




ĪSVARA & RELIGIOUS DISCIPLINE

PŪRNA VIDYĀ VEDIC HERITAGE TEACHING PROGRAMME




Values - Ahimsa

- In Sanskrit, Ahimsa means *non-injury*
- It is a universal value
- No human being wants to be hurt by another, physically or emotionally
- Common sense dictates that one does not do unto others what one does not done to oneself


Values - Ahimsa

- Sage Patanjali in his Yoga sutras, describes the eight-fold disciplines (*yama, niyama, āsana, prāṇayama, pratyahara, dhāraṇa, dhyana and samādhi*)
- The first discipline “*yama*” is self-control; in this first discipline, the first of five values is *ahimsa*
- *Ahimsa* = not hurting anyone or bearing malice to any being by means of speech, thought or action




Values - Ahimsa

- What happens when someone hurts you?
- What is your immediate reaction?
- Is there a better way to deal with such situations rather than acting impulsively?




Values - Ahimsa

- How do Buddhists practice the value of *ahimsa*?
- How do Jains practice the value of *ahimsa*?
- How is *ahimsa* practiced in the Vedic religion (Sanatana Dharma or Hinduism)?



Values - Ahimsa

- Human beings have the capacity to make choices
- Vegetarianism
- Taittiriya Upaniṣad



Values - Ahimsa

- Ahimsa and sensitivity/alertness
- Thoughts
- Words
- Actions

SYMBOL WORSHIP OF ÍŚVARA

Symbol Worship of Íśvara

- Íśvara is nonseparate from creation
- When this is difficult to grasp, then it is essential to have the *bhāvana*
- This is done through invoking Íśvara in the form of a symbol
- Remember that we do not worship the symbol or idol but the Íśvara who is represented by that symbol!

Symbol Worship of Íśvara

- What is *sampradāya*?
- What is *prāna prathiśṭhāpana*?
- Why do we celebrate *Brahmotsava* as a major event each year at our temple?
- Do we need an idol to worship?
- What we need is the attitude (prayerful attitude)

Symbol Worship of Ísvára

- Until one knows that the Lord is everywhere, one has to keep one's ego under check
- When one places a flower at the feet of the Lord, a worshipful attitude is created in the mind of the devotee
- A symbol, such an idol, therefore plays an important role in this worship, which helps one gain maturity and eventually self knowledge



Homework

- Practice the value of *ahimsa* consciously this week and write down your experiences and observations to be shared with the class next week
- What was the occasion?
- How did you practice the value of *ahimsa*?

Concluding Śānti Mantra

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

- Om pūrṇamadah pūrṇamidam pūrṇātpūrṇamudacyate
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