

Unit 5

1. What do you understand by definitiveness of ethical human conduct? Why is this definitiveness desirable?

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 humane-ness.

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 (Mūlyā): 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 participation of mine in this existence in terms of fulfilment of these universal human values.

2. Policy (Nīti): 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.

3. Character (Charitra): The definiteness of my desire, thought and selection gives definiteness to my living. Definitiveness 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- (svanārī, & 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.

On this basis, we get a definite notion of ethics. We get a definite criterion to judge whether an act of human being is ethical or unethical, and a definite way to work for ethics in life and

profession. We can see that the ethics in the living of an individual can be imbibed only through inculcation of values, policies and character, and this is possible through the process of ensuring right understanding through self-exploration.

At the same time, we can see that a human being with ethical human conduct coupled with requisite professional skills only can be a good professional, namely, a good engineer, a good manager, a good teacher and researcher, a good technocrat, etc.

We can further qualify the ethical human conduct on the basis of the following:

‘Ethical conduct’ implies that it is naturally acceptable to me and does not give rise to conflict within.

‘Ethical conduct’ implies that it is in consonance with the right understanding of the reality – the underlying harmony at all levels.

‘Ethical conduct’ implies that it leads to mutual fulfilment with other people and mutual enrichment with rest of nature.

Thus, the ‘ethical conduct’ is self-satisfying, people-friendly, eco-friendly and universal.

2. Explain the holistic alternatives and describe the vision for the holistic alternatives.

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.

Right understanding also provides us the basis to evolve a humanistic education system, holistic health care systems, appropriate technologies, production systems and management models, and an economic order based on recyclability and compatibility with nature. Also with the help of right understanding, it will be possible to visualize a humanistic constitution which will facilitate the development of a harmonious world family and a universal human order (Mānavīya Vyavasthā). The five dimensions of such a universal human order (Mānavīya Vyavasthā) can be worked out in detail in tune with the above mentioned objectives to usher in the holistic alternative.

3. Explain the competence process in professional ethics.

Professional ethics means to develop professional competence with ethical human conduct. Developing ethical competence in the individual (profession) is the only effective way to ensure professional ethics. 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. The salient features characterizing this competence can be summarized as follows:

1. Clarity about comprehensive human goal: Samadhan – Samridhi – Abhay – Sah-astitva, and its fulfilment through universal human order.
2. Confidence in oneself: Based on the right understanding of oneself and the rest of existence.
3. Mutually fulfilling behaviour: Clarity and confidence in ethical human conduct and its correlation with sustained personal as well as collective happiness and prosperity.
4. Mutually enriching interaction with nature: Self-sufficiency in fulfilment of physical needs; ability to assess the needs for physical facilities for the family and their fulfilment through production systems ensuring harmony in the nature. In the light of the above, one acquires the ability to identify and develop appropriate (people-friendly and eco-friendly) technologies, production systems etc.

4. What do you mean by Universal Human Order? What are its implications on the different dimensions of a society?

Universal human order (sarvabhauma vyavastha) is a feeling of being related to every unit including human beings and other entities of nature. Having understood the comprehensive human goal, we are able to be in harmony not only with human beings, but also with the rest of the nature. We are able to see that we are related to every unit in nature and ensure mutual fulfilment in that relationship.

On the bases of 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 be integrated in the following way:
Family => family cluster => village / community => village cluster => => => world family

5. What do you understand by competence in professional ethics? Elaborate.

Or

List out the salient features characterizing this competence in professional ethics

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6. What are the broad holistic criteria for evaluation of technologies, production systems and management models? How do they map with the comprehensive human goal?

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 decentralisation
- Durability and life cycle recyclability of products

For Production Systems

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

What to produce?

- How to produce?
- For whom to produce?
- 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 characterised 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
- Using people-friendly and eco-friendly technologies
- 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 maximisation
- Sharing of responsibility and participative mode of management
- Continuous value addition of the persons involved
- Effectively integrating individual competencies and complementarity

7. List some of the specific criteria for holistic evaluation of technologies. Elaborate on any two of them.

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.

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
Producible 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

8. What are the steps for evolution at the level of family, society and profession in transition to the holistic alternative? Explain.

We can now appreciate that there is a strong interconnectedness and co-existence among human beings as well as in human being and rest of nature. The efforts towards self-evolution by the individuals will always be through appropriate interaction at the level of family, society and nature at large. In the paradigm of right understanding, there is an essential complementarity among all the entities including the human beings. So the steps for personal evolution are not in alienation but in proper collaboration with family, society and nature. In fact, the extent of mutual fulfilment in such interactions will be an evidence of the maturity of one's understanding. Mutual fulfilment is the guiding principle which finally ensures personal happiness as well as collective happiness and harmonious co-existence with nature. So it will be an integral part of one's evolutionary effort to participate in the larger order. The participation in this respect on the part of individuals will follow the following sequence:

1. **Right Understanding (Samajhadāri)**- Effort to gain right understanding.
2. **Honesty (Īmānadāri)**- Sincerity to acknowledge what one has understood and be ready to work for complete understanding. This is followed by spontaneous reflection in one's thought, behaviour and work.
3. **Accountability (Jimmedāri)**- Feeling one's responsibility to participate in the larger order in the light of right understanding.
4. **Participation (Bhāgīdāri)**- Effort to actually participate in the larger order including the family, the society and the nature around according to one's competence, capacity and aptitude.

This will generate the process of mutual complementarity towards evolution of all – 'sarvodaya.' The person with better understanding and/or physical facilities will be keen to facilitate others as this is the proof of one's own level of evolution and understanding. This is how a person having obtained right understanding will become a nucleus of change for the family and people around, a spontaneous promoter of the revolution of the right understanding. And this effort is not seen as an obligation or a sacrifice but only as a means of one's evolution. Such a transition will be comforting for everyone. It will also be helpful in dissolving the contradictions and dilemmas which arise only out of ignorance. The real effort required is only in the process of getting rid of one's false pre-conditionings in the light of the truth of Existence. The families will provide the natural training grounds for the evolution of its members, so will be a society. Such individuals and families will then be instrumental in collectively working towards *svarājya* – working towards *akhandā samāja* and *sārvabhauma vyavasthā*. The ethos in the society will gradually change from the present untenable sensuality-mania (*Kāma-unmāda*), consumerism-mania (*bhoga-unmāda*) and the profit-mania (*lābha-unmāda*) to that of working for comprehensive human goal- '*samādhāna, samriddhi, abhaya* and *sah-astitva*'. This is what is conveyed by the concept of *Sahaastitvavāda*.

Major transition steps at the level of society will consist of the following

- (a) Promoting Mass Awareness and Moving towards Humanistic Education
- (b) Evolving Holistic Models of Living
- (c) Amending Policies, Programs and Social Systems in tune with Comprehensive Human Goal