

SALIENT FEATURES OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

India has one of the oldest and longest traditions of philosophical thinking in the world. The canvas of what can be termed as Indian thought is vast and varied spanning millennia, with a wide range and variety of philosophical schools and systems, our focus will be on the essential feature of Indian thought and culture and its heritage. Indian philosophy has a totality and integralism. The instruction of preceptors and systems of vision combine rational investigations, Logic and epistemology in a fuller way of life. The approach makes the philosophical systems both humanistic and scientific, practical and theoretical correlating vision leads to a “correct way of thinking” as well as “Right way of living”, man being at the center of all cognitive enterprises, all philosophical activities, instead of ending in intellectual exercise, subverse, a larger purpose of answering questions, about the life and death, the destiny of man, the nature of thinking and source of the world. The different philosophies developed over long spells of time. Indian Philosophy is all about **four Purusharthas**-

1. **Dharma** – Righteousness – Moral Values
2. **Artha** – Prosperity – Economic Values
3. **Kama** – Pleasure, Love , Psychological Values
4. **Moksha** – Liberation – Peace, Transcendental Stage Of Life, Spiritual Values

Indian Philosophy is inward looking and aims to help human beings deal with ups and downs of life with the goal of Self Realization. The Sanskrit word for Philosophy is *Darsana*, which means **direct vision**. The word symbolizes difference between modern western Philosophy, which mainly relies on an intellectual pursuit and Indian Philosophy that relies on a direct vision of Truth and Pure Buddhi, Reasoning.

The beginning of Philosophy in India occurred in the very remote past, and there is tangible evidence that this was somewhat before or about 1000 BC. Philosophy in India emerged as speculation about the unity and the ultimate ground of the world, in close connection with religion, from which it never separated itself. While religion continuously nourished it, it transformed and developed religion from within. The important philosophical contribution of the Rigveda is its discovery and assertion of the unity of Gods and world.

In ancient India at one time philosophy was conceived as the rational, critical and illuminating review of the contents of theology, economics and political science and also as the right

instrument and foundation of all actions and duties, which helped one to achieve intellectual balance and insight as well as linguistic clarity and behavioural competence.

The knowledge of Indian Philosophy, inculcates in a person, the habit of reflecting on one's life, thought and action, on what is happening in the society of which he is a member and in the world-community of which his society is a component, it is surely doing something practical and purposeful. The philosophical elements of Indianness is, enable one not only to judge and decide for oneself on religious, moral, social, and political problems, but to express oneself appropriately, and hopefully even to act meaningfully in different situations.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

1. Perennialism/Universalism/Cosmopolitanism
2. All religions are accepted/multicultural/multi-linguistic nature/ unity in diversity in geographical (variation)/cultural/historical/food/dress
3. All systems accept the views of the great world rhythm: - Creation/ Maintenance/ Dissolution – they follow each other.
4. Transcendental consciousness of Self (Intuition, Revelation, Cosmic Congregation).
5. Realization of Eternal Truths
6. Spiritual orientation
7. Naturalness of life
8. Practices of Yoga/ Meditation/ Salvation/ Moksha.
9. Intellectualism/ Wisdom/ Discussion/ Debates
10. Faith in past
11. Faith in action (Karma)
12. Faith in God (Surrender to God)
13. Faith in Rebirth
14. Synthesis in Religion and Philosophy
15. Ignorance as the root cause of sufferings
16. Philosophy as a practical necessity
17. Belief in an Eternal moral order
18. Liberation as the ultimate goal of life