

Human Values - Lesson 3

We have been learning about Human Values and its importance in our day to day life in the last couple of classes. How many of you remember the five basic human values? Those are Truth, Love, Peace, Right Action, and Non-Violence.

Today's lesson is on -

Human Value: *Peace*

Sub Value: Concentration

Objective: *One's mind is under one's own control, and great goals can then be achieved through it*

Peace is the state of being quiet, calm and free of emotional disturbance. Peace is not idleness but a sound and balanced mental state which learns to find rest in action and which utilizes all the inherent vital energies to create a perfect harmony in action. This could be achieved through focus and concentration.

Story 1 – The Power of Concentration

Once there lived in a village a poor man named Kushalchand. Though poor he was happy and satisfied with what he had. He was wise, calm and always peaceful. This was because he used to meditate for long hours.

Kushalchand used to work hard in the mornings and in the evenings he used to sit under a huge banyan tree and meditate for hours. This used to give him peace of mind and lots of happiness. One evening, the Prince of the land happened to pass through the village. All the villagers went to pay their respects to him except for Kushalchand, who was lost in meditation. When the prince happened to pass by the banyan tree he saw Kushalchand sitting under it with his eyes closed. The prince was very upset to see that Kushalchand had not come to pay his respects and ordered his guards to arrest Kushalchand and have him brought before the king.

Kushalchand was brought to the court before the king and was demanded an explanation for his behavior. Kushalchand was calm and unperturbed. He politely explained that when the Prince had visited the village he was in meditation and was concentrating on the 'Rama nama'. He further explained that whenever he concentrates on the Lord's name he forgets everything and even becomes unaware of the heat, cold, sun, wind, rains, etc.

The King, Prince and all the courtiers found it hard to believe Kushalchand. The King however felt that Kushalchand should be given a chance to prove his innocence and so he decided to give Kushalchand a tough test. He ordered Kushalchand to stand in a tank of water for one whole night. It was winter and the water was very cold. The tank was to be guarded from all the sides. The guards who stood near the tank were shivering with cold. However Kushalchand stood in the tank the whole night and came out very happy the next morning.

Now the King and the Prince were convinced of his meditative powers. They asked him respectfully as to how he had accomplished this task. Kushalchand humbly replied that, when he stood in the cold water he could see at a distance a lamp which was lit at a far away temple. He concentrated on the lamp and brought the light of the lamp to his heart and through out the night felt its warmth inside him, never feeling the cold outside.

The King and the prince now realized the importance and the powers of concentration. They happily rewarded and honored Kushalchand before he returned to his village.

Story 2 - Your mind should be only on the target

Once when Swami Vivekananda was in Chicago, he saw some young children trying to shoot eggshells. He noticed that the children missed the target nine times out of ten. When the children noticed that a Swami was watching them keenly, they were embarrassed. Thinking that they could regain their lost pride, they mockingly asked Swami if he could do better

Swami Vivekananda smiled and replied in the affirmative. He took the toy gun from the children and shot twelve times hitting an eggshell each time. The children were amazed and when they came to know that Swami Vivekananda had not even handled a gun before, they earnestly asked him how he could be so good at it.

Swami told the children the secret of his success. "Children, whatever you do, concentrate wholly on it. Think of nothing else. Your aim will not fail if your mind is fully on the target or on the goal. Concentration works wonders. When you sit for your study you must concentrate only on that and nothing else. This will ensure success in whatever you undertake."

Power of concentration is the secret of success of many great scientists and men of achievements.

Questions:

- **What was Kusalchand's nature?**
- **What was he doing when the Prince passed by?**
- **How could Kusalchand achieve the difficult task given to him?**
- **What should you do to increase your concentration power?**
- **What benefit do you get from the concentration?**
- **Is concentration the key to success? If yes why?**

Human Value: *Peace*

Sub Value: *Meditation*

Objective: *Define the link between concentration and meditation, and show that meditation leads to the goal of self-realization*

Peace begins with a smile. Peace is the state of being quiet, calm and free of emotional disturbance. This could be achieved through focus and concentration.

Story 3 – The King of Kings

Meditation is the process of concentration on the Lord, thinking only of Him. The word “dhyanam” is derived from a Sanskrit word meaning the “remembrance of God.” It is a method by which you continuously turn the mind inwards to become united with the Lord.

Swami Vivekananda was one of India's greatest sons in the field of spirituality. Before he assumed the name Vivekananda, his name was Narendranath. When Naren, as he was fondly called, was 18 years old, he met Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa who became his Guru.

Naren used to practice meditation regularly. One day at Cossipore, Narendra was meditating under a tree with Girish, another disciple. The place was infested with mosquitoes. Girish tried hard to concentrate but failed. After some time he opened his eyes and looked at Naren. He wanted to see whether Naren was also disturbed. But what he saw amazed him. A blanket of mosquitoes covered Naren's body, but he remained totally absorbed in meditation. His concentration was so great that he apparently did not even feel the mosquitoes.

One evening when Naren was sitting in meditation, he felt as if a lamp was burning at the back of his head. The light glowed more and more intensely and finally burst. Naren was overwhelmed by the light and fell unconscious. After some time, as he regained consciousness, he could feel only his head and not the rest of his body.

In an agitated voice, he said to Gopal, another disciple, who was meditating in the same room, “Where is my body?” Gopal answered, “Why Naren, it is here. Don’t you feel it?”

Gopal was afraid that Narendra was dying and ran to Sri Ramakrishna’s room. Sri Ramakrishna told Gopal to leave Naren as he was.

After some time, Naren reached his normal state of mind. He felt as though he was bathed in an ineffable peace. When he entered Sri Ramakrishna’s room later, the Guru said, “Now mother Kali has shown you everything.”

What Naren had experienced was a glimpse of the Divine Mother. Later on Naren did a lot of work for Mother India. As Swami Vivekananda he represented India at the Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893, he successfully opened the eyes of the western world to the spiritual grandeur of India. He gave many enlightening lectures in America, England and different parts of the world. His words were a clarion call to the youth to put the sublime Vedanta truths in practice, by serving the poor and the down trodden. He insisted on daily communion with God through regular meditation to awaken the Self within.

Questions:

- Does meditation mean concentration?
- Why should we tame the mind through meditation?
- What do you suppose the light that Naren felt, was?
- Is Naren good at meditation? Is Girish good at meditation? Why?
- Who is Naren’s Guru?
- What is Naren’s other name?
- Can everyone practice meditation?

Jumble Words – All words are from this lesson

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