

## Providing the Basis for Universal Human Values and Ethical Human Conduct

In section-II, we explored the content of right understanding, discovering the innate harmony at various levels of existence right from the human being to the whole of existence. This included a correct appraisal of the needs, characteristics and activities of the self ('I') and the Body and also the salient aspects of synergy between these. Then we also understood human-to-human relationships and the values characterising these relationships leading to harmony in family and society. We went further to explore the inherent interconnectedness, cyclability, self-regulation and mutual fulfilment existing in Nature. Finally, we concluded this study by identifying co-existence in the entire existence. This manifests in the form harmonious interaction of units (both sentient and insentient i.e consciousness and material) with each other being in co-existence with the all-pervading space. This reality- 'space' is no-activity, transparent, equilibrium energy and the units of nature are 'submerged' in space. Being in space, they are energized, self-organized and fulfil the definite relationship with each other, leading to the complete existential order- '*samagra vyavasthā*'.

All the above investigations were carried out through a process of self-exploration and studying the things around us. While the process of self-exploration has to continue to enable realization and understanding, we can start looking at the significant implications of such an understanding in our life and profession. This forms the subject matter of the five chapters of this section.

Here we can also visualize how such an understanding of the truth of existence and our ability to live in accordance with it, can pave way towards collective and sustainable human happiness and prosperity. Such an understanding enables the human being to achieve harmony in oneself, harmony with other human beings and harmony with rest of nature. This unfolding of truth through the process of self-exploration seems to be the direction of evolution of the entire mankind. This also is the purpose of human life. It is for us to get adequately convinced through our own exploration, that this is the only effective way of establishing peace within as well as peace outside.

In this section, we will also be able to visualize how the right understanding provides us the vision for carving out the 'Holistic Alternative' and perpetuate it in the human tradition in contrast to the present indefinite and highly unsustainable model of human living. It also provides the basis for ethical conduct of profession in a natural way and the development of appropriate technologies, production systems and management models to facilitate the holistic way of life. So let us start appreciating these implications and also visualize how we could undertake the journey towards the 'Holistic Alternative'.

## 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. Since we discussed them in detail in chapter 8, we will not discuss them here.

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.

One important point to be noted here is that artistic value is there only when utility value is there. When there is no utility, it has no scope for art too.

In appendix II, we have listed some more values for you to familiarize. You will see that all these values are nothing but the participation of the human being in different dimensions of living.

## Universal Values Naturally Emerging from the Right Understanding

Let us now understand how the inculcation of universal values is a natural outcome of the right understanding. From the discussions of section-II, we can easily infer that there is an innate harmony and orderliness in the existence. The human beings only need to understand it (and not to create it). The universal human urge for happiness and prosperity is actually the quest for understanding this harmony and being in tune with it. The universal human values are the parameters which designate this harmony at various levels and highlight the universal purpose in terms of understanding this harmony. Thus, the universal human values are nothing but manifestation of the truth of existence (harmony, co-existence) in various dimensions of human interaction in terms of the participation in the universal order. These are naturally acceptable to all human beings and conducive to human happiness. Only our ignorance, our wrong pre-conditionings, our illusion about ourselves, about the existence, about the nature of sensory interactions and about our relationships with things around us, leads to all the difficulties and confusions in appreciating and inculcating these universal values. Continuous self-observation and self-exploration into entire existence enables us to realize this truth. We are able to appreciate the universality and the innateness of human being. On our own right, we can experience how such a realization leads to fulfillment at all levels. Once we are able to get rid of our false pre-conditioning and anchor ourselves to our natural acceptance, the inculcation of human values becomes spontaneous. And this is true for all human beings and for all times. This is what all of us really cherish and as human beings we also have the requisite potential and wherewithal to realize it. This understanding is thus a source of great solace, great relief and great confidence to the whole human race.

The universal values are the truths of existence and are always there. It is for us to discover these through self exploration and learn to live in accordance with these in order to be happy. You will also find that these values cannot be enforced through fear or greed or false beliefs.

- The values are not to be enforced through fear (*bhaya*)
- The values are not to be enforced through greed (*pralobhana*)
- The values are not to be enforced through blind faith/ belief (*asthā*)

The values are naturally acceptable as we have seen, and hence there is no need for imposition or enforcement. Only right understanding through the process of self-exploration will lead to harmony in the society or organization.

This gives a very strong base to ensure value based living among human beings. Any attempt to inculcate values through fear, greed or a false belief will not be conducive to sustainable harmony in the society or organization. Only the process of understanding through self-exploration will work in the long run.

## Definitiveness of Ethical Human Conduct

What is innateness of human beings? What is our humanness 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 humanness.

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. It can be understood in terms of the following: (See appendix II for more details)

1. Values (Mithyas) 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

## Applications of Value-based Living

The implications of value-based living can be studied in the following terms:

1. *At the level of individual:* Transition towards happiness and prosperity will take place at the individual level. The individual will slowly start getting rid of the contradictions and conflicts within, and attain a state where one is able to answer his/her questions by exploring within the self. This will help the individual get rid of the tension, frustration, depression, one-upmanship and other such situations that he/she doesn't want to be in and will facilitate definite and predictable human conduct in him/her. The feeling of *Sanyama* will enable a proper care and use of the Body. It will instill self confidence and spontaneous joyfulness in the individual. This will in turn help the individual reduce the feeling of financial insecurity caused due to ill-health.
2. *At the level of family:* The value-based living will facilitate peace and harmony in the family, with just and fulfilling behaviour. People will feel prosperous and the feeling to nurture others will grow in the families. This will help raise the feeling of togetherness in the families, and reduce the family feuds. The prevalent problems of families will be on the wane once human living is more based on human consciousness than animal consciousness. Such harmonious living will also help reduce the competitive and consumeristic behaviour in family celebrations like marriages, parties and other social occasions.
3. *At the level of society:* When relationship gets higher priority over physical facilities, fearlessness and mutual trust start emerging in the society. Differentiations on the bases of *sex* (in terms of gender, age or race), physical facilities (in terms of wealth or posts) and beliefs (in terms of religions, sects, etc.) will be reduced. The conflicts between communities, nations, races, factions and problems like *naxalism*, *terrorism*, *consumerism* can be solved to a large extent without any coercion or war. The feeling of undividedness will surface in the society. Fulfilment of human goal will start getting to the fore in our plans and projects at the levels of societies and nations and a universal human order based on trustful relationships can slowly emerge.
4. *At the level of nature:* Human beings will be in a better position to place themselves in relation with other units in nature. The problems of pollution and resource depletion can be solved as people are able to judge their needs for physical facilities correctly and fulfill these in a recyclable manner matching with the process of nature. Better methods of farming and production (*awaranshed-cyclic*) will help cut down problems of greenhouse gases, ozone depletion, ecological imbalance. The population of animals and birds can be saved from extinction and forests can be replenished.