

Spirituality an Approach to Transform Self

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Abstract- It is recognized that over the millennium, human civilization has progressed successfully. This progression of civilization is described in terms of pre-industrial agricultural society to post-industrial information and knowledge society. The advent of the industrial revolution has brought material abundance, and a mechanical society emerged, but man became a machine and has regressed like never before. The key question is how to prevent this fall of man, and thereby restore his harmonic nature. This question can only be addressed by spiritual way of life through techniques like ethical conduct, peaceful talk, functioning through heart and altruism as an essential way of life for self management and transformation as an end result. This paper attempts to explain certain spiritual processes and techniques for self transformation from an ordinary self to a transformed individual who can function in today's world as a corporate yogi if practiced well.

Keywords: Spirituality, Self Transformation, Evolution of Self, Harmony with Nature, Altruistic Behavior.

I. INTRODUCTION

It is observed that “everything in this universe is in the process of evolving”. The universe only moves in its growth and expansion for ever changing, this includes consciousness and results the process of evolution. Time and again it is proved as an important aspect of the mankind in the process of evolution to be one with nature. The spiritual processes in various countries from ancient time have proved that, they have understood the importance of man's conduct and his thought process as the key to evolve better. The great spiritual traditions of East and West have promoted various forms of meditation techniques and practices for self development, transformation and attainment.

II. THE HUMAN PURSUIT FOR MEANING

Dittmann-Kohli (1991) has done enough work and stated that the personal meaning system is most important with respect to one's overall functioning. He states: “It is a dynamic, centralized structure with various sub-domains”. It is conceived as a cognitive map that orients the individual in steering through the life course. The personal meaning system comprises the categories (conceptual schemes) used for self and life interpretation. Wong (1989) defines personal meaning as an individually constructed cognitive system, which endows life with personal significance.

III. DEVELOPMENT OF THE PERSONAL MEANING PROFILE (PMP)

The PMP is a 57-item instrument intended to measure people's perceptions of personal meaning in their lives. The construction of the PMP began by studying people's own understanding of what constitutes a meaningful life by employing an implicit theories approach (Wong, 1998). Implicit theories are laypeople's conceptions and beliefs about various psychological constructs as compared to more formal models developed by psychologists. This approach allows researchers to understand people's ideas without imposing on them the researchers' own theoretical biases.

IV. DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN QUALITY

The development process of a man depends upon his ‘Guna’ (Sanskrit), and sequentially the quality of a man and his quality of living is dependent on his Guna type. The Guna model of human personality is based on the Sankhya philosophy and it is researched for behavioral analysis, it is important to know the Guna Type of a person for analyzing the behavior models and patterns.

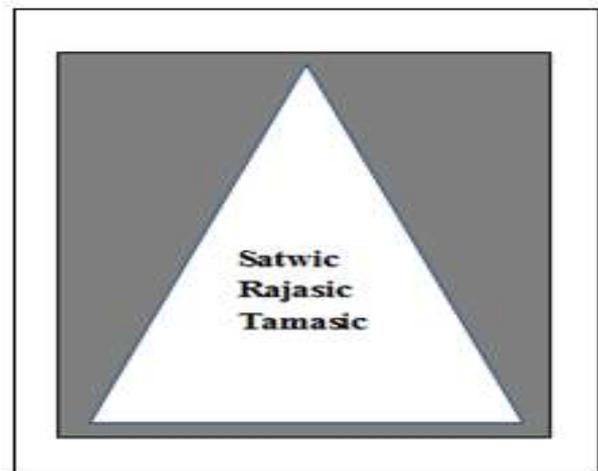


Figure: 1. Model for Guna Types

An individual's mind requires discipline and it needs to be tamed and trained in order to become aware of its own thought process that shows any / all of these three Gunas on daily bases.

V. MAN OF TAMASIC GUNA TYPE

An individual dominated by a ‘Tamasic’ Guna indulges in procrastinating, excuses, and peddling, late-coming, untidy, jealous and greedy behavior, and would be difficult to deal with as a member of a family / organization. The gradual shift in behavior and transition of a human being would be from the Tamasic Guna to Rajasic Guna type, as the Rajasic makes him to act upon and work swiftly. For this to happen, some kind of inspiration from a satwic parent or leader / guide / guru is indispensable.

Manuscript Received on January 2015.

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VI. MAN OF RAJASIC GUNA TYPE

An individual with Rajasic Type would be action oriented compared to Tamasic type, but this type comes with a price of high achievement orientation towards life. The action oriented qualities of Rajasic Guna makes an individual more furious, promotes competition and fighting spirit as the major attributes of a functioning style. For example, a strong competitive spirit or a great urge to succeed in life in conventional terms is a dominant feature of the Rajasic Guna type man involves in his life.

VII. MAN OF SATWIC TYPE

Satwa Guna is more supportive, than a restrictive constraint for the self transformation. An individual with Satwic state is desirable and adorable as to strive outside the home, in the organizational context. The Satwa Guna promotes the quality of friendship toward the virtuous, compassion towards the unhappy, gladness for the good and indifference for the evil.

VIII. HUMAN DEVELOPMENT THROUGH YOGA

In India the ancient Vedic culture has laid certain practices like Yoga to maintain harmony with body mind and soul in which thought process and life style plays a vital role emphasizing a healthy mind in a healthy body is the main resource to evolve and transform. Many research works have confirmed that the practice of yoga is an art and science dedicated to creating union between body, mind and spirit. Its objective is to assist the practitioner in using the breath and body to foster an awareness of ourselves as individualized beings intimately connected to the unified whole of creation. According to Sage Patanjali it is wise to cultivate the yogic practices for the sake of mental poise and cheerfulness. The historical evidence shows that the art of right living was perfected and practiced in India thousands of years ago and the foundations of yoga philosophy were written down in *The Yoga Sutra* of Patanjali. The sacred text "The Yoga Sutra" describes the inner workings of the mind and provides an eight-step blueprint for controlling its restlessness so as to enjoying lasting peace.

In brief the eight steps of Patanjali yoga Sutras are as follows:-

Yama	:	Universal morality
Niyama	:	Personal observances
Asanas	:	Body postures
Pranayama	:	Breathing exercises, and control of prana
Pratyahara	:	Control of the senses
Dharana	:	Concentration and cultivating inner perceptual awareness
Dhyana	:	Devotion, Meditation on the Divine
Samadhi	:	Union with the Divine

The Noble Eightfold Path / Ashtanga Yoga of Buddhism:

The Noble Eightfold Path consists of eight ways of thinking, speaking and behaving that the Buddha said people should follow if they want to reach the end of suffering, and attain Nirvana. All eight elements of the Path begin with the word "right". These denote completion, togetherness, coherence, and can also suggest the senses of perfect or ideal, wholesome, wise and skillful. In Buddhist symbolism,

the Noble Eightfold Path is often represented by means of the Dharma Wheel (Dharma Chakra), whose eight spokes represent the eight elements given to followers who follow the path of Buddhism.

The Rules of Eight Fold / Ashtanga Yoga Path are:

1. Right Understanding, 2. Right Intention, 3. Right Speech,
4. Right Action, 5. Right Livelihood, 6. Right Effort, 7. Right Mindfulness, 8. Right concentration

IX. TAOISM

The goal of Taoism is to return to our own simple and primal nature, to return to the root and fulfill our own destiny. Lao-tzu, supposedly, did write down about 5,250 words that are the Tao Te Ching, after which he did leave and was never seen or heard from again. The name Tao Te Ching means "Classic of the Way and its Virtue". Lao Tzu's 5,250 words are set into eighty-one chapters divided into two parts. In fact, both Tao and virtue are discussed in the chapters, but the Tao Ching refers to the metaphysical aspects of the Way and Virtue, while the Te Ching refers more to social virtues.

X. LAO-TZU'S IMPORTANT QUOTES

1. To do good deeds for others, and not for personal gain, 2. To do a job without ado, fuss, or ulterior ambitions, 3. To know when it is enough, far better to stop in time, 4. When you have done your work, retire, 5. To boast of success is to invite contention, 6. The admiration of others for achievement is fleeting and may turn to loathing. 7. Be kind to the unkind and faithful to the unfaithful because virtue is kind and faithful. Lao Tzu refers to these self-serving motivations as "unwanted food and extraneous growths" (Wu, 2003).

The main beauty of the Tao Te Ching is that in general it is quite unspecific so that it is easier to apply to a modern lifestyle. Although there are examples of how to follow the Tao that seem very tough to observe if taken to the letter, if one can manage to do some of his quotes at least in one's private life, then "he who practices Virtue is one with Virtue" (Wu, 2003 (23) should still apply.

XI. CONCLUSION

There are many philosophies that profess a particular lifestyle, but most are very difficult to adhere to in today's modern world. While the ideals, and in some cases, most of the lifestyle practices can be observed, there is always frustration when the necessities of modern life interfere and compromises need to be made. There are, however, important societal issues that plague us today; these issues can become the major obstacles for anyone to implement the techniques of spiritual approach. One major problem is the negation of values in societal interactions. Twelve insistently recurring causes for the negation of values in social interactions are: 1. Selfishness, 2. Egotism, 3. Pride, 4. Jealousy 5. Arrogance, 6. Parochialism, 7. Greed, 8. Deceit, 9. Anger, 10. Crookedness 11. Hatred, 12. Sycophancy. Spirituality advocates taking responsibility for life in alignment with the direction of progressive evolution in the universe. And it emphasizes great commitment to balance the pursuit of one's own sustainable prosperity with effective, life-affirming service to expand the wellbeing of

the various spheres of communities in which one is embedded and exists, for example: family, group/tribe, company, nation, humanity, and the planet with all earth species and the whole universe.

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