



Understanding the Human Being (As Co-existence of Self and Body)

We are human beings; and we need to first understand ourselves. So, what is a human being? The proposal is that human being is co-existence of the Self and the Body. Self is what we term as 'I' and Body is what we see with our eyes.

To understand the two realities, we can start by looking at the needs, activities and response of the Self and the Body.

The Needs of the Self and the Body

The need of the Self is happiness (e.g. feeling of respect leading to happiness) while the need of the Body is physical facility (e.g. food). All the needs related to the Self are continuous in time while all the needs related to the Body are required for a limited time. This is one way we can differentiate between the need of the Self and the need of the Body.

The other way to see the difference between the two is in terms of quantity and quality. The need for food is quantitative in nature. We can identify the quantity of the food needed to nurture our body. Same is the case with the need of clothes, shelter, etc. On the other hand, the feeling of respect, trust, etc. is not quantitative. We don't say, 'today I got half kg of respect' or 'two metres of trust'. These feelings are qualitative in nature.

Now, let us see how these two different types of needs are fulfilled. The need for food is fulfilled by something physical. But when it comes to the need for respect, it is fulfilled by the feeling of respect. All the needs related to the Body are fulfilled by some physio-chemical things. All the needs related to the Self are in terms of feeling, and they are fulfilled by right understanding and right feeling.

The Activities of the Self and the Body

The Self has the activity of desire, thought and expectation which are continuous. On the other hand, any activity of the Body, like eating, walking, etc. is temporary in time. The Response of the Self and the Body

The response of the Body is based on recognizing and fulfilling whereas the response of the Self is based on knowing, assuming, recognizing and fulfilling. The recognition and fulfilment of the Body is definite, while that of Self is determined by the activity of assuming. As assumption changes, the recognition and fulfilment by the Self also changes. The conduct of the human being basically depends upon the response of the Self, as all decisions are made by the Self. Only with the assumptions set right, i.e. assuming based on knowing (which is definite), can recognising and fulfilling be set right; and only then, the conduct can become definite.

All the problems of a human being are due to assumptions without knowing, and the solution lies in ensuring the activity of knowing. And this is possible only through education-sanskar.

The Self as the Consciousness Entity, the Body as the Material Entity

The Self and the Body are two different types of reality. The Self is the domain of consciousness, which is characterised by the activity of knowing, assuming, recognising and fulfilling. The Body is the domain of material and it only has the activity of recognising and fulfilling.

Happiness is the need of the consciousness and it is fulfilled by right understanding and right feeling,



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which are activities of the consciousness itself. The Body is a material unit, its needs are material in nature and they are fulfilled by physio-chemical things.

To understand the human being, both the domain of consciousness as well as the domain of material needs to be understood. For human being to be fulfilled, both domains need to be fulfilled separately.

Key Takeaways

Human being is co-existence of the Self (Consciousness) and the Body (Material). This can be seen on the basis of exploring into the need, fulfilment of need, activity and response of the Self and the Body. In particular, the response of the body is definite while the response of the self depends on assuming. With assuming based on knowing, the conduct of a human being gets definite, otherwise it is indefinite.

Gross Misunderstanding – Assuming Human Being to be only the Body

The gross misunderstanding is assuming the human being to be the Body; and therefore, trying to fulfil all the needs through physical facility. It is needless to say that due to over-use of physical facility, there are widespread repercussions at every level of human existence. On the one hand, there is exploitation of natural resources for more and more physical facility. On the other hand, human beings are exploited in the process and also, they are made to compete for the limited physical facility. The Way Ahead The only way to come out of this misunderstanding is to understand the human being as it is. The Self has to be understood as a conscious entity and Body as a material entity. Their needs are different, activities are different, response is different and basically, they are two different entities co-existing as a human being.

Key Takeaways

The needs of the Self and the Body are of two different types, so they have to be fulfilled separately. A gross misunderstanding is to assume the two to be the same, and this leads to the feeling of deprivation and exploitation.