



DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL ENGINEERING
Understanding Harmony in the Family and Society

Understanding Harmony in the Family

Every human being is born in a family and is part of a family. The family is the basic unit or building block of human organisation. It provides a base for appreciating, accepting, understanding and practicing to live in relationship and harmony (order).

Feeling of Relationship as the Basis for Harmony in the Family

The harmony in the family has primarily to do with the fulfilment of relationship between one human being and the other human being. In order to fulfil relationship, it is necessary to understand relationship.

Understanding Relationship

We will now explore into the four important aspects of relationship:

1. Relationship is – between one Self (I1) and another Self (I2)
2. There are feelings in relationship – in one Self (I1) for the other Self (I2)
3. These feelings can be recognised – they are definite
4. The fulfilment of these feelings and their right evaluation lead to mutual happiness

1. Relationship is – between one Self (I1) and another Self (I2)

Relationship is already there. We do not have to construct or create relationship. All we need to do is to understand relationship and fulfil it. Relationship is between one Self and the other Self. It is the Self which is recognizing the relationship, and not the Body. It is the Self which relates to the other, and not the Body.

2. There are feelings in relationship – in one Self (I1) for the other Self (I2)

The important issue in human relationship is that of the feelings. We can see that feelings are in the Self, not in the Body. It is the Self which has the feelings and which recognises the feelings. To understand relationship, one has to understand the Self and the naturally acceptable feelings in the Self.

3. These feelings can be recognised – they are definite

These feelings can be recognised, they are definite. There are nine feelings in relationship. These are the feelings which we can understand, which we can ensure within ourselves, which we can share with others and thus ensure mutual fulfilment in relationship. These are the feelings which are naturally acceptable to us in the relationship with the other human being. Feelings (values) in relationship:

1. Trust (foundation value)
2. Respect
3. Affection
4. Care
5. Guidance
6. Reverence
7. Glory
8. Gratitude
9. Love (complete value)

4. Fulfilment of feelings in relationship and their evaluation leads to mutual happiness

When we have these naturally acceptable feelings in the Self, we share them with the other and when we are both able to evaluate the feelings rightly, it leads to mutual happiness, i.e. the happiness of oneself as well as the happiness of the other.

Appraisal of the Current Status

The problem today is that we assume ourselves to be the Body and we assume the relationship on the basis of the Body (and not the feelings). We, therefore, fail to understand relationship and consequently, we fail to fulfil it, despite all our good intentions. The problems are due to absence of one or more of the right feelings in the Self. And we try to make up this gap by physical facility or by trying to demand these feelings from others, rather than ensuring these feelings in ourselves and sharing



it with others.

The Way Ahead

First, we need to rightly recognize the relationship, identify the naturally acceptable feelings in relationship, understand these feelings and ensure that these feelings are there in us. This will ensure happiness in us. Secondly, we have to share these feelings with the other. Because this is naturally acceptable to the other as well, it will lead to happiness in the other also. Thus, it will lead to mutual happiness. And that is how the fulfilment in relationship takes place.

Key Takeaways

Relationship already exists – we don't have to create it; rather we only have to recognise and fulfil it. The family is the basic unit of human-human interaction. The basic issue in family is that of relationship. In relationship, there are nine feelings (values) that can be clearly understood and lived with. There is harmony in the family, mutual happiness in the family, when we understand the feelings and ensure in our living.

Understanding Harmony in the Family and Society

So far, we have explored harmony in the human being and harmony in the family. In the sequence, the next level of living for a human being is society. We can see very much see that we can conceive of a society only if it has families living together in a relationship of mutual fulfillment otherwise it is just like a crowd or battlefield. **Understanding Human Goal**

The goals of human being living in a society can be articulated as shown below:

We can explore and see what is naturally acceptable?

- Right understanding in every human being or only a few to have right understanding and others to follow them?
- Prosperity in every family or few families to have accumulation, and others to be deprived and dependent on the few?
- Fearlessness, based on trust and affection, in the society or a state of fear, based on mistrust and jealousy in the society?
- Co-existence (mutual fulfilment) in nature or exploitation and domination of nature?

Appraisal of the Current Status

Due to the prevailing false assumptions of happiness (like money is everything), happiness is sought through accumulation of physical facility (money) by any means, and using it for getting sensations from the body or feelings from others. The second goal of prosperity is similarly seen as accumulating more and more. With these as the driving assumptions in the society, it has led to people living with three kinds of obsessions:

1. Obsession for consumption
2. Obsession for profit
3. Obsession for sensual pleasure

Similarly, instead of the third goal of fearlessness (trust), we have domination, exploitation and fear in the society. Finally, instead of mutual fulfilment, we are mostly trying to exploit and be the master over nature.

The Way Ahead

There is a need for understanding the harmony in society and living accordingly. The correct sequence in which these four goals can be fulfilled is shown in the figure below:

Dimensions (Systems) of Human Order

With the clarity of human goals, we can discuss five interconnected, complementary dimensions of



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human order required for the fulfilment of the human goal. The five basic systems of a human society are:

1. Education-Sanskar
2. Health-Self regulation
3. Production-Work
4. Justice-Preservation
5. Exchange-Storage

Though all are interconnected, we can see a primary link of the systems with the goals as:

Education-Sanskar → (leads to) → Right understanding and right feeling (happiness)

Health-self-regulation → (leads to) → Prosperity

Production-Work → (leads to) → Prosperity

Justice-Preservation → (leads to) → Fearlessness and Co-existence (respectively)

Exchange-storage → (leads to) → Prosperity and Fearlessness

Education-Sanskar

Looking at the first dimension of Education-Sanskar, as we discussed earlier, we can see that Education is to develop right understanding of the harmony at all levels of being – from self to the entire existence (individual, family, society, and nature/existence). and

Sanskar is to develop the basic acceptances of the harmony at various levels.

Education provides the commitment, preparation and practice of living in harmony at all levels.

Preparation includes learning the skills and technology for living in harmony. Our living is an expression of our sanskar.

Health and Self-regulation

We had discussed this at length earlier.

Self-regulation is the feeling of responsibility towards the Body, for nurturing, protection and right utilization of the Body.

Health of the Body is indicated by the fact that it is able to act according to the instruction of the Self and the different parts of the Body are in harmony.

Production-Work

Work is the effort a human being does on the rest of nature and Production is the physical facility obtained from work.

There are two important issues related to production-work:

1. What to produce?
2. How to produce?

Regarding what to produce, we have already discussed while exploring the proposals about prosperity, health and self-regulation – we have to produce physical facility required for nurturing, protection and right utilisation of the Body.

Regarding how to produce there are two criteria:

1. The process needs to be cyclic and mutually enriching – it has to be eco-friendly
 2. Justice needs to be ensured in relationship with human being – it has to be people-friendly
- A production process is cyclic when the resources utilised in the process return to their original state in due course of their lifecycle. In the absence of being in tune with the natural processes, what we see ultimately is resource depletion and pollution.

Resource depletion is the symptom of using a natural resource at a rate which is greater than the rate at which it is produced in nature. For example, if we use forest at a rate greater than the rate at which it is produced in nature, there will be a shortage/ depletion of forest.

Similarly, **pollution** indicates that we are producing something which does not return to the cycle in nature or it is produced at a rate that is faster than the rate at which it can return to the cycle in nature.

Plastic, for example, does not degrade, it does not return to the cycle of nature for many years.



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Justice-Preservation

Justice is recognition of human-human relationship, its fulfilment and evaluation leading to mutual happiness. We had discussed earlier that in human-human relationship, the feeling is the core issue. In order to ensure justice in the society, we need to develop the competence to understand and ensure justice in every individual. In case someone is not able to develop this competence and ends up doing injustice then:

- a) Stop the him from doing further injustice, as well as
- b) Help him/her to develop the competence for ensuring justice.

In the present system, mostly we seem to be restricting ourselves at (a) and not doing (b).

Preservation has to do with relationship of human being with the rest of nature.

Preservation is the recognition of relationship of human being with the rest of nature, its fulfilment and evaluation leading to mutual fulfilment. Precisely, preservation would mean enrichment, protection and right utilization of the rest of the nature.

Preservation ensures

1. Prosperity in human being
2. Enrichment, protection and right utilisation of the rest of the nature

Justice ensures fearlessness (trust) in the society and preservation ensures the mutual fulfilment (coexistence) with rest of the nature.

Exchange-Storage

Exchange means sharing or exchanging physical facility with a view of mutual fulfilment and not with the obsession for profit.

The sharing is within the family, or to the extent one has been able to accept relationship. Beyond that is exchange. Through sharing and exchange of physical facility, each family can have all that it needs, i.e. there is mutual fulfilment.

Storage is preserving physical facility after the fulfilment of needs, so that it is available, when required. This is done with a view of mutual fulfilment and not with the obsession for accumulation or exploitation.