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UNDERSTANDING HARMONY AMONG SELF, FAMILY AND SOCIETY

Dr. S PRASADA RAO LECTURER IN ENGLISH, SKBR COLLEGE, AMALAPURAM

ABSTRACT

Harmonious relationships are maintained through healthy families. We are born in these relationships and we live in a bigger social order where a whole range of relationships support the existence of our family. We can look further into this chain of social dependency and find that there is still a bigger web of interdependency. So, starting from our family and including our teachers, friends and all the different social relationships, each one of us is born and lives in such relationships. It is the Self (`I') that recognizes the relationship. Thus a relationship exists between the Self ('I') and the other Self ('I'). Relationships in a family or in a society are not created, they just are. We can understand these relationships and based upon this understanding, it will be natural to have right feelings (values) in these relationships. The society is an extension of family and it is possible to live in harmony with every human being, thus laying the foundation for an undivided human race, from family order to world family order. With the understanding of values in human relationships, we are able to recognize the connectedness with every individual correctly, and fulfill it. When we understand the values in relationship with other units in nature too, we are able to recognize our connectedness with them too, and fulfill it. This enables us to participate in the universal human order.

KEYWORDS :

INTRODUCTION

Since the time of our early years to death every human being related to us as part of a family. It is to be notified that family may change over the years, starting from mother, father and to a husband then children but none the less everyone belongs to a family as a human being cycle. Everyone does not have choice to choose their family yet there is a bound relationship between the members that no other means of affection can compare to. As we all know that harmony in the human being is the first level of being a family. Here we are to study into harmony at the level of family. Each one of us is naturally a part of a family that includes father, mother, brothers and sisters. Then there are other relations such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, nephews, nieces etc. These relationships are a reality of our life for each one of us. We are born in these relationships. Then we also have friends and colleagues with whom we frequently interact. Be it in our school, our neighborhood or our college friends are a significant part of our lives for all of us. We have teachers who enable us to learn and understand various things in life. We have recognized and identified these individuals, that we feel, understand us, have similar interests or tastes and we had an affinity for them. Besides our home, schools or colleges, we live in a bigger social order, where a whole range of relationships support the existence of our family. The corner grocery shopkeeper, the milkman, the washer man, the maid or the helper in the house, each one of them brings a certain value to our living. We can look further into this chain of social dependency and find that there is still a bigger web of interdependency. Such relationships are abundant and again a reality in each of our lives. So, starting from our family and including our teachers, friends and all the different social relationships, each one of us is born and lives in such relationships .This is an indivisible part of our living. Let us look deeper into the subject of relationships and the values characterizing them.

Recognizing and Mutual Happiness in a Relationship

We work and behave according to these feelings, it leads to fulfillment of both sides in the relationship, i.e. it leads to mutual fulfillment. Evaluation is a natural process when we live in relationships and we are constantly evaluating ours' and the other's feelings in the relationship. For example, trust is wanted in a relationship and if there is a mutual feeling of trust, then it leads to mutual fulfillment and there are no complaints. But if there is doubt on the other, the happiness in relationship is missing. To summarize relationships in a family or in a society are not created, they just are. We can understand these relationships and based upon this understanding, it will be natural to have right feelings (values) in these relationships. These feelings are definite and can be recognized with certainty. We have also seen that recognizing the relationship and having the feelings in relationship is an activity of the Self (`I') and not of the Body. It becomes clear that relationship is between the Self ('I') and the other Self ('I') and the feelings are also between `I' and 'I'. Mutual fulfilment is the natural outcome of a relation correctly recognized and lived. In the light of the finding mentioned above, we can understand `justice'. Justice is the recognition of values (the definite feelings) in relationship, their fulfilment and the right evaluation of the fulfilment resulting in mutual happiness. Thus we mark four elements of justice recognition of values, fulfilment, evaluation and mutual happiness as ensured. When all the four are ensured, justice is ensured. Mutual fulfilment is the hallmark of justice. And justice is essential in all relationships, be it with the small kid in your house, your old grandpa, the maid in the house, your fast friends or your distant relations. We need to grow up in relationships to ensure continuity of justice in all our relationships.

Recognizing Relationships based on only the Body

We are unable to see ourselves as co-existence of the Self (`I') and the Body. As a result, we see ourselves as a body and we also see the other as a body and we subsequently reduce our relationships and the feelings in the relationship to the level of our body. We tend to assume that we have relationship with our blood-related family members only. However, this wrong evaluation does not mean that the relationship with others is no more there. Consequently, when we are faced with stranger, it makes us uncomfortable. However, if we are able to see the relationship, then it puts us at ease. Struggling against relationships only increases the problem for us, it increases the contradiction in us. We are at ease only when we are in accordance with our natural acceptance, which is to recognize and fulfil our relationship with one, many and in fact, every human being. When we see the relationship, we accept it. When we are not able to see it, we have a sense of opposition or lack of belongingness. We can see evidence of this today in our families and neighborhoods. Try to observe how you see the relationship when a fresh student enters your institute, or a newly-wed bride enters the in-laws' house. Our ability to see relationships with other human beings depends on whether we are able to see the relationship at the level of I. At this level, slowly you will find that nobody is a stranger. The feelings in relationship are the same with every human being, only that we are not aware of them. This is something we are going to explore in detail as we proceed further.

Relationships based largely on the Exchange

As a result of mistaken assumption of us being only the body and the relationship with others being only at the level of body, we have reduced our expectations in relationships to the mere fulfilment of physical facilities. We evaluate all our relationships in terms of material things like money, property etc. In short; the purpose of

relationship has been reduced to physical and material needs and its exchange. Hence, we feel that working for physical facilities alone is enough or, we assume that as long as we are accumulating physical facilities and providing the same to the other, the relationship is automatically fulfilled. Let's take an example of this; suppose your father earns enough money and ensures that your physical needs are being taken care of, but does not spend time with you, does not care for you, or instead, behaves badly with you, would you feel satisfied? The answer is NO. This is something we can easily verify in our daily lives. Nowadays, we also get to hear of youngsters earning a lot of money. Instead of taking care of their parents, and fulfilling their needs of feelings at the level of `I' (such as, trust, respect, affection, etc), they just put their parents in some old age home. The parents have plenty to eat, good clothes, a big TV, a servants, etc. Do you think this is fulfilling for the parents? The answer is 'NO', since the needs of the `I', the feelings in `I' have been totally ignored, and we are working only at the level of the body, or at the level of physical facilities. The fact is, what we need first is the right understanding and this right understanding is not ensured by having money. Secondly, we need the feelings in relationships to be fulfilled, which is also not ensured by having money.

Human Relationships in Values

Trust or vishwas is the foundational value in relationship. The feeling of Trust in relationship is defined as "To be assured that each human being inherently wants oneself and the other to be happy and prosperous. When we are assured that the other is for my happiness and prosperity, I have trust in the other. When this is doubted, I lack the trust and it becomes the source of fear. You may give an easy `Yes' to the first question. In the third question, you give a small thought and say `Yes' again. In the second question, you hesitate to answer first, then you become choosy and tend to say that there are a few whom I want to make happy, and I am not concerned about the rest. Or, you may also say that I want to make some people unhappy, or, you may say that I want to make only those happy from whom I derive happiness, and other such things. But you are not able to give an easy Yes in the beginning. When you examine, you find that there are two parts in this exploration Intention (wanting to-our natural acceptance) & Competence (being able to do). Intention is what one aspires for (our natural acceptance), competence is the ability to fulfill the aspiration you are walking in your college campus and your close friend walks. You look at him and smile, but he barely notices you, and keeps walking, with his head down. You feel angry and disappointed that he did not acknowledge your presence. You tend to assume that he wants to ignore you. Later on, you find out that he was disturbed since he had lost his wallet. You immediately feel alright and you are not angry any. What happened here? You doubted your friend's intention. It is not that he intended to or wanted to ignore you, only that he was preoccupied with something else. However, you doubted his intention, and for that instant, you felt a sense of opposition for him, not a feeling of relationship. When you found out later on that he had lost his wallet, you immediately realized that it was not his intention to ignore you, only his competence was lacking at that moment.

The Trust – A big Question mark of today

In your family, when there is a problem with someone, check whether you doubt the other's intention, or doubt the competence. Also check, when you get hurt by other, it's not when you think he/she doesn't have the competence, but it you is when you think he/she does not have the intention. When you think that the other's intentions are wrong, it is only then that you feel hurt. When you see that his/her intentions are Fine but for some reason or the other he/she does not have the competence, then you become a help to the other. Check how many people there are, whose intention you trust at all times. For most of us, the answer is none. This is true even within families, among those whom we think we are very close to. This is the most serious matter in all our interpersonal relationships between husband and wife, father and son, between friends-this basic lack of trust, at the level of intention, is the basic issue. And we seem to be doing nothing to address this issue, to resolve this issue. "Why do people have poor competence?" You may ask. It is because hardly anyone is paying attention to understanding the relationships. People are largely unaware. We can see that people keep doing things they don't mean to even each one of us. We don't want to get angry (intention), but end up getting angry (lack of competence). Hence, it means that when we feel hurt by someone, the other does not mean to hurt us at the level of the intention (deep within), but is just doing it. He/she is helpless, doing it, but not happy to do it. When we are unable to notice this simple fact, we keep mixing up the intention and competence. You can see that you cannot get hurt if you don't doubt the intention of the other. Observe and find out in your day to day relationships with friends, father, teachers, brother, etc; whether you are evaluating both intention and competence, or only evaluating intention when evaluating yourself and evaluating competence when you evaluate the other. Unless you have a doubt at the level of intention, you can't fight. You can only be a help to each other.

We have defined the term 'Trust' on the basis of research as follows:
1. How can I trust a stranger?' Or,
2. How can I trust someone who has bad intentions?' Or,
3. I know someone's character is not good. How can I trust someone like that?' Or,
4. If I crust everyone, wouldn't people take undue advantage of me? Or
5. This person can never be trusted. Be careful of that person' Or,
6. Never trust anyone blindly.

He will find that he actually wants to make himself and yourself happy, but is instead, doing something else. When we say that the robber 'wants' to rob your house, he is actually "desiring, thinking and selecting this in absence of realization and understanding". His intention is intact, the same as his natural acceptance. His competence is not according to his intention and If we are able to see this distinction clearly, not only would we be at ease, and be assured, we would also be able to deal with someone who robs in a more effective way! Secondly, in this way, we are not throwing our house open to be robbed, rather working in die direction of ensuring that there is nobody around us who even thinks to rob. 'I know someone's character is not good. How can I trust someone like that'? Let's see if we can understand what we mean when we say 'character', when we evaluate someone today. We look at someone's behavior, what one thinks, what one does, and end up concluding on the other's 'character'. Whereas, this is actually the lack of competence, it is at the level of desires, thoughts and selections in I. Anything that is solely on die basis of this desire, thought and selection in I keeps changing, hence, people are unpredictable and we end up doubting their character. However, if we start looking at the level of the person's natural acceptance,' we find that we are all the same. So, when a person behaves badly, it is not that he/she truly wants to have a bad character; rather, he/she is just operating at the level of assumptions and beliefs which is the competence or rather lack of it. Character at the level of one's competence, is different from intention/natural acceptance. The former is unstable, and unpredictable, the latter is definite. We have to start seeing the latter, since the former is not acceptable to us, and only leads to problems. If trust everyone, wouldn't people take undue advantage of me? On the contrary, it gives us inner strength and we become far more effective in interacting with and "dealing with different people". This is simply because, we already are sitting with the knowledge of what the person truly wants, truly intends, even though the person may not know this himself/herself. Hence, our ability to1 interact with people becomes far more effective and in the process, we don't get hurt, we don't get disturbed, we end up becoming an aid to the other. No one can take undue advantage of you if you have the right understanding. People can take advantage of you only if you do not have the right understanding, which is the state you are in today! In other words, becoming aware, having the right understanding, living with trust, living with the assurance in relationship does NOT mean becoming "stupid"!, more competent. Further, what is being said here is that we have trust on the intention of everyone, but, when it comes to making a program with

someone, I evaluate my competence, I evaluate his competence and make the program accordingly. This makes me more effective than if I do it otherwise i.e. by doubting his intention. 'This person can never be trusted. Be careful of that person'. This only means that the person we are talking about is someone that is under wrong assumptions, all the time! It means their competence is really lacking. The other is not aware of one's own natural acceptance at all, and hence has assumed things that only make one unhappy, but also make everyone else around unhappy as well! Such people need a lot of help, to be able to see the truth, to be able to access their own natural acceptance and it thus becomes our responsibility to help them, for which, we need to have the right understanding ourselves! 'Never trust anyone blindly': Well, to be blind, means not to have the right understanding. It means we are not aware of our own natural acceptance. It means, we are living solely on the basis of our imagination, or our desires, thoughts and selections. Not to be blind means to be aware, to know the truth, to have the right understanding. For this, we have to start this dialogue within ourselves, between what we are, and what we really want to be. When you do this, you find that the fact about die intention holds good for everybody. So, you can trust anyone (for the intention part)! But don't assume that his/her desires, thoughts and expectations are going to be right (he/she may lack competence)! The competence is to be evaluated before you make a program with the other.

CONCLUSION

To be assured of the other at all times is the feeling of trust in relationship (we saw that it is possible to ensure this for everyone with right understanding of intention). This is the foundation of relationship. It is important to be able to differentiate between the intention (wanting to) and the competence (the ability to do so). The intention of the other is always to make us happy, just like we always have the intention of wanting the happiness of the other.

But our's, as well as the other's competence is lacking, for which we have to accept responsibility to improve and work towards having the right understanding for this improvement. In all our relationships, trust is the Foundation. A relationship without trust results in opposition, the relationship itself gets shaken up. Lack of trust is what ultimately leads to extreme situations like war. Trust is thus called the foundation value. Our natural acceptance is to live with a feeling of relatedness to all and this means that we have the assurance in us at all times that each and every human being wants my happiness, just like we want the happiness of other human beings. However, since we are not competent and similarly the other is also not competent, we need to work towards improving our competence and help the other improve theirs.

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