CHAPTER-VII

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The field of ethics, also called moral philosophy, involves systematizing, defending and recommending concepts of right and wrong behaviour. Philosophers today usually divide ethical theories into three general subject areas:

- **Meta ethics**
- **Normative ethics**
- **Applied ethics**

**Meta ethics** investigates where our ethical principles come from and what they mean. Are they merely social inventions? Do they involve more than expressions of our individual emotions?

**Meta ethical** answers to these questions focus on the issues of universal truths, the will of God, the role of reason in ethical judgements and the meaning of ethical terms themselves.

**Normative ethics** takes on a more practical task, which is to arrive at moral standards that regulate right and wrong conduct. This may involve articulating the good habits that we should acquire, the duties that we should follow, or the consequences of our behaviour on others.

Finally **applied ethics** involves examining specific controversial issues, such as abortion, infanticide, animal rights, environmental concerns, homosexuality, capital punishment, or nuclear war.
Ethics forms the steel-frame foundation of the spiritual life

Ethics, which concerns itself with the study of conduct, is derived, in Hinduism, from certain spiritual concepts; it forms the steel frame foundations of the spiritual life. Though right conduct is generally considered to belong to legalistic ethics, it has a spiritual value as well. Hindu ethics differs from modern scientific ethics, which is largely influenced by biology; for according to this latter, whatever is conducive to the continuous survival of a particular individual or species is good for it. It also differs from utilitarian ethics, whose purpose is to secure the maximum utility for a society by eliminating friction and guaranteeing for its members a harmonious existence. Hindu ethics prescribes the disciplines for a spiritual life, which are to be observed consciously or unconsciously as long as man lives.

Hindu Ethics is Mainly Subjective or Personal

Hindu ethics is mainly subjective or personal, its purpose being to eliminate such mental impurities as greed and egoism, for the ultimate attainment of the highest good. Objective ethics, which deals with social welfare, has also been considered by Hindu thinkers. It is based upon the Hindu conception of Dharma, or duty, related to a man's position in society and his stage in life. Objective ethics, according to the Hindu view, is a means of an end, its purpose being to help the members of society to rid themselves of self-centredness, cruelty, greed, and other vices, and thus to create an environment helpful to the pursuit of the highest good, which transcends society. According to Hindu view there are certain universal ethical principles which apply to all human beings irrespective of their position in society or stage in life.
Social Welfare

The ethical doctrines of the Hindus are based upon the teachings of the Upanishads and of certain secondary scriptures which derive their authority from the Vedas. But though their emphasis is mainly subjective, the Upanishads do not deny the value of social ethics. Among the social virtues are included 'hospitality, courtesy, and duties to wife, children, and grandchildren'. In one of the Upanishads, a king, in answer to a question by a Rishi regarding the state of affairs in his country, says: "In my kingdom there is no thief, no miser, no drunkard, no man without an alter in his home, no ignorant person, no adulterer, much less an adultress.

Ethical actions calculated to promote social welfare is enjoyed upon all who are identified with the world and conscious of their social responsibilities. Without ethical restraint there follow social chaos, which is detrimental to the development of spiritual virtues. According to Upanishads, the gods, who are the custodians of society, place obstacles in the path of those who seek liberation from sansara, or the relative world, without previously discharging their social duties. As a person realized the unreality of the world and the psycho-physical entity called the individual, his social duties gradually fall away; but they must not be forcibly given up. If the scab is removed before the wound is healed, a new sore forms. Every normal person endowed with social consciousness has a three fold debt to discharge: his debt to the gods, to the Rishis, and to the ancestors. The debt to the gods, who favour us with rain, sun, wind, the other natural amenities, is paid through worship and prayer. The debt to the Rishis, from whom we inherit our spiritual culture, is paid through regular study of the scriptures. The debt to the ancestors, from whom we have received our physical bodies, is paid through the procreation of children, ensuring the preservation of the line.
With the blessings of the gods, the Rishis, and ancestors, one can cheerfully practice and discipline for the realizations of the highest good, in which all worldly values find fulfillment.

The observance of social ethics, in a large measure, preserved Hindu society when various outside forces threatened to destroy it. The neglect of social ethics, on the other hand, has undermined its vitality.

How, by suitable ethical disciplines, the brutish man may become a decent man, a decent man an aristocrat, and the aristocrat a spiritual person, has been explained by a story in one of the Upanishads.

Once a god, a man, and a demon- the three offspring of the creator- sought his advice for self-improvement. To them the creator said: “Da.” As the syllable ‘Da’ is the first letter of three Sanskrit words, meaning, respectively, self-control, charity and compassion, the creator was in effect asking the god to practise self-control, man to practice charity, and demon to practise compassion.

In human society there exists aristocrats, average men, the demoniacal men. The aristocrat, in spite of his education, refinement, generosity, and gentleness, may lack in self-control and go the excess in certain matters like eating, drinking, or gambling. Hence he needs self-control through the practice of compassion.

The Upanishads say that the Creator, even today, gives the same moral advice to different types of human beings through the voice of the thunderclap, which makes the reverbrating sound ‘Da-da-da’.

The caste system in Hinduism is intimately connected with the social aspect of Hindu ethics, demonstrating the importance of renunciation and self denial as cardinal virtues. The origin of this system is found in the Vedas, though it later underwent much transformation in the hands to the Hindu lawgivers. The Bhagavad
Gita says that the Lord Himself divided human being into four groups, determined by their actions and virtues. Traditions other than Hinduism supports similar divisions.

**Caste System**

According to the Hindu scriptures, a normal society consists of the Brahmins, who are men of knowledge, of society, literature, thought, and learning; the Kshatriyas, who are men of action and valour; the Vaisyas, who are men of desires, possessiveness and acquisitive enterprise; and lastly the Shudras, who are men of little intelligence, who cannot be educated beyond certain low limits, who are incapable of dealings with abstract ideas, and who are fit only for manual labour. Each of them, in the words of Nietzsche, has its own hygiene, its own domain of labour, its own sentiments of perfection, and its own special superiority. In the Vedas the four castes are described as four important parts of the body of the Cosmic person: the head, the arms, the thighs (or the stomach) and the feet. This analogy suggests the interdependence of the four castes for the common welfare of all; it also suggested that the exploitation of one by another undermines the strength of the whole of society. The rules regarding the four castes sum up the experience, sagacity, and experimental morals of long centuries of Hindu thinkers.

The Bhagavad Gita describes the virtues of the four castes, and their duties. The qualities of a Brahmin are control of the mind and sense, austerity, cleanliness, forbearance, uprightness, scholarship, insight and faith. He possesses a minimum of worldly assets, accepts voluntary poverty, and is satisfied with simple living and high thinking. Both a priest and a teacher, he is leader of society and an advisor to king and commoner. A custodian of the culture of the race, he occupies his high position in society by virtue of his spirituality, and not by the power of arms or wealth.
The qualities of a Kshatriya are heroism, high spirit, firmness, resourcefulness, dauntlessness in battle, generosity, and sovereignty.

Agriculture, cattle rearing, and trade are the duties of a Vaisya. The main duty of a Sudra is action entailing physical labour.

The hierarchy in the caste system is determined by the degree of voluntary renunciation, poverty, self-control, and also by the degree of intellectual and spiritual attainments. A Brahmin has to suppress many impulses for physical enjoyment. A Kshatriya, no doubt enjoys power and pleasure, but he is ready at any time to lay down his life for the protection of the country from external aggression or internal chaos. A Vaisya, whose moral code and intellectual attainments are not so rigorous or high as those of the two upper castes, amasses wealth, both for his own enjoyment and for the welfare of society. One does not expect from a Sudra very much of spiritual, intellectual or moral perfection. The higher is one's position in the caste system, the greater is one's obligation to members of the lower castes, and the more stern is the renunciation of personal comforts. The caste system was designed to promote that harmonious working of society, the weak being assured of protection from the strong. It has nothing to do with superiority or inferiority. When a person belonging to a lower caste becomes a saint, he is honored even by the Brahmins. The disciplines for spiritual development are not withheld from anyone.

**The Basis of the caste system**

The Basis of the caste system, according to the Hindu view, is men's self-evident inborn inequality; physical intellectual, and spiritual. An individual is born into a higher or lower caste as a result of actions performed by him in his previous life, and each person, therefore, is himself responsible for his position. By discharging the duties determined by his caste, a man becomes qualified for birth in a
higher caste in a future life. If one does not accept the doctrine of rebirth and the law of karma, then the inequity from which members of lower castes often suffer cannot be explained.

A second element in the organization of the caste system is Varna or colour. Even in the remote past of history, people of different racial marked by different complexions inhabited the Indians subcontinent, which formed the basis of their divisions. In course of time, through trade relations and invasions, the Persians, the Greeks, the Scythians, the Bactrians, the Sakas, the Kushanas, the Huns, and peoples of other races entered India and were gradually absorbed into Hindu society. They were assigned places in the caste system according to their physical or mental aptitudes. In this manner Hindu society solved the problem of alien minorities in its midst. Gradually the contrast between colours was toned down by intermarriages. Through permutations and combinations many subcastes came into existence. A tolerant Hindu society allowed by newcomers to preserve, as far as practicable. This composite Hindu society gradually came into being whose watch words were unity in diversity and friendly coexistence. In olden times inter-dining was permitted, as also intermarriage under certain conditions. Through the caste system, Hindu society entrusted itself to the leadership of spirituality and intellect in preference to that of military power, wealth or labour.

For many centuries the caste system worked in a super manner, creating and consolidating the Indians culture, which reached its height when the Brahmins, Ksyatriyas, Vaisya, and Sudras all dedicated their activities and efforts to the Common welfare. But in this relative universe had a monopoly of the knowledge of the scriptures, which was the source of their power; eventually they become greedy for more and began to exploit the lower castes. They demanded privileges and respect even when they did not possess Brahminical qualities.
Similarly, the Kshatriyas and the Vaisyas exploited the Sudras, who formed the majority of the population. The social laws became rigid, and in the absence of freedom Hindu society stagnated. On account of exploitation, the masses became weak and the country fell an easy prey to powerful invaders from the outside. Islam and Christianity took advantage of the injustices that prevailed in Hindu society and made easy converts, especially among those who were denied social privileges. Hindu society, however, was not completely to blame; for foreign religions also sometimes used force and unethical persuasion for the purpose of conversion.

But individual should not be forgotten that the system, even in its rigid form, rendered good service to Hindu during the days of foreign domination, the Brahmin leaders, by means of ironclad caste laws, prevented Islam and Christianity from completely destroying it. They became the custodians of the Hindu Culture and zealously protected it from the leveling influence of these alien faiths.

The Bhagavad Gita states, in its last verse, that the secret of prosperity, strength, morality, and all round social welfare lies in the harmonious working together of the spiritual and the royal power. Sankaracharya points out that a conflict between the Brahmins, the creators of the spiritual culture, and the Kshatriyas, the protectors of that culture, causes the disintegration of society. If India gives up the caste system in principle and in practice, she will surely lose her spiritual backbone. There is, however, no room for the caste system in an industrialized society, which is controlled largely by the power of wealth and labour. It is the goal of secular classless society to create an equality at the level of the Sudras, whereas Indian society, through the caste system, has aimed at creating an equality by raising all to the level of the Brahmin.
Even at its best, however, the caste system is a human institution, and one cannot expect perfection of it. The good and evil of the rule of society by the four castes have been brilliantly pointed out by Swami Vivekananda in a letter to an American friend written during the last decade of the nineteenth century. The Swami says:

"Human society is, in turn, governed by the four castes - the priests, the soldiers, the traders, and the labourers. Each state has its glories as well as defects. When the priest (Brahmin) rules, there is tremendous exclusiveness on hereditary grounds - none but they have any knowledge. Its glory is that at this period is laid the foundation of the sciences. The priests cultivate the mind, for through the mind they govern.

The military rule individual tyrannical and cruel; but they are not exclusive and during that period the arts and social culture attain their height. The commercial (Vaisya) rule comes next. It is awful in its silent crusting and blood-sucking power. Its advantage is that, as the trader himself goes everywhere, he is a good disseminator of the ideas collected during the two previous states. They are still less exclusive than the military, but culture begins to decay.

Last will come the labour (Sudra) rule. Its advantages will be the distribution of physical comforts - Its disadvantages (perhaps) may be the lowering of culture. There will be a great distribution of ordinary education, but extraordinary geniuses will be less and less. If it is possible to form a state in which the knowledge of the priest period, the culture of the military, the distributive spirit of the commercial and the ideal of the equality of the last can all be kept intact, minus their evils, it will be an ideal state. But is it possible?

Yet, the first three have had their day, now is the time for the last - they must have it - none can resist it....... The other systems have
been tried and found wanting. Let this one be tried- if for nothing else, for the novelty of the thing. A redistribution of pain and pleasure is better than always the same persons having pains and pleasures. The sum total of good and evil in the world remains ever the same. The Yoke will be lifted from shoulder to shoulder by new systems, that is all.

Let every dog has his day in this miserable world, so that after his experience of so-called happiness they may all come to the lord and give up this vanity of a world and all other botheration."

Outside the pale of society are the untouchables, whose contact pollutes others. Who are these untouchables? Originally they were the aborigines, with a very low mental development, who ate unclean food, lived by hunting, and were uncouth in appearance, manner and conduct. The Aryans, proud of their spiritual culture, shrank from them. But instead of annihilating them outright, or forcibly superimposing upon them their own higher culture, the Aryans sought to assimilate them through education. The Ramayana and the Mahabharata record that many of these aborigines established intimate friendship with the Hindus of the higher castes. During the foreign rule of India, when the very existence of Hinduism was threatened, society became conservative and the process of assimilation practically stopped. Now that the danger is over, laws have been passed abolishing untouchability. Economic and political positions, educational facilities, and temple entry for the purpose of worship are open to all. Even in the past many Hindu religious leaders have protested against untouchability and regarded it as a blot upon society.

**The Four Stages of Life**

Apart from caste a person's duties, in the Hindu tradition, are determined by the stage of life to which he belongs. Life, which is
regarded by Hinduism as a journey to the shrine of truth, is marked by four stages, each of which has its responsibilities and obligations. In that journey a normal person should leave no legitimate aspiration unfulfilled; Otherwise physical and mental sickness will follow, putting roadblocks in the way of his further spiritual progress.

The first stage of life covers the period of study, when a student cultivates his mind and prepares himself for future service to society. He lives with his teacher in a forest retreat and regards the latter as his spiritual father. He leads an austere life and conserves his energy, spurning the defilement of the body and mind through evil words, thoughts or deeds. He shows respect to his elders and teachers, and becomes acquainted with the cultural achievement of the race. Students, rich and poor, live under the same roof and received the same attention from the teacher and his wife. When the studies are completed, the teacher gives the pupil the following instruction, as described in one of the Upanishads:

“Speak the truth. Practise Dharma. Do not neglect the study (of the Vedas). Having brought to the teacher the gift desire by him, (enter the house holder’s life and see that )the line of progeny is not cut off. Do not swerve from the truth.

Do not swerve from Dharma. Do not neglect personal welfare. Do not neglect prosperity. Do not neglect the study and teaching of the Vedas. Do not neglect your duties to the gods. Treat your mother as God. Treat your father as God. Treat your teacher as God. Treat your guest as God. Whatever deeds are faultless, these are to be preformed-not others. What ever good words have been performed by us, those should be performed by you- not others. Those Brahmins who are superior to us- you should comfort them by giving them seats. Now, if there arises in your mind any doubt concerning any act, or may doubt concerning conduct, you should conduct yourself in such matters as
Brahmins would conduct themselves—Brahmins who are competent to judge, who (of their own accord) are devoted (to good deeds) and are not urged (to their performance) by others, and who are not too severe, but this is the rule. This is the teaching. This is the secret wisdom of the Vedas. This is the Command (of God). This you should observe. This alone should be observed.”

With marriage, a person enters the second stage. A normal person requires a mate; his biological and emotional urges in this respect are legitimate. Debarred from marriage are those alone who have a dangerous ailment that may be transmitted to children, or those rare souls who as students, forsake the world at the call of the spirit. Neither a confession of a sin nor a concession to weakness, marriage is a discipline for participation in the larger life of society. Hinduism does not regard romance as the whole of the married life. Husband and wife are co-partners in their spiritual progress, and the family provides a training ground for the practice of unselfishness. A healthy householder is the foundation of a good society, discharging his duties as a teacher, a soldier, a statesman, a merchant, a scientist, or a manual worker. He should be ambitious to acquire wealth and enjoy pleasures, but not by deviating from the path of righteousness. The following are the five great duties of a householder; the study and teaching of the Vedas; daily worship of the gods through appropriate rituals; gratification of the departed ancestors by offering their spirits food and drink according to the scriptural injunctions; kindness to domestic animals; and hospitality to guests, the homeless, and the destitute.

When the skin wrinkles, the hairs turn grey, a grandchild is born, one is ready for the third stage of life in the forest or in a quiet place. At this stage, the pleasure and excitements of youth appear stale.
and physical needs are reduced to a minimum. The third period of life is devoted to scriptural study and meditation on God.

During the fourth stage, a man renounces the world and embraces the monastic life. He is no longer bound by social laws. The call of the infinite becomes irresistible to him; even charity and social service appear inadequate. He rises above worldly attachments, finite obligations, and restricted loyalties, he is a friend of his fellow human beings, of the gods, and of the animals. No longer tempted by riches, or power, a monk preserves equanimity of spirit under all conditions. He turns away from a vanities of the world, devoting himself to the cultivation of God-consciousness, which is a man’s true friend both here and hereafter. During the fourth stage a disciplined life attains to its full blossoming. Well has it been said: ‘when a man is born he cries and the world laughs; but let him lead a life that he dies, he laughs and the world cries.’

Thus, it will be seen that every stage of life, as described in the Vedas, has its duties and obligations, the right discharge of which requires self-control. Through the disciplines of the four stages of life, a Hindu learns progressive non-attachment to the transitory world. The movement of life has been aptly compared to that of the sun. At dawn the sun rises from below the horizon, and as the morning progresses it goes on radiating heat and light till it reaches the Zenith at midday. During the afternoon it goes down, gradually withdrawing its heat and light, and at dusk, it sinks below the horizon, a mass of radiance to illumine other regions.

The Key to the individual and social ethics of Hinduism is the conception of Dharama, whose full implications cannot be conveyed by such English words as religion, duty or righteousness. Derived from as root, which means to support, the world signifies the law of inner growth by which a person is supported in his present evolution and is
shown the way to future development. A person’s Dharama is not imposed by society or decreed by an arbitrary god, but is something with which he is born as a result of his actions in previous lives. Dharma determines a man proper attitude towards the outer world and governs his mental and physical reactions in a given situation. It is his code of honour.

Hinduism emphasizes the relative nature of Dharma, and does not recognize absolute good or evil; evil may be described as what is less good. One can not stipulate what is absolutely good or evil for all men at all time. The attempts to do so, and to judge all people by a single concept of Dharma or impose upon all a single idea of righteousness, has been the cause of much injustice to humanity. If one wants to give a comprehensive definition of good and evil, one may say that what helps men toward the realizations of God or the Unity of existence is good, and its reverse is evil. But one faces difficulties when one tries to work out practical details. A soldier unsheathes his sword to vindicate injunction of non- killing can not, therefore, have a universal application, at least at the present state of human evolution. A man must give up his imperfect Dharma, determined by his inborn nature; all actions have elements of imperfection in them. He however perfect the latter may be. By performing his duties in spirit of worship without seeking any personal result, a man ultimately realizes God, in whom alone all duties and values of life find fulfillment. The Mahabharata narrates the stories of a house wife and an untouchable butcher who, by following their respective Dharma, realized the highest truth and become teachers of the knowledge of Brahman.

Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksha

The affirmative attitude of Hinduism toward life has been emphasized by its recognition of four legitimate and basic desires: Dharma or righteousness, Artha or wealth, Kama or sense pleasure,
and Moksha or freedom through communion with God or the infinite. Of these, three belong to the realm of worldly values; the fourth (Moksha) is called the supreme value. The fulfillment of the first three paves the way for Moksha. Enjoyment, if properly guided, can be transformed into spiritual experience. The suppression of legitimate desires often leads to an unhealthy state of body and mind, and delays the attainment of liberation.

Dharma, or righteousness, we have already seen, to be the basis of both individual progress and social welfare. Artha, or wealth is legitimate; money is indispensable in the present state of society. Voluntary poverty, as practiced by religious mendicants, is something quite different; pious householders provided for the monk’s few necessities in recognition of their efforts to keep alive the highest spiritual ideal. But a man of the world without money is a failure; he can not keep body and soul together. According to an injunction of Hinduism, first comes the body and next the practice of religion. Furthermore, money is needed to build hospitals, schools, museums, and educational institutions, which distinguish a civilized from a primitive society. Money gives leisure, which is an important factor in the creation of culture. But money must be earned according to Dharma; otherwise it debases a man by making him greedy and cruel.

The object of the third legitimate desire is Kama, or the enjoyment of sense pleasure. This covers a vast area— from the enjoyment of conjugal love, without which the creation cannot be maintained, to the appreciation of art, music, or poetry. Life becomes drab and grey unless one cultivates aesthetic sensitivity. But sense pleasure, if not pursued according to Dharma, degenerate into sensuality. Wealth and sense pleasures, which are only means to an end, are valuable in so far as their enjoyment creates a genuine
yearning for spiritual freedom in the mind of the enjoyer. The hedonists alone regard sense pleasure as an end in itself.

The Charvaka school of thinkers, out and out materialists, rejects, righteousness and spiritual freedom and admits only two values, namely, those related to wealth and sense pleasure. The Upanishads make a sharp distinction between the ideal of the pleasant and of the good, and declares that the former, created by ignorance, ultimately brings about suffering and misery. Even Dharma, or duty, for its own sake, is regarded as empty and dry Hindu philosophers. It is a worthy end in so far as it helps the soul to attain its spiritual goal. But the illumined person serves the world not from a sense of duty, but because of his overflowing love of all the created beings.

The fourth legitimate desire, equally irresistible, is related to Moksha, or freedom from the love and attachment prompted by the finite view of life. Man, who in essence is spirit, cannot be permanently satisfied with worldly experiences. The enjoyment of desires cannot be satisfied by enjoyment, any more than fire can be quenched by pouring butter into it; the more they are fulfilled, the more they flare up. Nor can man attain his divine stature through correct social behaviour, economic security, political success, or artistic creation. Charity for the needy may be a corrective for selfishness, but cannot be the ultimate goal of his soul's craving. Even patriotism is not enough: as history shows, undue emphasis on patriotism was a major cause of the downfall of the Greek city-states. After fulfilling all his worldly desires and responsibilities a man still wants to know how he can suppress his inner restlessness and attain peace. So at last he gives up attachment to the world and seeks freedom through the knowledge of the spirit.
**Personal Ethics over Social Ethics**

A few words may be said that to explain why Hindu philosophers emphasized personal ethics over social ethics. Their argument was that since society consisted of individuals, if individuals were virtuous, social welfare would follow a matter of course. Second, the general moral tone was very high in the ancient Hindu society, where everybody was expected to do his appropriate duties, which included, among other things, rendering help to one's less fortunate fellow beings.

We must do good to others, because by means of selfless action we can purify our hearts and transcend the relative world of good and evil. Social service has only an instrumental, not an ultimate, value. Need for emphasis on social ethics in modern India cannot be denied. For times have changed; the conception of Dharma, which was the foundation of Hindu life, both individual and social has greatly lost its hold upon the people. The struggle for existence in an increasingly competitive society has become keen, and wealth is not justly distributed. The strong often invoke the law of karma to justify their exploitation of the poor, who are helpless in their suffering. There exists in India's widespread misery due to ignorance, poverty, ill health, and general backwardness. The rich and the powerful are often too selfish to remove these drawbacks. Hinduism in the past has no doubt produced many saints; but the precious gems of their spiritual realizations have been preserved in heaps of dirt and filth.

A certain measure of compliance with the general principles of social ethics may well have helped to preserve the Hindu social system from total disintegrating during the dark period of Indian history. But an account of insufficient emphasis on social responsibilities, there is in Hindu society a lack of the vitality characteristic of Western society. Therefore India is now emphasizing the value of social ethics; the
government is trying to create a welfare state. Whatever may be the pattern of development in the new India, she should not forget the ultimate goal of ethics, the liberation of the soul from the bondage of the phenomenal world.

Hindu philosophers encourage the performance of duties, but they exhort men to perform them not from a sense of compulsion but through love. Unless a man is inspired by love, he cannot cheerfully perform his duty at home, in the office, in the factory, or on the battlefield. This love is not, however, sentimentality, but springs from the perception of God in all living beings. Work done under the impulsion of duty deepens a man’s attachment to the world, but when performed through love it brings him nearer to freedom.

The healthy social environment created by objective ethics provides men with an opportunity to culture the more important subjective ethics. The discipline of subjective ethics for the liberation of the soul have been stressed in the Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads. The Gita says: ‘Let a man lift himself as his enemy. To him who has conquered himself by himself, his own self is a friend, but to him who has not conquered himself, his own self is hostile like a external enemy.

**Discipline of Subjective Ethics**

The chief discipline of subjective ethics are austerity, self-control, renunciation, non-attachment, and concentration. Austerity enables a man to curb his impulses for inordinate enjoyment of physical comforts and also for the acquisition of supernatural powers, which exalt him far above the world of man, nay, even above the world of the gods. But later austerity degenerated into bodily torture as practice by spurious Yogis with a view to performing for selfish purpose, thus depriving this noble virtue of its original significance.
Let us try to understand the meaning of self-control. The sense organs, which are ordinarily included toward material objects and employed to seek only the pleasant should be controlled in order to create that inner calmness without which profound spiritual truths cannot be grasped. But self-control does not mean the weakening of the organs, as is explained in the Katha Upanishad by the illustration of the chariot. The body is compared to the chariot, the embodied soul to its master, the intellect or discriminative faculty to the driver, the mind to the reins, the senses to the horses, the sense-objects to the roads. The Chariot can serve its purpose of taking the master to his destination if it is well built, but if the driver can discriminate between the right and the wrong road, if the reins are strong, if the horses are firmly controlled, and if the roads are well chosen.

Likewise, the spiritual seeker should possess a healthy body and vigorous organs, unerring discrimination, and a strong mind. His discrimination should guide his senses to choose only those objects, which are helpful to the realization of his spiritual ideal. If the body, the mind, or any of his faculties is injured or weakened, he cannot attain the goal, just as the rider can not reach his destination if the chariot and its accessories are not in the right condition. Thus the two important elements emphasized in the practice of self-control are discrimination and will power.

Renunciation is another discipline for self-perfection. A good example of it is seen in the institution of monasticism. A monk takes the vow of renouncing enjoyments in the 'three worlds'- earth, the mind-region, and heaven. The four stages of life, already described, are a training ground for this important discipline. Non attachment and concentration are the other disciplines for self-perfection.
Ethics is principally concerned with conduct, which is in turn guided by will, pious or impious

The impious will leads to unrighteous conduct and produces evil, whereas the pious will leads to righteous conduct and is conducive to the highest good. With the help of ethical disciplines one suppresses unrighteousness and stimulates righteousness.

Unrighteousness may be physical, verbal, or mental. Physical unrighteousness is expressed through cruelty, theft, and sexual perversion; verbal unrighteousness through falsehood, rudeness, insinuation, and gossip; mental unrighteousness through ill will, covetousness, and irreverence.

Righteousness is also three fold: physical, verbal and mental. Physical righteousness is expressed through charity, succour to the distressed, and service to all; verbal righteousness through gentle speech conducive to the welfare of others; and mental righteousness through kindness, detachment, and reverence. Righteousness and unrighteousness cover both personal and social duties. Broadly speaking, virtue is defined as what is conducive to the welfare of others, and vice as what causes them pain and misery.

Patanjali, in his Yoga philosophy, enumerates the important virtues as follows: non-injury, truthfulness, abstinence from theft, chastity, and non attachment to material objects. Non injury and truthfulness are sovereign virtues emphasized by all religious Hindu’s from the Vedic Rishis to Mahatma Gandhi. The practice of non injury also includes gentleness and abstention from harsh words. Mahatma Gandhi applied non injury as a discipline for the individual and for the nation. Chiefly by means of non-violence, India, under his leadership, secured her political freedom from alien rule.
Three Gateways of Hell

According to the Bhagavad Gita, the ‘three gateway of hell’ leading to the ruin of the soul are lust, wrath, and greed, and the five cardinal virtues are purity, self-control, detachment, truth, and non-violence. Called universal virtues, they admit of no exceptions arising from caste, profession, place, or occasion. They are compulsory for all spiritual seekers aspiring after freedom, and they differ from ordinary moral standards, by which one treats differently men and animals, one’s fellow countrymen and foreigners, relatives and strangers.

Jainism, which is an offshoot of Hinduism, speaks of an action as immoral if it is impelled by the impious thought of the agent, and moral if there is pious thought behind it. Forgiveness is regarded as the highest virtue. Jain ethics aims more at self-culture than a social service, though in actual practice the Jains of India are most forward in alleviating miseries, especially those of dumb animals and insects.

Buddhist philosophers hold that it is not words or tangible actions alone that are moral or immoral, but also the disposition of the mind. Thus unrighteousness begins to accumulate from the day when a man resolves to earn his living by plundering and killing others, though the resolution itself may remain unfulfilled for a long time. Likewise, a man begins to accumulate virtue from the day he makes a pious resolution, even though the conscious action may take place much later. Furthermore, Buddhism admits of institutional morality; the founder of an alms-house engages in a meritorious action, whereas the founder of temple where animals are slaughtered is guilty of an immoral act. Greek ethics stresses the social virtues, the two most prominent ones being justice and friendship. Of these, the former, emphasizes proper respect for the rights of others, and the latter is a social quality.
The struggle against evil can not be won on the moral level; for morality cannot redeem the sinner

The woman taken in adultery, as described in the Bible, was condemned by her judges according to the moral laws of the time, but could not be redeemed by them. The redemption came upon a spiritual man, der reine Tor, who had transcended moral judges, themselves still struggling against evil, enable the woman to rid herself of her Sin? One is redeemed through love and grace, which belong to the realm of spirit. Dirt cannot be completely washed away by water which is less dirty, but only by water which has no trace of dirt.

Hindu philosophers have suggested the means of enjoying spiritual freedom even while engaging in the performance of action. Both optional duties, through which the agent seeks particular ends, and obligatory duties, which ought to be done by all spiritual seekers endowed with social consciousness, should be performed according to the moral laws. But the actions of the enlightened, performed in a spirit of love and non attachment, can not bind the doer; the secret of freedom is non attachment. This non-attachment is not a negative attitude; it is not indifference. On the contrary, it denotes a superior power of the mind. Which enables one to preserve inner peace and equanimity in success and failure. The practice of non attachment by both the dualist and the non-dualist, relate to Karma Yoga.

Both enlightened dualists and non-dualists, free from ego, transcend the moral ought. In their activity they are not impelled by the compulsion of duty, but by love. Actions flows spontaneously from the fullness of their hearts. To them the ideas of work with the purpose of improving the world is meaningless. Devotees of God see the world as God's everywhere and in everything only the spirit, ever perfect, ever free, and ever illumined. The world process is the spontaneous manifestation of the spirit, as the wavers are of the ocean, there being
neither rhyme nor reason behind the cosmic activity. To project, support, and dissolve names and forms is the very nature of Brahma, say the Upanishads. Only the ignorant read a motive into the creation. Their little brains fool them all the time.

Work of lasting benefit of humanity has been done by blessed souls like Christ and Buddha, Who were free from ego and moral struggle, and inspired by selfless love for all. On the other hand, the work done by many social reformers or philanthropists has a limited value. It is said that nowadays men become philanthropists only after making their first million; even in a noble act of charity there is a conscious or unconscious desire for fame, power or recognition. Too often a philanthropist is trying to soothe a guilty conscience or escape the boredom of life. And how different modern charity is from the charity of St. Francis, inspired by his love, humility, chastity, poverty, and complete self-denial. Only and illumined person, whose ego has either been burnt in the fire of self-knowledge or totally transformed by love of God, has no trace of selfish motive. Sankaracharya says that a man should first of all see God in himself, and then serve therefore fore fruitful action. His moral struggles are over. He is no longer deceived by the notion of good and evil. He does not refrain from evil from fear of punishment or engage in good works from hope of reward; moral virtues become his natural attributes, the by products of his spiritual freedom. In the words of the Upanishad: 'Evil does not overtake him, but he transcends evil. He becomes sinless, taintless, free from doubts, and a knower of truth'.

**Learning Environment**

The personal life of the teacher influences the spread of education and the process of learning by the young ones. Imparting knowledge in India in the earlier times has been through men of renunciation. Even in the present times this basic task has to be
handled by only those who have a genuine appreciation of renunciation, dedication, sense of commitment and preparedness for a value based life. Love, affection, empathy, the feeling of appreciation and respect on the part of the teacher could create a respect on the part of the learner would generate a true learning environment, essential for developing a learning society.

Swami Vivekanand wanted teachers to know the spirit of scriptures like Bible, Vedas, Koran and Granth Sahib. In his words, it is knowledge of spirit of scriptures alone that constitute the true teachers. A pure heart and selfless motive characterized the true teacher. The system of education must provide learning candidates in which the teacher’s mind is not restless. Only then the real knowledge can be assimilated and the learners become capable of appreciating and understanding the essence of higher human pursuits. Human life is not meant only for meeting the basic requirements but to achieve higher goals and values. Every individual has to learn to overcome the desire for materialism, egoism, and tendencies to possess as much as possible, education must light the pathway towards knowing the truth and in moving towards spirituality.

The deterioration in the functional environment within schools and institutions of higher learning is a serious national concern. One of the major causes has been the deterioration in the relationship between the teacher and the taught. The bonds of affection and empathy between the teachers and the learner either do not exist or to have become just peripheral. The system provides only for transaction of the prescribed curricular content aiming at the percentage of marks at the year end examination.

According to Swami Vivekananda, the basic problems of the nation can be solved by an ideal system of education. According to Swami ji problems can be many “but none that cannot be solved by
that magic word ‘education’.” All knowledge is within the individual, it requires only an awakening, this is where the task of the teacher begins. Swami Vivekananda conceived of an “education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, intellect is expanded, and by which one can stand on one’s own feet.” Swamiji emphasized on the ancient Indian system of education in which there was ample personal contact between the teacher and the taught which is missing in the modern educational system. He was deeply concerned with the masses and believed that the only service to be done to the masses is to give them education. To him, upliftment of masses and women’s education was of the foremost importance. Initiatives are necessary to re-establish the close relationship between the teachers and the learners. This sound mutual relationship would enhance emotional and affective aspects of learner's personality development. The entire world has now realized the significance of science of Yoga which has enormous potentialities to develop human personality. The realities of physical world, mental world and spiritual world are in fact to be seen only comprehensively.

**The Psychology of Education**

The mind is the fundamental substance which does the entire function in the learning process. That which helps the mind to do this function is concentration. The more the power of concentration, the greater the knowledge that is acquired. “The very essence of education is concentration of mind”. From the lowest man to the highest Yogi, all have to use the same method to attain knowledge. All success in any line of work is the result of concentration.

An animal has very little power of concentration. So the main difference between man and animal is in their power of concentration. This difference in the degree of concentration is also found between man and man. The Vedanta says that within man is all knowledge,
even in a child it is so and it requires only an awakening and that is the work of the teacher. "The explanation of every thing is after all in yourself".

Vivekananda believes that each race in the world has a peculiar bent, a peculiar mission to fulfill in this life. Similarly each individual has his own peculiarities, being a product of heredity and environment. “An individual’s life is marked out for him by the infinite past life, by all his past karma”.

The whole gist of this teaching is that one should work like a master and not as a slave, work incessantly, but do not do slave’s work. Don’t you see how everybody works? Nobody can be altogether at rest, ninety nine percent of mankind work like slaves, and the result is misery, it is all selfish work. Work through freedom. Work through love. The word “love” is very difficult to understand, love never comes until there is freedom. There is no true to love possible in the slave. If you have a slave and tie him down in chains and make him work for you, he will work like a dredge, but there will be no love in him. So when we ourselves work for the things of the world as slaves, there can be no love in us, and our work is not true work. This is true of work done by relatives and friends, and is true of work done for our own selves. Selfish work is slave's work, and here is a test. Every act of love brings happiness, there is no act of love which does not bring peace and blessedness as its reaction.

The man who works through freedom and love cares nothing for results. But the slave wants his whipping, the servant wants his pay. So with all life, take for instance the public life, the public speaker wants a little applause or a little hissing and hooting. It you keep him in a corner without it, You kill him, for he requires it. This is working through slavery. To expect something in return, under such conditions, becomes second nature. Next comes the work of the servant who
requires some pay, I give this and you give me that. Nothing is easier to say, “I work for work’s sake,” but nothing is so difficult to attain.

The weak has no place here, in this life or in any other life. Weakness, leads to slavery. Weakness leads to all kinds of misery, physical and mental. Weakness is death. There are hundreds and thousands of microbes surrounding us, but they cannot harm us unless we become weak, until the body is ready and predisposed to receive them. These may be a million microbes of misery, floating about us. Never mind! They dare not approach us, they have no power to get a hold on us, until the mind is weakened. This is the great fact, strength is life, weakness is death. Strength is felicity, life eternal, immortal, weakness is constant strain and misery, weakness is death. The lesson for all life is to face the terrible odds, to face all hardships boldly. If we are ever to gain freedom, it must be by conquering value, never by running away. Cowards never win victories. We have to fight fear and troubles and ignorance if we expect freedom.

Be strong, that is Swami Vivekananda’s advice to the younger generation. You will be nearer to heaven through football than through the study of the Gita. These are bold words, but Swami Vivekananda says, “I have to say them, for I love you”. Swami Vivekananda says, “You will understand the Gita better with your biceps, your muscles, a little stronger”. “You will understand the mighty genius and the mighty strength of Krishna better with a little of strong blood in your veins, you will understand the Upanishads better and the glory of the Atman when your body stands firm upon your feet, and you feel yourselves as men”.

Do not talk of the wickedness of the world and all the sins. Know the truth and practice the truth. The goal may be distant, but awake, arise and stop not till the goal is reached.
Weak men, when they lose every thing and feel themselves weak, they employ all sorts of uncanny methods of making money, and come to astrology and all these things. It is the coward and the fool who says, “This is fate” — so says the Sanskrit proverb. But it is the strong man who stands up and says, “I will make my fate”. It is people who are getting old who talk of fate. Young men generally do not come to astrology. We may be under planetary influence, but it should not matter much to us.

Swami Vivekananda says, “This I lay down as the first essential in all I teach: anything that brings spiritual, mental or physical weakness, touch it not with the toes of your feet”. Religion is the manifestation of the natural strength that is in man. A spring of infinite power is called up and is inside this little body, and that spring is spreading itself and as it goes on spreading, body after body is found insufficient, it throws them off and takes higher bodies. This is the history of man, of religion, civilization or progress. That giant promethers, who is bound, is getting himself unbound. It is always a manifestation of strength, and all these ideas, such as astrology, although there may be a grain of truth in them, should be avoided.

We, the people entered 21st century with more globalization and dissolution of frontiers. The physical frontiers might be existing, but the culture’s economic, business and educational frontiers are dissolving. Natural barriers are no longer insulating a country from rest of the world. In this globalization, there is growing interdependence of Ethics, which are universally acceptable. Of worse, this has been the practice in human society, Since age – old times, as Ethics and value system evolved in human society over millions of years. In ancient times, various societies have adopted various ethical standards, but over time, they converged. To fight against adverse forces of nature, man felt that many society should come together. So new rules were
created to work in groups. These rules are “Ethics”. The Ethics is a question a balancing between conflict in needs and expectations. For society’s orderly growth, it needs control, through ethical behaviors of various people. Ethics include value system and values change from time to time.

With globalization, irrespective of place of cause, irrespective of good or bad, the effects are felt all over. Tsunami is a natural disaster originated in Far East and effected twelve countries. Man made disasters like collapse of Enron, will affect people at far away countries also. These man made disasters can be reduced to a large extent by increasing ethical sensitization of people. Kidder (2005) stated that the most basic and crucial step in making an ethical decision is to recognize that the issue in hand is in fact an ethical issue. Later steps in ethical decision making or involve gathering facts, analyzing dilemmas, building a moral argument, applying resolution principle, etc. He also comments that surpassing number of ethical collapses is directly from a lack of this ethical awareness.

A lack of awareness causes more ethical failings than muddled values and misplaced reasoning combined. Hence, this ethical sensitivity of people, which relates to some one’s awareness that his/her actions can affect welfare of others, is very crucial for the peaceful program of the global society.

**ETHICS OF EDUCATION AS CONCEIVED BY SWAMI VIVEKANANANDA AS CAN BE EMBEDDED IN THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF EDUCATION IN INDIA**

On the basis of Swami Vivekananda’s vision of education, as discussed above, in the succeeding paragraphs efforts have been made to concentrate on the ethics of education as conceived by Swami Vivekananda, which can be embedded in the contemporary education
system and also to attend to those important indicators which will be helpful in rectifying the existing system of education in our country.

**Character building as Aim of education**

Aim of education is to mould the character of pupils and to draw out the best in them. It is an endeavor to develop the latent talents in them. It is advocating the whole person, rather than concentrating on one. Teaching learning is a process in this context. It is a highly moral activity (Ethical) to create a learning environment in which education is just means. It is the transmission of values such as: truthfulness, firmness, patience, kindness, dignity, diligence and other virtues. Indeed, education for life was the objective in the ancient Indian system through ‘Gurukula’.

Education is training for the completeness of life. Its aim as the manifestation of the divinity in man touches the highest point of knowledge. Best teaching learning process was in existence in ancient India. Education was an intimate relationship between the teachers and taught. To begin with oral means was a mode of transmission of ideas and ideals. Subsequently institutional form of imparting learning came into existence. Typically, it was the Gurukula system (where pupil resided in the house and with the family of the teacher). Student had to convince the teacher of his desire, determination and the required intelligence to pursue purpose studies and undergo rigorous tests before he was taken as a student. Students were supposed to live in complete celibacy and in a very austere environment. Objectives of education were to develop his personality, his innate and latent capabilities. The guiding principles of education were Sat, Chit, Ananda, Satyam, Shivam and Sundarm and are the supreme values of ancient indigenous culture.
Education for life should lay the foundation of goodness from the beginning of one's life. Child grows good if it sees good. This leads to the ability to appreciate values in life as it grows. In the ambit of ethics drawn from the Gurukula system, a modern technology taught makes the education more purposeful education for livelihood.

In Gurukula culture, students were advised to behave ethically as this would spiritually elevate them. The students whose acts are in consonance with moral rules attain spiritual perfection. Even if a student wanted to become an asset to the society by mastering the technologies ought to attain spiritual perfection by doing. Thus character and competence shall be the watchwords in the present day's living. Students should be taught and educated about their social responsibilities. Institutions shall have a goal of promoting social and national welfare. Encouragement in the form of practice through case studies is to be ensured at all levels of professional education. When students leave the universities and face life, they ought to be told to remember as a citizen of the country and as a member of the community, that it was their duty to assist in the process of social progress and social development through ethical behaviors.

The role model student should not adopt ego-centered individuality, but replace it by ethic-centred altruistic personality. Every walk of life has its own potential ethical behaviour which should be imbibed in students. The life of Adi Sankara and the objectives of Ramakrishna Mutts established by Swami Vivekananda with special reference to the leadership qualities, shines as inspiration for the present student community regardless of the passage of time and expertise. It is no secret to proclaim that “Learning by Values” in any profession is the order of the day. It is more demanding in Computer and Information Technology areas. According to our traditions ‘service
without sacrifice is a sin'. Such a conviction in the stakeholders provides a moral strength and determination.

Values of life enhance full growth resulting higher knowledge and also the better quality of life. These values cannot be fragmented. Any attempt to separate them from the system or profession or human security can only diminish the purpose of professional education. It is necessary to provide an anchor to the students who are facing uncertainty and loss of faith in the system. Though science and Technology has given enormous power to the students, they are incapable of coping with consequences because personality has not grown commensurately with the developmental demands. In such a situation, life becomes bitter. It is felt that a value system that is integral to India’s ethos with deep roots in the Vedas and the Upanishads can still be a shelter for preserving and enhancing the quality of life. The obligation in Education began around 5000 BC when the Indian priests taught the principles of Vedas other sacred text of Vedic period, to imbibe social responsibility among its followers.

In Gurukula, the concept was taught to make him realize his obligations towards his Mother, Father and Society. They are made to be aware of essential of education viz. Spirituality, which is the foundation of education. Manifestation of the inner strength and co-existence with all living beings; all round development of personality. Attempt must be made to bring awareness amongst the students, the cherished values of life so that they could lead a better life. According to the Upanishad, the essence of good life is- dama, dana, dya (self-control, sacrifice and kindness). It is the duty of the teacher to inculcate these qualities in their students. Religious stories or incidences instill into us a great moral strength which lay down the lines on which we have to conduct ourselves. In this context students should be made to study our ancient scriptures. Values are nothing
but truth, goodness, fairness, restraint, feeling for the fellow men, righteousness, moral integrity, loyalty, sacredness and the sacrifice. For achieving these guidance can come from within and hence the quest for perfection of the student and the system.

According to Swami Vivekananda one of the important aims of education is the physical development. On this he says the body is considered to be the basis for the performance of duties, and therefore this basis must be kept in perfect order through the appropriate exercises, Asans and Pranayam. Swami Vivekananda gives a definite place to Asanas and Pranayams in the life of a student. Swami Vivekananda, has likewise recognized the value of a sound mind in a sound body and has advocated the inclusion of physical exercises, games and athletics in any scheme of education, for the well being of the individual.

Swami Vivekananda has emphasized the ideal in Brahmacharya (celibacy) for the student. In this emphasis he has advocated self control on the part of the student. By self-control he means the mastery not only of the body but also of the mind. He says, "It is owing to want to continence that everything is on the brink of ruin in our country. But observance of very short Brahmacharya all learning can be mastered in a very short time.

Curriculum

Craft work is a value addition to education. The craftsman is the mating place of the nature and man.

Co-operative work or Group Work is quite significant in the nation building process. Also, abstract knowledge is born out of concrete work experience. Thus, concrete productive craftwork or industry is not an obstacle in the search for abstract knowledge. Infact, they are friendly to each other. As such, practical craft work is a
promoter of pure and abstract knowledge. Today's education has no relevance to the local culture and needs. Thus, it is required to have different curriculum in different universities, thereby strengthening people in their locality. Virtue is not learnt by reading alone, it is acquired by doing good deeds. As education is the total experience of individuals, students should be made to associate more and more with the community around so as to enable them to identify themselves with the community at large.

Universities in Ancient India adopted rigorous tests while selecting students. Punishments were also sever. Teachers need to regain their authority as models of character, Institutions should have a goal of promoting social welfare. Admissions must be based on competence and character, Glorification based on patronage shall have no place. Inculcate among students their social responsibility. Introduce curriculum which is need-based according to the circumstances and geographic situations. Vivekananda has advocated fundamental process of reading, writing arithmetic, elementary hygiene, physical education study of scripture, Elements of civics, history, Economics, home science, psychology and Sanskrit by Vivekanand with certain modification by introducing the subject of computer science and commerce and some vocational subjects in order to give our education system a desired direction.

**The Teacher**

According to Swami Vivekananda the conditions necessary for the taught are

- purity
- a real thirst for knowledge
- and perseverance
• Purity in thought, speech and act is absolutely necessary for any one to be religious. No impure soul can be really religious.

As to the thirst for knowledge, it is an old law that we all get whatever we want. None of us can get anything other than what we fix our hearts upon. The students who set out with a spirit of perseverance i.e. a continuous struggle, a constant fight will surely find success and realization at least.

In regard to the teacher, Swami Vivekananda says that it is the knowledge of the spirit of the scriptures alone that constitutes the true religious teacher.

• The second condition necessary in the teacher is sinlessness. We have to look into the character and personality of the teacher as well. In the spiritual science, teacher must have purity of heart and soul and then only the teacher would be able to transmit the values of his world to the taught.

• The third condition is in regard to the motive. The teacher must not teach with any selfish motive for money, name, or fame his work must be simply out of love, out of pure love for mankind at large. The only medium through which spiritual force can be transmitted is love. Any selfish motive, such as the desire for gain or for name, will immediately destroy this conveying medium. God is love, and only he who has known God as love can be a teacher of godliness and God to man.

Swami Vivekananda says that, "He who is learned in the scriptures, sinless, unpolluted by lust, and is the greatest knower of the Brahman is the real teachers".

Thus Vivekanand has pointed out emphatically the need for making certain changes in the teacher education programme in order
to give meaning to our educational system, ideas as given by him need to be incorporated.

**Concentration**

According to Swami Vivekananda, concentration is the essence of all knowledge. Nothing can be done without it. When our mind will be concentrated, trained all will be servants, not our masters. Swami Vivekananda quoted examples of the results of concentration. The Greeks applied this concentration to the external world, and the result was perfection in art, architecture, sculpturing, literature and philosophy. The Hindus concentrated on the internal word, upon the unseen in the self, and developed the science of Yoga. Yoga is controlling the senses, will and mind. The benefit of its study is that we learn to control instead of being controlled. Concentration is restraining the mind into smaller and smaller limits.

**There are eight processes for restraining the mind.**

The first is *yama*, controlling the mind by over avoiding externals. All morality is included in this. Beget no evil. Injure no living creature. If you injure nothing for twelve years, then even lions and tigers will go down before you **Practice truthfulness.** Twelve years of absolute truthfulness in thought, word and deed gives a man what he wills. **Be chaste** in thought, word and action. Chastity is the basis of all religions. Personal purity is imperative. Next is Niyama, **not allowing the mind to wander in any direction.** Then Asana, posture. There are **eighty four postures**; but the best is that most natural to each one, that is which can be kept longest with the greatest ease.

After this comes pranayama, restraint of breath. Then pratyahara, drawing in of the organs from their objects. Then Dharana, concentration. Then Dhyana, contemplation and meditation. This is the
Kernal of the Yoga system, and last Samadhi, super consciousness. The purer the body and mind, the quicker the desired results. One must be perfectly pure. Do not think of evil things such thoughts will surely drag you down.

If you are perfectly pure and practice faithfully, your mind can finally be made a searchlight of infinite power. There is no limit to its scope. But there must be constant practice and non-attachment to the world. When a man reaches the super conscious state, all feeling of body melts away. Then alone does he become free and immortal. To all external appearance, unconsciousness and super consciousness are the same, but they differ as a lump of clay from a lump of gold. The one whose whole soul is given up to God has reached the super conscious plane.

**The Secret of Work**

The Secret of Work is an extract from Swami Vivekananda's Karma Yoga. Here Swami ji dwells upon the idea of non-attachment of action, which is a famous precept from the Bhagavad Gita that unequivocally declares:

कर्मचेताः स्वयमात परांत यथाप्रचते पुरुषस्य ते स न स्वकारणि॥

The meaning of this Sloka is that any work good or bad, done with a selfish desire to gain, something or get something in return, will naturally and necessarily result in the bondage of man’s soul.

The real cause of all miseries or evils of the world is the desire of man for material possessions. And these evils on miseries of the world will be cured or removed only when he changes his character. Ignorance leads to evil and evil to misery. So the solution to the problem is to make men educated and spiritually strong. The
Bhagwad-Gita preaches that we all must work continuously. But the problem is how to keep one's soul free of the bondages sentiments and reactions. The solution provided in the Gita in regard to this painful influence of work is detachment. Now the question is as to what this non-attachment signifies. The first stage is when a man attains total control over his senses. That is how the character of man is formed. The second stage is when he aspires for full freedom - freedom from the slavery of good and evil. "Attached", becomes “Unattached” only when both the tendencies- the good and the bad tendencies- are removed. One must work continuously but the result should not be allowed to affect one’s mind, should not be allowed to leave deep impressions on the mind and when a man remains unperturbed, unmoved, untouched either by good or bad result of work, then comes the stage of non-attachment.

Now, the next problem is as to how to achieve this stage of non-attachment. Solution suggested here is that one must work without binding oneself as this world is only a temporary stay of man. One must work here like a master and not as a slave.

He must work with full freedom inspired by love because only an act of love bring true happiness and real love makes one untouched. Love means freedom and not bondage. Work is duty, so one must work, incessantly, but work without expecting anything in return. Remaining always on the giving end but expecting nothing in return helps one achieve non-attachment. Attachment is the natural result of expecting something in return and non-attachment is the natural and necessary result of working like masters inspired by love. Expecting anything in return hinders or obstructs one’s spiritual progress and finally brings misery. If one look upon work as worship, self less and mercy naturally follow the work. A selfless and unattached man can remain unaffected and untouched by sin while living among the crowds.
Conditions Necessary for becoming a Disciple

According to Swami Vivekanand, it is not easy to become a disciple. For this purity, a real thirst for knowledge, perseverance, purity in thought, speech and act are absolutely necessary.

Swami Vivekananda recalls an old proverb of India with regard to these subjects of discipleship “There are hundreds and thousands of teachers but it is hard to find one disciple”. It seems true. The one important thing is the attitude of the pupil. When the right attitude is there, illumination comes easily.

According to Swami Vivekananda, to become a true disciple four principal conditions are laid down by the Vedantists, which are as fellows:

1. The first condition is that the student who wants to know the truth must give up all desires for gain in this world or in the life to come. The disciple seeks to know the truth and truth alone and does not want the sense life in any form.

2. The second condition is that the disciple must be able to control the internal and the external senses and must be established in several other spiritual virtues.

3. The external senses are the visible organs situated in different parts of the body. We have the external eyes, ears, nose and so on. The internal senses are intangible. We are continually at the beck and call of both these groups of senses.

All these senses, external and internal must be under the disciple’s control. The mind must be made to quiet down. Swami Vivekananda says no spiritual knowledge is possible so long as the mind is restless and out of control. The disciple has to learn to control the mind. The disciple must have great power of endurance.
Swami Vivekananda says mind should not lose its balance. It should bear all evil and misery without any thought of unhappiness and resistance. Swami Vivekananda quotes the example of Jesus Christ for his endurance.

4. Swami Vivekananda says that a true disciple must forget that he/she is body or mind, is in pain or pleasure, has name or fame but is the pure spirit. Swami says that a true disciple is one who has faith in the Guru (teacher). A disciple must worship the Guru as God.

**Discipline**

Swami Vivekananda pleaded for the ancient system of self-imposed discipline in place of the discipline imposed from without, because he was quite conscious of the evils of the authoritarian types of discipline as generally prevalent in the modern schools. The teacher should be competent enough to command respect by his very reverent personality, which is an embodiment of all virtues, and the pupil should lead moral and chaste life so that he may develop a sense of self-discipline from within. This is what he calls idealistic method of maintaining discipline.

**The Yoga Way in Education**

The Science of Yoga claims that it has discovered the laws with which man can very easily strengthen his powers of concentration and meditation. To Vivekananda this is one of the great practical things and this is the secret of all education. In the Yoga system, there are impersonal principles that one can practice and find full expansion of his inherent powers. Proper food, exercise, sleep and wakefulness we require for keeping the mind steady, in its pursuit of knowledge. The Yoga way is to keep the body and mind pure and strong for self-development as well as total-fulfillment. The teacher should make a
careful study of the nature of the trainee and show him the path which suits him the best.

The practice of yoga requires a high degree of concentration. In fact, all success in any type of work is the result of concentration. As soon as a person tries to concentrate on a particular object of knowledge, thousands of undesired impulses may rush into the brain and consequently disturb the mind. "How to check these impulses and bring the mind under control is the whole subject of study in "Raja-Yoga". The Physical body is the gross part of the mind and so in the training of the mind it is easier to reach it through the body. Swamiji is fully convinced that the Yoga-way will help the student to develop his innate qualities like fearlessness, love, sympathy etc, and equip him to lead an ideal life. It always brings about culture of the human heart. Thus while framing curriculum the advice of Swami ji can be incorporated which will help the new generation to become fearless, have a tension free life and to acquire a high degree of concentration.

Women Education

Swami Vivekanand has spoken emphatically for the liberation of women in India by giving them the right type of education and by granting them equal status before men.

A country's greatness is usually judged by the way in which it shows respect towards her women. Education alone can solve many and varied problems of women. To Vivekananda, "Women must be put in a position to solve their own problems in their own way and Indian women are as capable of doing it as any in the world."

India requires great and fearless women to continue the traditions of Ahalya Bai and Mira Bai – women fit to be mothers of heroes bound by the principles of chastity and purity. Education of
women should be spread with religion as its centre. It may go a long way in the formation of character and observance of celibacy.

The ideal of a perfect woman is to be found in Sita, in the great epic Ramayana, and every Indian woman should try to attain that greatness and strength. In the Vedic period also there were similar examples like Maitryi and Gargi who had taken the place of Rishis through their wonderful eruditions in philosophy.

The first things, required is to intensily this ideal of womanhood in the Indian women so that they may feel the necessity of coming up along with men. Along with that they should be taught the sciences and other things which would be of real use to them.

Considering the needs of his age, Vivekananda felt it imperative to train some women in the ideals of renunciation in order that they may work as Brahmacharinis for women’s welfare and progress. The main task of India is to impart education to both men and women alike. In the education of women can be included subjects like Religion, Arts, Science, Home-Management, Cooking, Sewing and Hygiene.

For this, the trained Brahmacharinis should go to the villages and towns, open centres i.e. Mahila Mandals and do hard work. Along with other things, Japa, worship and meditation shall form an indispensable part of teaching.

Vivekananda hopes that the women who get themselves trained in these centres will make further progress in the virtues that distinguish them from the rest. The children of such mothers will prove themselves to be worthy citizens of India. “It is only in the hands of educated and pious mothers that great men are born.” The ideal woman in India is the mother, the mother first and the mother last. From this motherhood comes tremendous responsibility of women. The mother is the ideal of love. She rules the family, she possesses the
family, “to the ordinary man in India, the whole force of womanhood is concentrated in motherhood.”

No woman should any longer remain content in an inferior position. In most of the Western countries women have gained considerable importance in their race for equality with men. But blind imitation of the West cannot be equated with the social progress of India. In the West the spiritual aim of human life is not uppermost as it is in India. It is the spiritual ideal of Sita that Indian women have been following through the ages. Faith in God, self-abnegation and service have marked their character, and charity has been the guiding motive of their life.

Role of Women According to Swami Vivekananda

Swami Vivekananda says, “The women of India must grow and develop in the footprints of Sita, any attempt to modernize our women, to take our women apart from that ideal of Sita, is immediately a failure, as we see everyday.” Thus he tells the direction in which the women in India must move.

The Indian women are at crossroads. Are they to grow and develop in the footprints of Sita or to follow the footsteps of the brave Valentine? Are they to follow the western ideals or the ideals of the Orient? By way of answering these perplexing questions we have to consider the ideals of the women of ancient India in the light of the ideals of the present day Indian women and to fix the ideals for the future women.

We have a list of women whom we really admire who are women who have proved to be strong, resourceful, full of inspiration, fit for moments of crisis, poetic, mystic such as Padmini of Chittore, Chand Bibi, Rani Jhansi, Meera Bai, Rani Bhawani, Ahalya Bai, Sita and the list is endless.
These ideals are constructive. It is not their fame and glory that the Indian child is trained to contemplate. It is their holiness, simplicity, sincerity and their character that we admire.

According to Swami Vivekananda, women should be taught history and the puranas (mythologies), house keeping and the arts, the duties of home-life and principles that make for the development of an ideal character. These subject should be taught with the help of modern science. He wants that girls are trained up in ethical and spiritual life. The children of such mothers will make further progress in the virtues that distinguish the mothers. It is only in the homes of educated and pious mothers that great men are born.... The uplift of the woman.. must come first and then only can any real good come about for the country. Only with this effort, we can make our nation strong in each and every sphere.

It is not good to let them teach novels and fictions.... But only teaching rites of worship won't do; their education must be an eye opener in all matters. Ideal characters must always be presented before the view of the girls to imbue them with a devotion for lofty ideals of selflessness. The noble examples of Sita, Savitri, Damayanti, Lilavati and Mira should be inspired to mould their lives after them. What a pity that today many of our women are drifting away from this ideal. It is high time that we take a note of warning from Vivekananda and set our women on the right track so that they may be able to attain perfect Indian womanhood capable of producing great sons like Vivekananda, Gandhiji, Tagore Dayananda and the like.

We Indian stand indebted to Vivekananda for printing out so emphatically the need for women education and for granting equal right to women. Today government has given so many concession and reservation to women for their education and in other walk of life. There is so much awareness among women regarding their rights.
Rajya Sabha has already cleared a bill of Women Reservation for making women more empowered.

In future also while making any National Policy on Women education or making any bill on Women’s Reservation for making them more empowered, the ideals of Swami Vivekananda can be incorporated because these are relevant for the benefit of the nation.

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