

Human Values & Professional Ethics

Unit V

Topic: Natural Acceptance of Human Values

It is right to say that we naturally accept Human Values in the light of our understanding of Harmony and Co-Existence. Every Human being naturally expects to be purposeful and successful. Our wisdom is the true source for realizing these expectations. This source could never be obliterated - every person naturally accepts goodness, Every person naturally expects goodness to happen. We all are waiting for goodness to happen. The place where goodness would be realized will naturally be in our relationships with other entities in existence. Recognition of a relationship in existence is essentially recognizing of its innate purpose or value. This is study in existence. Commitment in a relationship is a natural outcome of this recognition. Thereafter perfection in Harmony in that relationship becomes inevitable. Perfection naturally results in fruitfulness or success. Omni-dimensional resolution emanating from Jeevan is always connected with all our relationships.

Human values need to be lived. What will it take to fulfil this need? Human values are realized by understanding of Jeevan, understanding of existence as co-existence, and by natural acceptance of humane conduct. Wisdom is nothing else but this. When we begin realizing human values only then we become capable of doing right, and become proficient in doing right. Till then we are trapped in one mania or the other - and there's no way for us to do right. Understanding Jeevan and understanding Existence are essential for becoming wise. Moreover, values are realized only upon recognition of the meaning or purpose of relationships

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Topic: Definitiveness of ethical human conduct

The right understanding gained through self-exploration enables one to identify the definitiveness of human conduct which may also be called the Ethical human conduct. It is the same for all human beings, and is in agreement with the universal human values.

Characteristics of ethical human conduct:

It is a combined representation of – Values , policies and character. Values help us to live in harmony with family, character helps us to live harmoniously in the society and policies help us to maintain harmony with the orders of nature.

Values (Mulya): Values can be witnessed in relationships. The ability to recognize the relationships is due to imagination and being self organized in work. It enables us to understand the relationship between various orders of nature too. We have many relations in life, but the actual purpose of relationship is to be understood. For example, the purpose of relationship between parents and children is fulfillment and protection and living in order. Trust is the functional value that helps us to maintain the continuity of relationship.

Policy (Niti): The assets of an individual include the self 'I', the body and the physical resources. It is important that proper coordination exists between them. Policies are the rules which when followed help us to protect, enrich and utilize adequately the various assets possessed by us.

One must evaluate his conduct based on the above three dimensions and self exploration alone bridges the gap between conduct and the ethical human conduct. A human being can be called prosperous and successful if he blends his professional skills with ethical human conduct.

Character (Charitra): Character is determined by the values one incorporates in his life. It is the outcome of the values he possesses, his perception, imagination and the experiences gained during his life time. The characteristics of good character include-

- Having personal trustworthy relationships
- Access to rightful acquiring of wealth
- Compassionate behavior and work

If one has the above he will be organized and has self harmony. By understanding natural acceptance one gains self expression and self extension by participation in harmony at all levels of existence. This leads to right understanding which will result in a prosperous undivided society of high human order.

This definitiveness of human conduct in terms of values, policies and character is termed as Ethics. The 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 are varying. Ethics in the life 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.

'Ethical conduct' implies that it is naturally acceptable and does not give rise to conflict within. Thus, the 'ethical conduct' is self-satisfying, people-friendly, eco-friendly and universal.

Acceptance of Basic human values: Schwartz has identified 10 basic human values. These include the core values recognized in cultures round the world and are mentioned in different cultures, religions and philosophical discussions of values.

Each of the ten basic values can be characterized by describing its central motivational goal:

1. Self-Direction: Independent thought and action; choosing, creating, exploring.
2. Stimulation: Excitement, novelty, and challenge in life.
3. Hedonism: Pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself.
4. Achievement: Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards.
5. Power: Social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources.
6. Security: Safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships, and of self.
7. Conformity: Restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms.
8. Tradition: Respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion provide the self.

9. Benevolence: Preserving and enhancing the welfare of those with whom one is in frequent personal contact (the 'in-group').

10. Universalism: Understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature.

The model figure of representing the relationship among the values is mentioned below:

The conflicts and congruities among all ten basic values yield an integrated structure of values. This structure can be summarized with two orthogonal dimensions. Self-enhancement vs. self-transcendence: On this dimension, power and achievement values oppose universalism and benevolence values. Both of the former emphasize pursuit of self-interests, whereas both of the latter involve concern for the welfare and interests of others.

Openness to change vs. conservation: On this dimension, self-direction and stimulation values oppose security, conformity and tradition values. Both of the former emphasize independent action, thought and feeling and readiness for new experience, whereas all of the latter emphasize self-restriction, order and resistance to change. Hedonism shares elements of both openness and self-enhancement.