



# ĪSVARA & RELIGIOUS DISCIPLINE

PŪRNA VIDYĀ VEDIC HERITAGE TEACHING PROGRAMME

**ABSENCE OF SIX-FOLD ENEMIES  
&  
THE VALUE OF ACCOMMODATION**

# SIX-FOLD ENEMIES

- Kāma = Unfettered desire
- Krodha = Anger
- Lobha = Greed
- Moha = Delusion
- Mada = False pride
- Matsarya = Jealousy

# FROM THE GĪTĀ

क्रोधाद्भवति सम्मोहः सम्मोहात्स्मृतिविभ्रमः ।

स्मृतिभ्रंशाद् बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात्प्रणश्यति ॥ २-६३ ॥

**krodhāt bhavati sam-mōhaḥ  
sam-mōhāt-smṛti-vibhramah  
smṛti-bhramśād buddhi-nāśah  
buddhi-nāśāt-pranaśyati**

**Gita 2:63**

# THE VALUE OF ACCOMMODATION

- Kṣānti = Accommodation
- The root word is “kṣama” or “forgiveness”
- What is meant by “accommodation” in our behavior towards others?

# THE VALUE OF ACCOMODATION

- Do you find that others around you have faults? Can you accept those faults or others that cannot be changed?
- Can you be content with not demanding others to change to please yourself? This is “*kṣānti*”
- What happens when you insist that someone change their behavior and they do not? Do you think they have similar expectations of you?

# THE VALUE OF ACCOMODATION

- The value of “*kṣānti*” is built around understanding human nature and relationships
- Sometimes we can change another person’s behavior without hurting them
- Sometimes we can move away from them as long as we are not neglecting our duty
- When neither option is not available, we have to learn to *accommodate* the person and the behavior *happily*

# THE VALUE OF ACCOMMODATION

- Accommodation or “*kṣānti*” does not mean resigning ourselves to the limitations of others but actually accepting them as they are before trying to educate them



# ACTING WITHOUT REACTING

- *Acting* and *reacting* are two very different responses to a given situation
- Acting involves listening, understanding, and accepting before taking any action
- Reacting is an unthinking response to the same situation

# ACTING WITHOUT REACTING

- **Example from Ramayana:** Lakṣmana's attitude toward Kaikeyi and Lord Rama's attitude towards Kaikeyi
- **Example from Ramayana:** Vibhiṣana Saranagati episode where Vibhiṣana seeks Lord Rama's protection and Lord Rama goes against everyone's advice to accept Vibhiṣana

# ACCEPTING ONE'S OWN FAULTS

- What about accepting one's own faults?
- Is that important?
- Why?
- What happens when we put ourselves down?

# ACCEPTING ONE'S OWN FAULTS

- Consider the following *subhāṣita*:
- क्षमा शस्त्रं करे यस्य दुर्जनः किं करिष्यति ।  
अतृणे पतितः वह्निः स्वयमेवोपशाम्यति ॥
- kṣamā śastram kare yasya durjanaḥ kim kariṣyati  
atrṇe patitaḥ vanhiḥ svayamevopaśāmyati.
- “What will a devious person do to the one who veiled that  
weapon of accommodation in his hands? Fire falling on ground  
without any grass (to burn) gets extinguished by itself.”

# FROM THE GĪTA

अमानित्वमदम्भित्वमहिंसा क्षान्तिरार्जवम् ।  
आचार्योपासनं शौचं स्थैर्यमात्मविनिग्रहः ॥ १३-७ ॥

amānitvam adambhitvam ahiṃsā kṣāntir ārjavam ।  
ācāryopāsanam śaucaṃ sthairyam ātmavinigrahaḥ ॥13-7॥

- The values of *Ahiṃsa* and *Kṣānti*!

# AHIṂSA AND KṢĀNTI

- The qualities of *Ahiṁsa* and *Kṣānti* are the hallmarks of a saintly person
- Such a person does not consciously hurt others by thought, word or action and can accept any person as he or she is
- A saint responds to the person behind the behavior and has an endless capacity to be accommodating
- A saint can see that improper actions are born out of erroneous thinking or inner conflicts

**RELIGIOUS DISCIPLINES  
AN INTRODUCTION**

# WHAT DRIVES OUR ACTIONS?

- As a child one's actions are driven by one's **needs**
- Then the child begins to grow up and has **likes and dislikes**, which now prompt the growing child to actions
- These **likes and dislikes** form the basis of one's personality and can be of two types: **Binding** and **Nonbinding**



# ROLE OF RELIGIOUS DISCIPLINES

- **Likes and dislikes** keep changing and if one lives a life based on satisfying them, they take hold of the personality
- Observance of religious disciplines helps one to relatively neutralize the likes and dislikes and develop stronger willpower
- Undertaking any discipline requires diligence, perseverance, and single-pointedness in pursuit

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# RELIGIOUS DISCIPLINES: VOWS

- A “*vrata*” or vow is a form of self-discipline
- It is a means for inner growth and helps develop a strong character
- One example: A “*satyavrata*” is one who has made a vow to be truthful in speech
- Another example: A “*pativrata*” is a wife who chooses the welfare of her husband as a vow and directs all her actions to meet that end

# RELIGIOUS DISCIPLINES: VOWS

यान्ति देवव्रता देवान्पितृन्यान्ति पितृव्रताः ।

भूतानि यान्ति भूतेज्या यान्ति मद्याजिनो ऽपि माम् ॥ ९-२५ ॥

yānti devavratā devān pitṛn yānti pitṛvratāḥ ।

bhūtāni yānti bhūtejyā yānti madyājino 'pi mām ॥9-25॥

- Lord Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna in the Gita (9:25) that a vow made towards any goal helps the individual gain that goal

# VRATAS IN THE VEDAS

- The Vedas ask us to observe some *vratas* such as:
- Sāvitra vrata (before initiation into Gāyatri mantra)
- Brahmacharya-vrata (celibacy during Vedic study period)
- Aupaniṣada-vrata (undertaken before upaniṣadic study)
- Snataka-vrata (observed by one who completed scriptural study and is about to enter householder stage)

# EXAMPLES OF WIDELY PRACTICED VRATAS

- Pūja-vrata (special pujas to certain deities)
- Yātra-vrata (vow to undertake pilgrimage to holy place)
- Upavāsa-vrata (undertaking a fast for religious purposes)
- Japa-vrata (chanting mantras)
- Mauna-vrata (silence)
- Prayascitta-vrata (atonement)
- Pratijna-vrata (self-imposed resolve such as not eating sweets)

# VALUE OF MODERATION

युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु ।

युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा ॥ ६-१७ ॥

yuktāhāravihārasya yuktaceṣṭasya karmasu ।

yuktasvapnāvabodhasya yogo bhavati duḥkhahā ॥6-17॥

- Lord Kṛṣṇa says in the Gita (6:17) that it is important to use moderation and keep in view the **intent** for which an action is undertaken (including when practicing vratas or vows)

# VALUE OF MODERATION

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युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा ॥ ६-१७ ॥

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- For one who is moderate in eating and other activities, in effort to one's duties, in reference to sleeping and waking hours, for such a person meditation (discipline) becomes the destroyer of sorrow



# Meditation on OM

- Sit comfortably and take a few deep breaths gently
- Let your breathing become calm and even
- Take stock of your body and relax each part consciously
- With a relaxed body bring your attention to OM and think of Isvara
- Start chanting OM continuously and become aware of the pause between successive OM chants



# Homework

- Practice chanting OM for 3-5 minutes each morning and each evening
- This week practice the value of accommodation and keep track of when an opportunity comes up. Write the incident down and remember the action you took to practice the value of accommodation

# Concluding Śānti Mantra

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदम् पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते  
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥  
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

- Om pūrṇamadah pūrṇamidam pūrṇātpurṇamudacyate  
pūrṇasya pūrṇamādāya pūrṇamevāvaśiṣyate ॥  
Om śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ ॥

That is fullness, this is fullness. From that fullness this fullness came. From that fullness (when) this fullness (is) removed, what remains is fullness. Om peace, peace, peace