and the rest of existence.
3. Competence of mutually fulfilling behaviour, clarity and confidence in ethical human conduct and its correlation with sustainable personal as well as collective happiness and prosperity.
4. Competence of mutually enriching interaction with nature, ability to assess the needs for physical facilities for the family and their fulfilment through production systems ensuring harmony in the nature.
5. Competence of actualizing one’s understanding in real life.

Issues in Professional Ethics - The Current Scenario

The issues in professional ethics are becoming very complex in the current scenario. The unethical practices are rapidly increasing and their impact is also becoming far-reaching. Corruption in multifarious manifestations is afflicting all the professions like a virus. Similarly, other unethical practices are also proliferating and getting out of control. It appears as if human ingenuity is being increasingly harnessed to devise newer and subtler ways to thwart the ethical conduct of profession, to twist the laws and to beat the system. A good number of people have started nurturing the feeling that with money, everything can be accomplished, any person can be ‘purchased’, and any system can be bent to one’s advantage. As a result of this ‘epidemic’ of unethical practices, we are frequently coming across serious scams, major economic offences and kickbacks in large scale purchases. These are also manifesting in the form of hawālā and benāmi transactions, in fact, leading to a parallel black market economy. Lapses on the part of big organizations in ethical conduct of profession have led to large scale disasters, such as Bhopal Gas Tragedy, the Chernobyl Disaster, etc., endangering public life and property, and causing serious degradation to environment

Vision for Holistic Technologies, Production Systems and Management Models

The Holistic Criteria for Evaluation

The modern technologies and systems are all human inventions in response to the needs visualized under the influence of the prevailing worldview. Accordingly, they have been designed and optimized to the objective functions best suited to this world view. In order to facilitate the development of holistic technologies and systems, it will be necessary to visualize alternative objective functions and to formulate appropriate criteria for evaluation compatible with comprehensive human goal.

Generally speaking, there are three broad criteria to guide the development of such technologies and systems, viz.,

- (a) Catering to appropriate needs and lifestyles,
- (b) People-friendly, and
- (c) Eco-friendly.

In addition, these have to promote local self-sufficiency and optimal utilization of local resources and expertise. In accordance to the above general considerations, the specific criteria for judging the appropriateness of technologies, production systems and management models may be identified as follows:

Criteria for Technologies

The above mentioned general criteria can be itemized into more specific form as follows:

- Catering to real human needs
- Compatible with natural systems and cycles
- Facilitating effective utilization of human body, animals, plants and materials
- Safe, user-friendly and conducive to health
- Producing with local resources and expertise as far as possible
- Promoting the use of renewable energy resources
- Low cost and energy efficient
- Enhancing human interaction and cooperation
- Promoting decentralization
- Durability and life cycle recyclability of products

For Production Systems

In determining the type of production systems, the key questions to be answered are:

1 What to produce?

1 How to produce?

1 For whom to produce?

1 And how much to produce? All these will be decided in the context of availability of local natural resources and the needs of the people for any given community. Of course, the needs are to be characterized in consonance with the comprehensive human goal. The specific criteria to judge the appropriateness of the production systems may include the following:

- Optimal utilization of local resources and expertise
- Economic viability and sustainability
- Priority for local consumption
- Matching the pattern of production with the availability/ producibility in the local environment and the pattern of consumption
- Decentralized systems capable of meaningful employment of people in the community
- Facilitating production by masses and not mass production in a centralized mode
- Promoting individual creativity and sense of accomplishment 1 Using people-friendly and eco-friendly technologies 1 Ensuring requisite quality of production
- Safe and conducive to the health of persons involved in production as well as others

For Management Models

The management needs to focus at the fulfilment of the people involved in the production system as well the users of the produce and not to profit-mania. The following criteria can be chosen for a humanistic management model:

- The whole unit working as a well-knit family
- Cooperative and motivational
- Ensuring correct appraisal of human labour
- Targeting employer-employee as well as consumer satisfaction and not profit maximization
- Sharing of responsibility and participative mode of management
- Continuous value addition of the persons involved
- Effectively integrating individual competencies and complementarity